

# COMMON HOUSE

WITH SACRED ORDINARY DAYS



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Common House Welcome Guide, beta version, February 2017

[www.sacredordinarydays.com](http://www.sacredordinarydays.com)



# COMMON HOUSE RULE OF LIFE

Sacred Ordinary Days creates modern resources for Christian spiritual formation rooted in ancient practices and rhythms. Common House is the ecumenical online community we've created for Christians to walk alongside and encourage one another in intentional spiritual formation. We know that the transformation of individuals and the world happens through shared practices, cultivated of relationships, and continued learning in supportive community. Anyone who values spiritual formation and is open to learning and growing with others is welcome here.

We seek to abide in this community together with a common rule of life guiding us:

- ⊕ We love one another well.
- ⊕ We value conversation that is intentionally encouraging, compassionate, and confidential. To that end, we commit to upholding our Common House conversation covenant.
- ⊕ We honor the reality of freedom in Christ and foster unitive community among diverse members, respecting others' theological opinions with an intention toward learning from one another.
- ⊕ We gather in the Common House to make relationships and find real community in addition to our family, friends, and local churches.

We invite you to join in and share life with us!

**Jenn Giles Kemper**  
Founder and Creator of  
Sacred Ordinary Days and Common House  
[www.sacredordinarydays.com](http://www.sacredordinarydays.com)

**Laura Knowles Cavanaugh**  
Common House Director

**Karin Bergstrom**  
Common House Small Group Coordinator

**Common House Host Team**

# CONVERSATION COVENANT

- ⊕ We seek to **encourage** one another in our conversations in a spirit of curiosity, humility, and generosity. Before commenting, we first ask ourselves:
  - Have I really listened carefully and thoughtfully before forming my response?
  - Have I earned the right to speak into this conversation by virtue of our relationship?
  - Have I earned trust with this person?
  - Does my response reflect and uphold our community values and rule of life?
- ⊕ We communicate with one another with **intention** and **compassion**, which means:
  - We notice our own feelings and needs as they arise and hold them gently before commenting.
  - We seek to make observations rather than value judgments.
  - We make thoughtful requests rather than demands when asking something of one another.
  - We honor our unfiltered human moments by choosing to post potentially sensitive content as a link in the first comment below the post so that others have the choice to view it or not.
- ⊕ We maintain **confidentiality** in our community as a healthy boundary that protects safe space for genuine conversation among our fellow members. Before sharing the words or work of someone else, we respectfully ask their permission and honor their decision without judgment or critique.
- ⊕ We celebrate our **differences** and choose to engage in respectful conversation and loving relationship that helps foster a spirit of unity among a community that appreciates and values members of diverse backgrounds, experiences, and beliefs.
- ⊕ We value **creativity** and benefit from learning from each other, so we enthusiastically share our own work and the work of others we have benefitted from in designated community threads in the Library.
  - We reserve posts about our events, products, and other offerings the community might want to know about for these designated Library threads.
  - We choose to post in these threads not more than once per week in order to create space for other members who have not yet shared to be encouraged to contribute.
- ⊕ We care for our community space by helping to hold each other accountable to communicating in a spirit of loving hospitality and radical kindness.
  - We report any content that does not uphold the covenant of our space to the Sacred Ordinary Days Team account in a personal message that includes a direct link to the post or comment.
  - We choose to trust the Common House leadership to handle reported concerns in keeping with posted values and to support their resulting decisions.
  - We extend grace to one another both during and following a reported issue.
- ⊕ We choose to be a part of this community. By joining Common House, we each **commit** to upholding our Common House rule of life and conversation covenant.

