



# Gathering Well

*Learning Lab for building intentional community*

Welcome to the RMS Gathering Well Learning Lab! Why a “learning lab”? More than hearing from any sort of expert or joining to get the right checklist for planning a gathering, this will be a place for dialogue, learning with and from one another, and actively testing out models for gathering and participating in digital spaces and small group gatherings. Each session will include something to take with you to try out, with space at the next gathering to share learnings.

Each gathering will be focused on a central theme, with additional resources offered for deeper exploration. The five gatherings do build on one another, so attending all is encouraged, but not required. You are encouraged to attend as many as possible, for the sake of building this community and for the sake of increasing our own skill and capacity.

## **Evening Gatherings**

Monday, June 8, 5:30pm  
Monday, June 29, 5:30pm  
Monday, July 20, 5:30pm  
Monday, August 10, 5:30pm  
Monday, August 31, 5:30pm

## **Morning Gatherings**

Tuesday, June 9, 9:30am  
Tuesday, June 30, 9:30am  
Tuesday, July 21, 9:30am  
Tuesday, August 11, 9:30am  
Tuesday, September 1, 9:30am

## **Gathering One: What Makes Community?**

*“To belong to a community is to act as creator and co-owner of the community.”*

*“Belonging can also be thought of as a longing to be. Being is our capacity to find deeper purpose in all that we do.”*

-Peter Block, Community

During Gathering One, we will explore what makes a community, how to create opportunities for intentional, connected community, and questions to explore when planning gatherings.

**Deeper Dive:** Community by Peter Block

The Digital Cathedral by Pastor Keith Anderson



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## Gathering Two: Creating Intentional Space

***“The future is created one room at a time, one gathering at a time. Each gathering needs to become an example of the future we want to create.”*** Peter Block, Community

In Gathering Two, we will explore how the goals, audience, and topic of an event inform how a gathering is planned and executed. How do we capture the particularities of the specific gathering to shape the event and create the space we are wanting?

**Deeper Dive:** The Art of Gathering by Priya Parker  
Together Apart by Priya Parker

## Gathering Three: Let’s Talk (Powerful conversation)

***“The way we change the room is by changing the conversation”*** – Peter Block, Community

During our third gathering, we will consider how the structure of conversation and the type of questions can invite a deeper conversation and community. What are the powerful questions and how do build on questions and conversation to invite honesty and vulnerability?

**Deeper Dive:** [Faith Five from Faith Inkubators](#);  
Fierce Conversations by Susan Scott



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## Gathering Four: Who's invited and what shape is the table?

***"We don't work to improve relationships among people or functions. Rather we set up conditions under which people can choose new ways of relating."***

– Future Search by Marvin Weisbord and Sandra Janoff

***"You will have begun to gather with purpose when you learn to exclude with purpose...If everyone is invited, no one is invited- in the sense of being truly held by the group. By closing the door, you create the room."*** -The Art of Gathering by Priya Parker

In Gathering Four, we will sit in the tension of when "All are welcome" might not be the most helpful framework. When might specific parameters or intentional invitations create the community you are seeking? When and how might strictly structured gatherings move your community closer to where you want to be? What models could be useful?

**Deeper Dive:** Future Search by Weisbord and Janoff,  
Open Space Technology by Harrison Owen ([Overview of Open Space](#))

## Gathering Five: Ending Well

***"When it's over, it's over."*** – Open Space Technology

The final gathering will simply be an open space to bring our final questions, celebrate our learnings, share next steps, and formally end our time as this community. Celebratory food and beverages are encouraged!