

Leader Notes /Agenda—1st Night

MAKE YOUR FIRST NIGHT GREAT

Goals of the First Meeting

- Rekindle relationships and meet new members
- Clarify your group's direction / expectations / commitments using the covenant Briefly discuss the sermon topic (if there is time)
- Pray for the building of relationships and spiritual growth of the group

Items Needed for the First Meeting

- Dinner / dessert plans decided
- Community Group covenants – small ones to handout and a large one for everyone to sign Name tags (host should write them out ahead of time)

Contact Your Group in Advance

- Contact all members one week before the first meeting to welcome them to the group and inform them of the location and time of your group, as well as any entrees to bring for dinner

Leadership tip – Studies show that the first 7 seconds a person spends in a room can make or break the remainder of their experience in that room.

- People greeted when they arrive
- Drinks available when people arrive
- Upbeat music playing
- House cleaned, phone off if possible

#3 Know that your dessert conversations are just as important as your meeting discussions

#2 Think through the uniqueness of your first group discussion *GOING OVER THE COVENANT IS CRUCIAL*

#1 Welcome, mingle and talk while you eat

Leadership tip – Never underestimate the significance of the time after the meeting. It is key to connect with people and find out more what people are all about.

Welcome to Fall 2019 Community Groups!

This week we kick off our Fall Community Group semester. Your first meeting will include a potluck dinner, time to get acquainted, as well as time to discuss your Community Group Covenant. The Study Guide has been shortened this week to allow ample time to accomplish this.

To prepare for this week's meeting, take some time to focus on the questions below and be prepared to share your answers with the group. Have a great first meeting as you come together to connect, encourage one another to grow and to see God change your lives from the inside out!

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. What's something you did this past summer that was fun or enjoyable? (i.e. going to a concert, swimming, family gathering, vacation, barbeque, etc.)

2. What is a favorite pastime or hobby of yours – and when was the last time you were able to participate in it?

3. Who was your most memorable teacher in elementary school and what made him or her so memorable?

4. Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

LAUNCHING YOUR COMMUNITY GROUP QUARTER

One of the key reasons we meet in Community Groups every week is to gain the encouragement and support we each need to keep our focus on Jesus and live our lives for him. Before you go over the Covenant in your group, take a moment and write down your response to the question below:

What are you looking forward to in your Community Group this quarter?

LEADERS GUIDE - COMMUNITY GROUP COVENANT

_____ Ph.# _____

_____ Ph.# _____

Small groups thrive on participation! The purpose of this covenant is to help you to discuss and clarify your group's goals, expectations, and commitments.

COMMUNITY GROUPS: THEIR PURPOSE

Community Groups exist to promote spiritual maturity and personal growth through meaningful Christian relationships and study of God's Word (Romans 8:29 & Hebrews 10:24, 25). We'll do this by focusing on

SHARE

Each week we'll take time to share what is happening in our lives. At first this sharing will include planned "sharing questions". But after the first few weeks, it will become more informal and personal as we feel more comfortable.

STUDY

Each week we'll study a section from God's Word that relates to the previous weekend's sermon or an appropriate personal growth topic. Our goal is to learn how to live out our Christianity in everyday life. *Our goal is to interact interpersonally on the topic and how we can practically follow Christ, not to answer all the questions.*

SUPPORT

Each week we'll learn how to take care of one another as Christ commanded (John 15:9-13). This care can take many forms such as *prayer, encouragement, listening, challenging one another, and meeting real needs.*

SERVE

Spiritual Growth is fostered not only by what we gain through the support and input of others, but also through service to others. The role each of us fills is important to the health of the church and for us to be the hands and feet of Jesus to our community (Ephesians 4:11-16). Throughout the quarter, it is our hope that you can find and/or be affirmed in the ways God has designed you to serve, and make a difference in God's Kingdom.

FIVE MARKS OF A HEALTHY GROUP

For our group to be healthy, we need to...

Make spiritual growth our number one priority (Romans 8:29).

⇒ Tangents – they are okay sometimes, but sometimes we need to be refocused. We'll need to keep spiritual growth our focus and stay on topic.