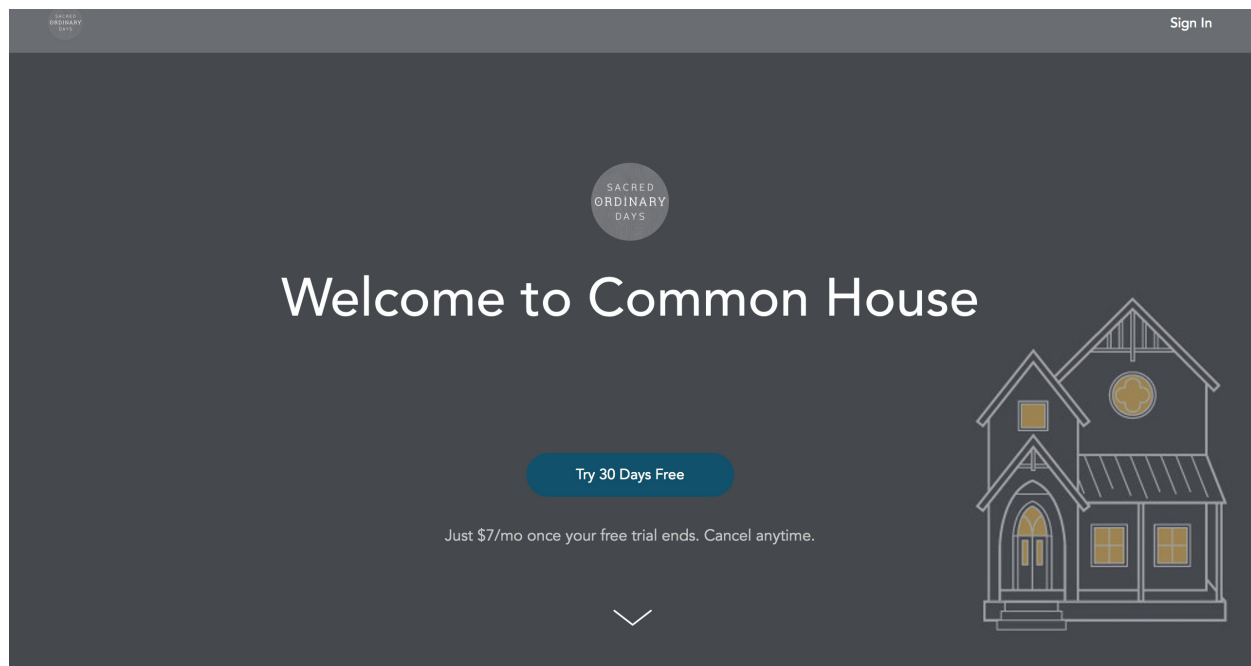
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Please contact us at [commonhouse@sacredordinarydays.com](mailto:commonhouse@sacredordinarydays.com) with any questions or concerns about these community values. We will be revisiting and updating our rule and covenant regularly, recognizing that we will evolve along with the needs of our community. Keep an eye out for notices on the Bulletin Board whenever updates or changes occur.

# COMMON HOUSE MEMBERSHIP

We are pleased to be able to offer your first month at Common House absolutely free. We are convinced that a month in our community will give us time to prove to you just how amazing Common House can be and that once your first 30 days are up you will be just as convinced that contributing your \$7 per month is a totally worthwhile and vital contribution to the general upkeep of Common House. We hope you will want to stay with us and continue connecting with all the wonderful people we are sharing life with in Common House.

And don't forget that—while our private and confidential community is moving from the closed Facebook group model to the Mightybell platform—all our currently free content will stay absolutely free! That includes the SOD blog, the SOD podcast, our Spotify playlists, Instagram, and the email newsletters. Plus, we'll be able to offer more and better content everywhere else thanks to having more hands on deck! It's good for everyone.





# MEET OUR HOSTS



## JENN GILES KEMPER, FOUNDER

Jenn is the founder and the heart behind Sacred Ordinary Days and Common House, both of which were created out of her passion for business and entrepreneurship, mixed with her heart for ministry and spiritual direction. Her spiritual formation has been deeply influenced by her quiet, contemplative, liturgical Baptist church in Waco, Texas. Jenn values learning and seeks to do things to the best of her ability. She is a dreamer and a dot connector she seeks to lead her team at Sacred Ordinary Days well so that the members of the Common House community can experience growth and formation. Jenn is a lover of color, hospitality, sunshine, shared meals and shared life.



## LAURA KNOWLES CAVANAUGH, COMMON HOUSE DIRECTOR

Laura has been a writer all her life and treasures the sacred story woven through ordinary daily life. She has studied English literature and creative writing, theology and art, and spiritual direction and is especially interested in contemplative spiritual practices and body theology. While growing her spiritual direction practice, she works as a remote office manager and writing tutor/editor and also volunteers as a conversation partner for non-native speakers. Laura and her husband have moved several times for his job and are currently in the Kansas City area with their rambunctious rescue mutts, Starbuck and Eleven. Although her roots are Presbyterian, she has since participated in a wide variety of Christian denominations and also appreciates learning from eastern practices. Laura loves sharing deep conversations over a hot cup of tea.



