COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE

For the week of January 28, 2024

WELCOME TO THE FALL QUARTER OF COMMUNITY GROUPS!

This week we kick off our Fall Community Group Quarter. Your first meeting is designed to give you time to get acquainted and connect with each other, as well as time to discuss how to make your Community Group meetings great! The study questions have been shortened this week to allow ample time to accomplish all of this.

To prepare for your first meeting, take some time to focus on the questions below and be prepared to share your answers with the group. Have a great meeting as you come together to connect, encourage one another to grow and see how God might work!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Night of Prayer
On January 31st at 6:30 pm, we'll host a Night of Prayer. We'll gather together in corporate prayer at the Ballast Point Campus. Throughout the night, our prayer team will lead prayer prompts as we cover our families, church, and community in prayer.

Getting To Know You

One of the great parts of being in a Community Group is getting to know others better. Take a moment to jot down your answers to the questions below and be ready to share with your group.

What would the title of your autobiography be?

If you had to delete all but 3 apps from your smartphone, which ones would you keep?

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or something that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

Going Deeper

1. Have you ever fasted in the past? What was your experience like? What was your motivation for fasting? What did you learn?

2. Fasting is a form of self-denial. In what ways do you currently deny yourself? When has self-denial brought you something good?

3. Think about someone who has been an encourager for you. Share how they have done so and how you might go and do likewise for someone else.

4. Fasting is not just about removing something but replacing it. As we fast, we desire to know God more intimately. What would it look like practically for you to seek the Lord during your fast? Is there any specific burden or prayer request you want to bring to Him as you fast?

5. Fasting in the Bible is always about food. However, it can also be helpful spiritually to remove other things for a season in order to focus more on God. Is there anything (even a good thing) in your life right now that is distracting you from God? What things do you turn to for comfort when you are hungry, angry, lonely or tired? What would it would like to give these up for a season in order to grow closer to God?

Looking Ahead

The blessing of doing Community Groups is having a front row seat seeing God is at work as you connect, care for one another and encourage each other to follow Him and live out His Word.

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

COMMUNITY GROUP COVENANT

Leaders		Ph.#	
Hosts		Ph.#	

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 four primary activities:

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.

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…

1. **Make spiritual growth our number one priority (Romans 8:29).**
2. **Accept one another (Romans 15:7).**
3. **Take care of one another (John 13:34).**
4. **Treat each other with respect (Ephesians 4:25-5:2).**
5. **Keep our commitments to the group (Psalm 15:1-2, 4b).**

GUIDELINES & COMMITMENT

1. **Dates** — We'll meet on _____ nights for _____ weeks. Our final meeting of this quarter will be on _____.

2. **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.

3. **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!

4. **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.

5. **Prayer** — Praying for one another.

6. **Homework & 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! If we cannot come to a meeting, we will call _____.

7. **Desserts** — My week to bring dessert is; _____

8. **Social & Service Project(s)** — *Bring your calendar with you to be ready to plan!*