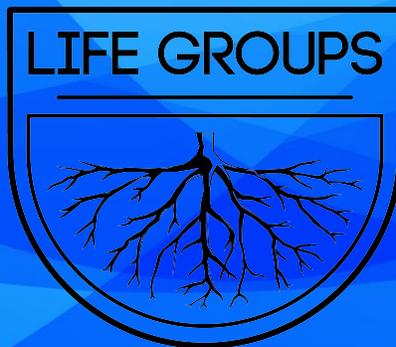
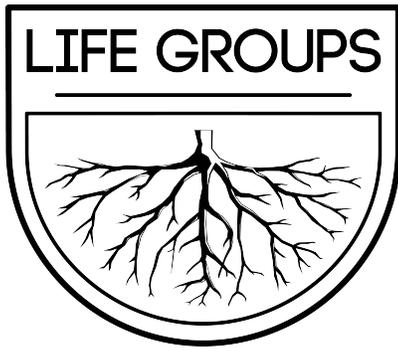


Life Group Leader Packet





Hello Leaders and Hosts!

Welcome to a new year of Life Groups! We are so grateful for your leadership and willingness to serve your group. In this packet, you will find helpful information to prepare you for this new year of Life Groups!

- **First Night Agenda** to help you have a great first meeting
- **Life Group Commitment** to help set the expectations for your group (*leader & member copy included*)
- **Life Group Evaluation** to allow your group to look back at the last year of Life Groups and evaluate. Allows your group to discuss things that you would like to change for the new year.
- **Serving Opportunities** to help you find the right service project for your Life Group

Thanks so much for all you do! We are praying for a blessed quarter for your group.

Life Group Ministry
South Peoria Baptist Church



LIFE GROUP AGENDA

South Peoria Baptist Church

First Night Preparation

Leaders/Host – Check your rosters online and **CONTACT ALL MEMBERS** one week before the first meeting and **WELCOME** them to the group. Provide the location and time of your group, as well as any entrees to bring for dinner/dessert.

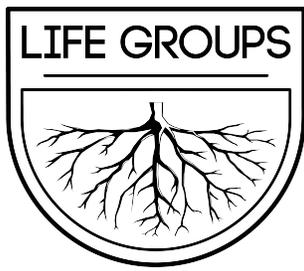
| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Goal for the first meeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rekindle relationships and meet new members • Clarify your group's direction / expectations / commitments • Briefly discuss the sermon topic (if there is time) • Pray for the building of relationships and spiritual growth of the group |
| Items Needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dinner / dessert plans decided • Beverages Set up • Life Group Commitment • Nametags (<i>Optional and would help for if you have new members</i>) |

3 ESSENTIAL PARTS OF YOUR EVENING

| Topics | Presenter | Time allotted |
|--|-----------|---------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> #1 Welcome, mingle and talk while you eat | | |
| <p><i>Leader/Host greet members upon arrival. Having music in the background help greet well.</i></p> <p><i>The 1st 7 seconds after arrival are critical for new members ~ Make a GREAT 1st impression!</i></p> | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #2 First group discussion | | |
| <p>Sharing Activity: "Getting to know you" questions and/or Getting to know you game like 2 Lies and a Truth.</p> <p>Worship (optional): This is a great way to connect spiritually with your group.</p> <p>REVIEWING THE COMMITMENT IS CRUCIAL: Take this time to introduce the commitment and share the importance of it</p> <p>Closing Prayer: Dedicate the quarter to God.</p> | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #3 Keep in mind, your dessert conversations are just as important as your meeting discussions. | | |

LEADERSHIP TIPS

- ⇒ **1:** Never underestimate the significance of the time after the meeting.
- ⇒ **2:** Use the Commitment to set the standards for your Life Group.



LIFE GROUP COMMITMENT

South Peoria Baptist Church

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

LIFE GROUPS: THEIR PURPOSE

The purpose of Life Groups is to promote spiritual maturity and personal growth through authentic godly relationships with other believers in our church family by living life together around God's Word. In Life Groups, we experience Life in Christ together. We do life by gathering together and building healthy relationships. We also give life by encouraging, supporting, sharing, and praying for one another as we all learn and grow together around God's Word. 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 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 If there are children that come to Life Group, then the groups will determine how to arrange for childcare for the children.
4. Study Our studies will focus on the same topic covered in the previous weekend's sermon or an appropriate personal growth topic. Our goal is to hear from everyone every night and keep God's Word at the center.
5. Prayer Praying for one another.
6. Preparation & Attendance Joining a Life Group requires a commitment to be prepared with taking notes and answering the questions from Sunday's message. It also means making it a priority to be at Life Group as often as you can. There will be of course time where people will be sick, on vacation, have work conflicts, and other special events. If we cannot come to a meeting, we will call or text _____.
7. Dinner/ Dessert
8. Social & Service Projects

We agree to honor this commitment throughout the quarter.
(To be decided by each person on or before the third week.)