## KARIN BERGSTROM, SMALL GROUP COORDINATOR

Karin is a spiritual director and a preacher in the Covenant (ECC) and Lutheran (ELCA) denominations. She describes herself as a deeply creative soul and a natural born researcher. Originally from the Minneapolis area, she currently lives in East Grand Forks, Minnesota--a small town on the prairies of the Minnesota-North Dakota border not so very far from Canada. Karin attended Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN and the C. John Weborg Center for Spiritual Direction at North Park Theological Seminary in Chicago. She is interested in sustainable rhythms, women in ministry, and parenting as a spiritual practice. She lives with her loves: her husband, two tween sons, a rescue dog, and a house packed with books and yarn. Lots of yarn, her husband says.



## KIM PARKER, HOST

Kim is a spiritual director and retreat/workshop facilitator who guides individuals in deep listening through exploring the contemplative path and its practices. Years after earning an M.Div., Kim pursued spiritual direction training through Sustainable Faith as well as contemplative living and leadership formation through Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation, and her work in higher education led her to pursue more training at The Enneagram Institute. Kim was raised in the evangelical Christian church, currently attends a Lutheran (ELCA) church, and has experience working in interfaith contexts. She lives just outside Indianapolis, Indiana with her husband and two daughters. When Kim isn't studying the mystics or reading about spiritual formation, she can be found running, gardening, and enjoying family time.





### **ALIZABETH RASMUSSEN, HOST**

Liz is a spiritual director trained at the Franciscan Spiritual Center in Portland and is part of the Catholic tradition. She had a stroke three years ago that has allowed her to learn to slow down and to help others to do the same. She is interested in lectio divina using poetry and visio divina using photography. Liz also volunteers to teach writing and mindfulness classes and enjoys practicing yoga. She has been published on the websites damselfly press, Wild Violet, and Mused as well as in the recent book, Nothing to Declare--A Guide to the Flash Sequence. She lives in Bellevue, WA with her son, Ian. She often says that she is "on a mission to be real."



### **MATT RHODES, HOST**

Matt is a creative director and designer who holds an M.Div. from Fuller Seminary. He loves to find ways to integrate his two biggest passions: creativity and spiritual formation. He is currently earning his certification as a spiritual director from Sustainable Faith's School of Spiritual Direction. Recently he partnered with a fellow spiritual director to create an online course called Meeting God in Scripture: A Hands-On Guide to Scripture Meditation. Traveling, reading, creating, collaborating, teaching, and having deep conversations are the stuff that fill Matt's soul. He also enjoys hiking and skiing in one of the best parts of God's creation (the Colorado Rockies) with some of God's best people (his wife, Misty, and their two kids, Madison and Tanner).



### **KAREN RICHTER, HOST**

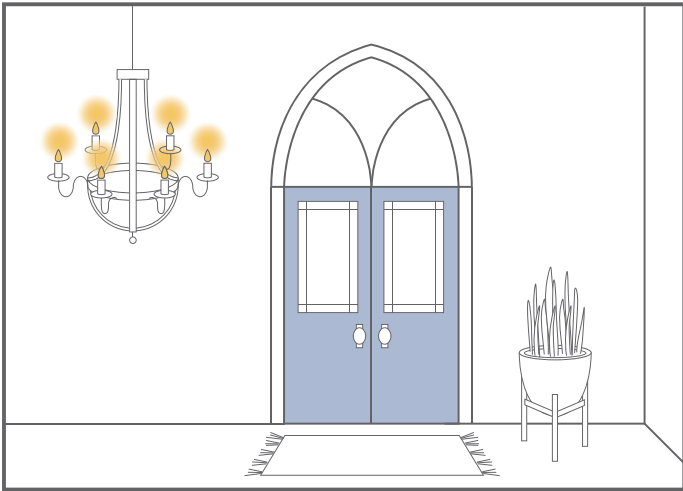
Karen is the director of spiritual formation at a church in the United Church of Christ denomination. She lives in Phoenix and was trained in spiritual direction at the nearby Hesychia School. She is interested in parenting as a spiritual practice, activist self-care, poetry, and discernment. She also blogs as part of an author's group. She loves being a church staffer, is always weaving in pop culture references, and cares deeply about how our communication and language shape our world. When Karen's not at church or discussing discernment and such at Common House, she can be found hanging out with her three kiddos, eating her husband's excellent cooking, or walking the trails with a tiny dog, Xena the Warrior Princess.