Accept one another (Romans 15:7).

⇒ We will have different preferences.

Take care of one another (John 13:34).

⇒ When crisis happens we're there to help with support, prayer, encouragement, listening, meals etc.

Treat each other with respect (Ephesians 4:25-5:2).

- ⇒ *Listening to one another, if one's talking let's all listen, nothing worse than two conversations going on at once.*
- ⇒ *Our goal is to listen, not give advice. (Advice is given when asked for) We are not here to judge or fix – unless someone asks. An example of giving advice is by saying, "Well this is what I think you should do." On the other hand, that doesn't mean we can't question what is said or what someone is doing.*
- ⇒ *Some of us have the gift of gab, also known as a dominator – be careful, I as a leader might have to help you.*
- ⇒ *Be careful of gossip prayers. For example, "we need to pray for (person's name) because they are doing this ..."*
- ⇒ *No put-downs.*
- ⇒ *What is said here, stays here – of course we never promise confidentiality if something shared would be harmful to yourself or someone else and/or if I, as the leader, need to seek counsel on how to respond to an issue in the group.*

Keep our commitments to the group (Psalm 15:1-2, 4b).

- ⇒ *Please give us a call if you can't make it to Community Group so we know what's going on and how to pray for you.*

GUIDELINES & COVENANT

We'll meet on _____ nights for _____ weeks. Our final meeting of this quarter will be on _____. *Fill in blanks*

Time We'll arrive between _____ & _____ and begin the meeting at _____. We'll spend approximately _____ minutes in singing (optional), _____ minutes in study/discussion, and _____ minutes in prayer/sharing. *Fill in blanks*

Children

Group members are responsible to arrange child care for their children. Nursing newborns are welcome provided they are not a distraction to the group!

Study

Our studies will focus on the same topic covered in the previous Sunday's sermon or an appropriate personal growth topic. Our goal is to learn how to live out our Christianity in everyday life. ***Not to answer every question.***

Prayer

Praying for one another. *You'll go over tips on topical prayer the second week of group. Remember - being forced to pray in group or just the idea of it can cause people to not want to come to your group. If you have new people in your group, you might want to say something like this: "It's exciting to see how God works in our lives through prayer. We also realize prayer in groups is something many have never done. Know that you will never be forced to pray." Let them know you'll talk more in the weeks to come on how we do group prayer and that we break a lot of the stereotypes of what it means to pray.*

Study Guide & Attendance

Joining a Community Group requires a commitment to *attend each week and do the homework ahead of time*. Obviously, allowances are made for sickness, vacation, work conflicts, and other special events—but not much more!

This commitment is the key to a healthy group.

If we cannot come to a meeting, we will call _____.

⇒ *Emphasize the importance of the commitment to attendance and preparation. (A good group starts with good preparation)*

⇒ *Make sure that everyone is with you. (Do we agree? Is this what we want? Make eye contact, etc.)*

⇒ *Most weeks require 20-30 minutes of homework to prepare for the group study and discussion.*

7.

Social & Service Project(s)

Emphasize the importance of a quarterly social and service project. As a leader and host, have 2 or 3 suggestions ready and 2 or 3 potential dates. Choose a date or ask the group to bring their calendars next week. New groups are preferred to have their social by mid-quarter.

Desserts

Have everyone sign up for a night to do dessert.

We agree together in Christ to honor this covenant.

(To be decided by each person on or before the third week.)

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. | 7. |
| 2. | 8. |
| 3. | 9. |
| 4. | 10. |
| 5. | 11. |
| 6. _____ | 12. _____ |

ANNOUNCEMENTS/WAYS YOU CAN SERVE

Women’s Bible Study

We’d love for you to come along as we study the book of Genesis with author and teacher Jen Wilkin. In “God of Creation,” We’ll meet Monday nights and Tuesdays mornings (September 9 and 10 – November 11 and 12) at the Davis Islands Campus.

REGISTER FOR MONDAY
REGISTER FOR TUESDAY

Missions Connect - Sunday Sept 1, All Campuses at BP