LEADERS GUIDE - LIFE GROUP COMMITMENT

- *When discussing – use the proactive leadership style – clear direction, yet flexible*

| | | | |
|-----------------|-------|--------|-------|
| Leaders | _____ | Ph.# | _____ |
| Hosts | _____ | Ph.# | _____ |
| Station in Life | _____ | Campus | _____ |

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

LIFE GROUPS: THEIR PURPOSE

Life 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.

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...

- 1. 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.
- 2. Accept one another (Romans 15:7).**
⇒ We will have different preferences.
- 3. Take care of one another (John 13:34).**
⇒ When crisis happens we're there to help with support, prayer, encouragement, listening, meals etc.
- 4. 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.*
- 5. Keep our commitments to the group (Psalm 15:1-2, 4b).**
⇒ Please give us a call if you can't make it to Life Group so we know what's going on and how to pray for you.

GUIDELINES & COMMITMENT

1. **Dates** We'll meet on _____ nights for _____ weeks. Our final meeting of this quarter will be on _____. *Fill in blanks*
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. *Fill in blanks*
3. **Children** If there are children that come to Life Group, then the groups will determine how to arrange for childcare for the children.
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 hear from everyone every night and keep God's Word at the center. *Not to answer every question.*
5. **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.*
6. **Preparation & Attendance** Joining a Life Group requires a commitment to be prepared with taking notes and answering the questions from Sunday's message. It also means making it a priority *to be at Life Group as often as you can*. There will be of course time where people will be sick, on vacation, have work conflicts, and other special events.
This commitment is the key to a healthy group.

If we cannot come to a meeting, we will call or text _____.
⇒ 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.)
7. **Dinner/Desserts** *Have everyone sign up for a night to do dinner/dessert.*
8. **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.*

We agree to honor this commitment throughout the quarter.
(To be decided by each person on or before the third week.)



GETTING INVOLVED IS EASY!

SERVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUR GROUP

Family Friendly: Game nights with seniors or special needs adults, distribute food, clean up a park.

Meals for homeless shelters: Bring dinner or put together sack lunches for those in need.

Outdoor: Freeway clean up, natural preserve restoration, trail maintenance.

Donations: Donate canned food, cleaning supplies and toiletry kits.

SMALL GROUP EVALUATION FORM¹

Group Name: _____

Your Name: _____

One of the best ways to improve any group is to evaluate it! You have the opportunity to assess both the strengths and weaknesses of your particular group. Please take some time to evaluate your small group experience and the questions below will help you think through different aspects of your group. Please answer the questions thoroughly and honestly.

THE GROUP

One of the things I have enjoyed most about being in the group is:

| Are you happy with the amount of time we spend each week in: | Yes | No | Comments |
|--|-----|----|----------|
| Discussion | | | |
| Study | | | |
| Prayer | | | |
| Worship (if applicable) | | | |

Is the length of the meeting appropriate? Yes No
 Please explain.

How have the group discussions gone? Is everyone who wants to share able to share? Are there any people or issues that quell the discussion? Explain:

Do you have suggestions for improving the meetings?

MY PLANS

For the next small group session, I'm planning to:

- Remain in the same group
- Try a new group
- Take a break from small groups

QUESTIONS

What do you like most about the questions?

What do you like least?

If you could change just one thing about the questions, what would it be and why?

The amount of questions is:

- Just about right
- A little too much
- Not quite enough. (Please explain)

MY LEADER

One of the things I appreciate most about my small group leader is:

If your leader asked for advice on whether he/she should talk *more, less* or *exactly the same* during your meetings, what would you say?

Is there anything your leader could do to make your meetings even better?

YOUR HOST (may be the same as your leader)

One of the things I appreciate most about our host is:

Is there anything your host could do to make your meetings better? (seating arrangements, lighting, temperature, refreshments, socials, etc.)