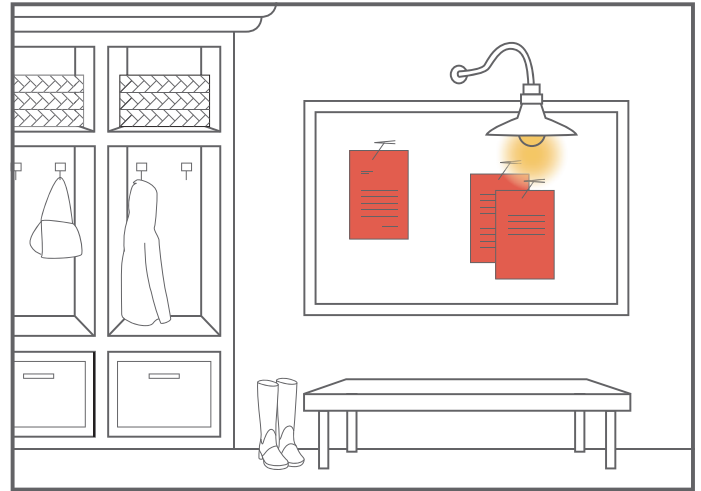
### **PETER WHITE, HOST**

Peter is a spiritual director and the chaplain for a ministry restoring families in financial crisis to economic and spiritual vitality. He lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma with his wife and two toddlers. Rooted in the United Methodist tradition and trained by Sustainable Faith, he is the creator and curator of The Sabbath Life website. There he explores the ways Scripture inspires an imagination for the spiritual life and mission. While procrastinating his thesis on poverty ministry, he can probably be found in the corner of a local coffee shop with his nose in a book. Either that, or he's watching a movie. He's desperately trying to get more fiction in his life.

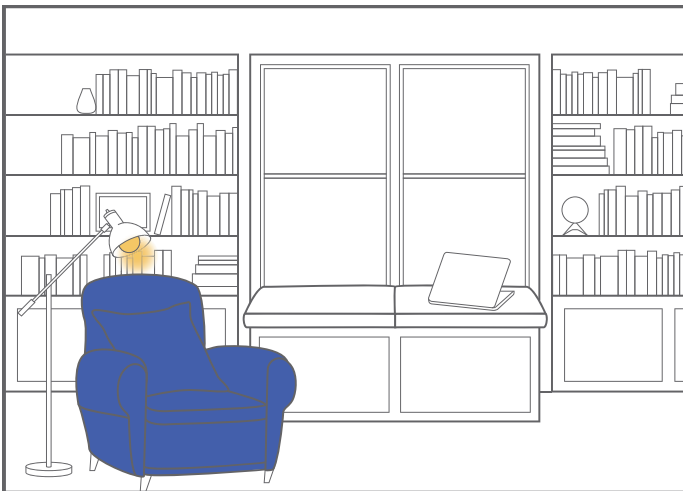




**ENTRYWAY**



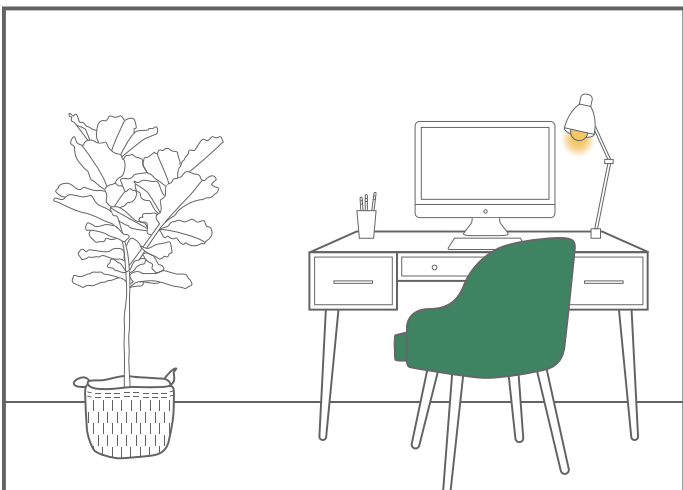
**BULLETIN BOARD**



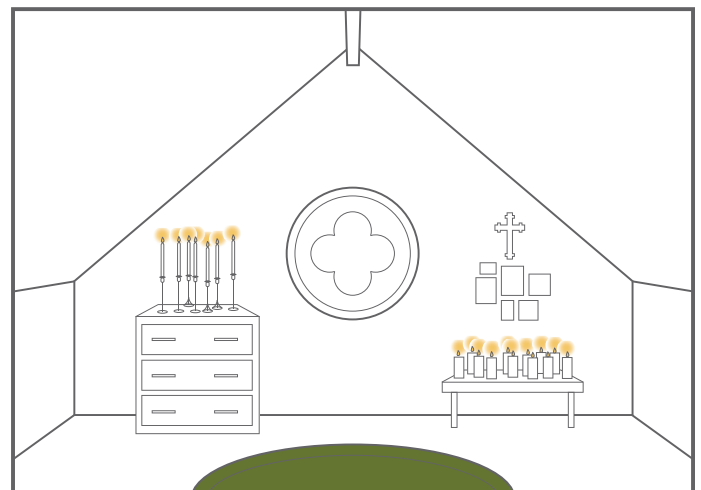
**LIBRARY**



**LIVING ROOM**

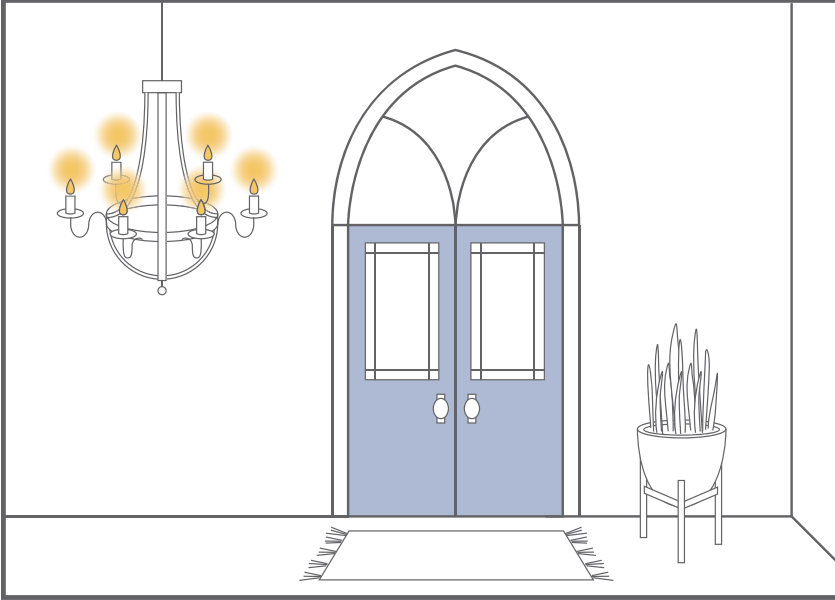


**OFFICE**



**PRAYER ROOM**

# ENTRYWAY



**Come on in! Introduce yourself here and get to know others.**

Tell us what has drawn you to enter Common House. What are you hoping for? What inspires you? In what ways might we best support you in your particular season of life? What are you most excited about or interested in? Where are you from/living? Do you have a favorite spiritual practice that speaks to you?

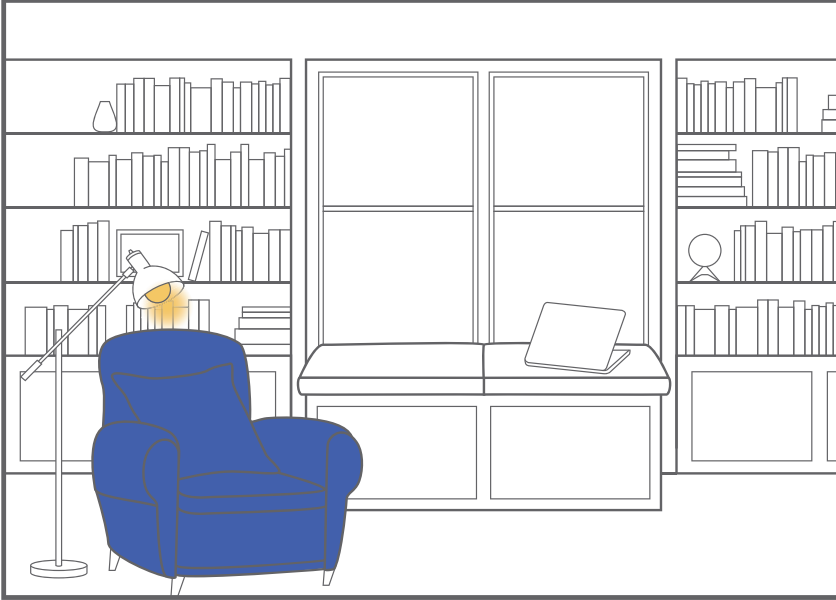
Take a moment to see what your fellow members have posted in the Entryway. Tell them what sparks your curiosity in their post. Maybe you have similar interests or live nearby.

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## A minimalist line drawing of a dressing room. On the left is a wardrobe with shelves holding patterned boxes, hanging clothes, and drawers. To the right is a large mirror reflecting a desk lamp and three red folders. In front of the mirror is a long bench and a pair of boots.

This room is your first stop for all things Common House. Check back often to see what's new and coming up. Our hosts are so excited to share with you. The Bulletin Board is the way to stay in-the-know.

## LIBRARY



**Books. Music. Podcasts. Find something worth reading or listening to. Add your favorites. Cozy up. Find a couch.**

Are you looking for book recommendations? Maybe you have a great new discovery you'd love to share. This is the place! We will also have designated weekly threads where you will be invited to share a creation or event of your own that you think other members of Common House might especially appreciate or benefit from. We can't wait to learn from each other in this room!

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## LIVING ROOM

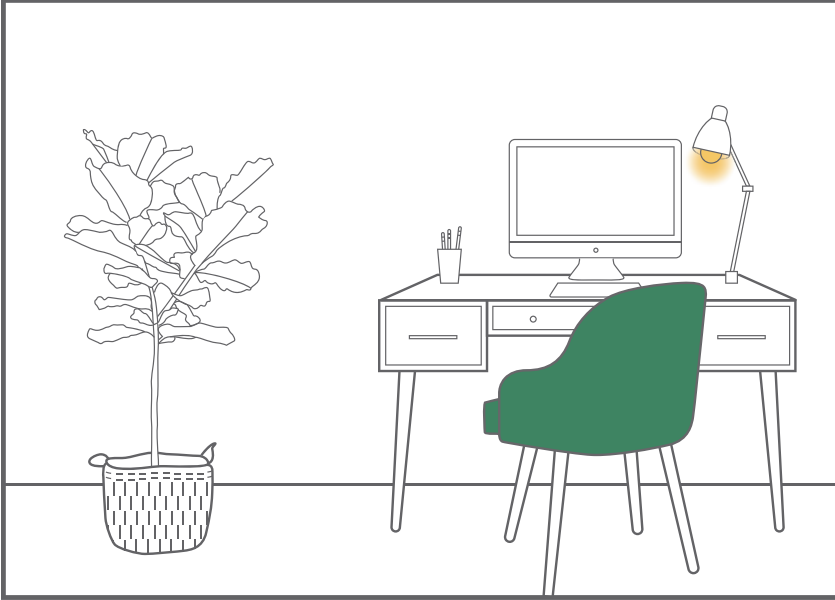


Have a chat. Ask a question.  
Offer a reflection. If you don't  
know where your post goes,  
it goes here. Make yourself at  
home.

No thought, idea, or topic is off limits in the Living Room. Bring your full, human self to this space. Be sure to run your post or comment by our conversation covenant or check with a host if you are uncertain where or how to share.

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# OFFICE



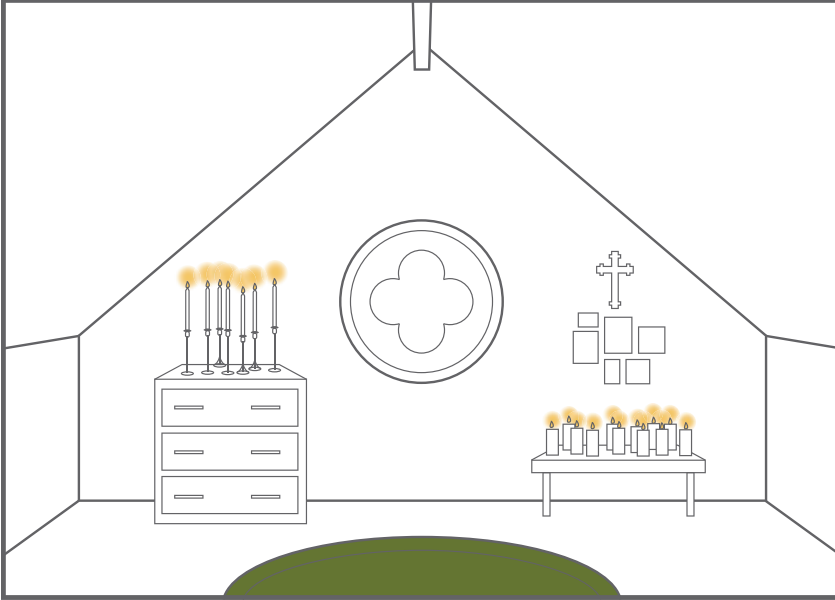
**Talk about vocation and occupation. Explore your calling. Discern the next step. Let's get down to business!**

Share what you do and why you do it. Ask questions related to your work. Maybe you are sensing a call to something new. Perhaps you are seeking sustainable rhythms that support work-life balance. This is the space to explore our vocations and occupations in all their varied richness.

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# PRAYER ROOM



**Ask for prayer. Offer a prayer.  
Join us for guided prayer  
practices. Light a candle.**

Praying with and for each other is a foundational practice for engaging in common life in Common House. We care deeply for daily struggles, both large and small, and we share in both the encouraging and discouraging moments of our lives. We will also be practicing different kinds of prayer in this room and inviting all who are interested to explore them with guidance from our hosts.

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# ABOUT MIGHTYBELL

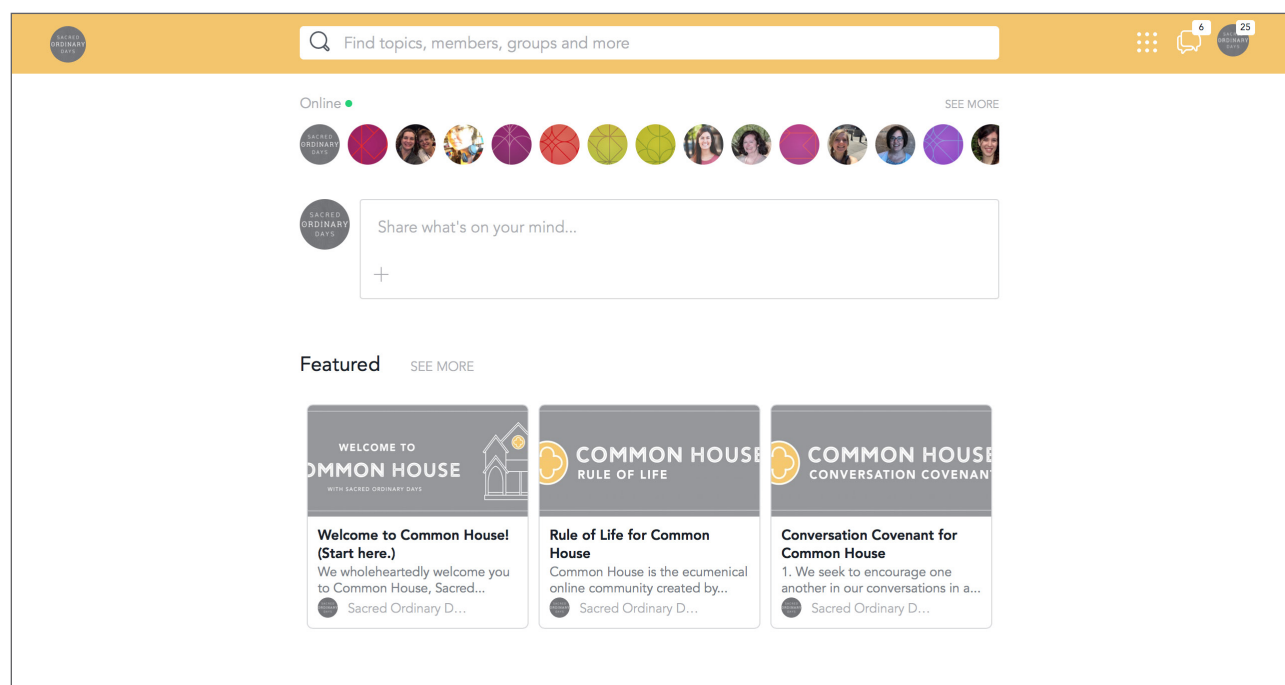
Mightybell is a web and mobile platform designed to help foster intimate and engaged communities by connecting members like you with the resources and groups that most interest you.

Like any robust web platform, there will be a slight learning curve in becoming comfortable with navigating through Mightybell. The Common House hosts are also learning how to best welcome, train, and support you. We are grateful that the team at Mightybell has created something worth learning and is committed to helping our community flourish.

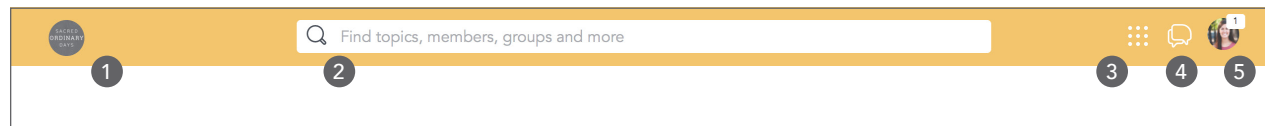
Unlike a Facebook group, which is essentially one large message board, the Mightybell platform offers more layers of organization, complete with searchable Topics and Tags (which we refer to as rooms) as well as the ability to create private groups for members to engage with each other in a smaller, more structured setting around a shared interest, spiritual practice, or season of life.



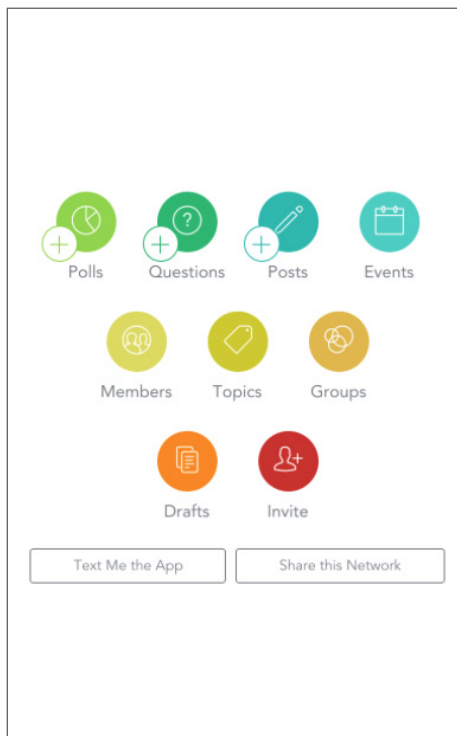
Let's take a tour of Mightybell's navigation. As you enter Common House, you will see the main feed which shows new activity. Start off by reading all three posts in the Featured section.



Here's a look at navigating Common House:



- 1 **HOME BUTTON** | This button will always take you back to the main newsfeed. The most current posts will show up here. It will give you a brief look at what has happened since you last logged in.
- 2 **SEARCH BAR** | Use the search bar to scan Common House for a topic, person or thread. Clicking the search bar brings you to an overview of Common House that might help you find your way if you are feeling lost.
- 3 **DASHBOARD** | The grid icon with nine dots is called the Dashboard and will bring up a secondary menu.



Browse through the different types of content and create your own **Poll, Question, Post, or Event**

**Members** | See all the members, and find ones nearest you.

**Topics** | Mightybell uses the word topics, but around Common House we like to think of them as the different rooms in the house. This is a great place to go to get your bearings and find content that most interests you.

**Groups** | As Common House grows, we will begin creating small groups. Stay tuned for more details.

**Drafts** | Brainstorm your ideas, edit your draft, and post later.

**Invite** | Invite friends to join you in Common House! It'll be richer to share the space with other people you're already in relationship with as you form new relationships!

**CHAT** | Use the chat feature to send private messages to any of the Common House hosts and to other members of Common House.

**VIEW YOUR STUFF** | This button brings up a secondary menu where you can:

- View and edit your profile, including uploading a profile picture.
- See current and previous notifications.
- Go to your account settings.
- Go to the Mightybell FAQ and help page.
- Sign out of your account.



**COME ON IN!**

**WE'VE GOT THE  
LIGHTS ON  
FOR YA!**

