

LIFE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

For the week of January 13, 2019

Welcome to the Winter Quarter of Life Groups!

This week we kick off our Winter Life Group Quarter. Your first meeting will include a potluck dinner, time to get acquainted, as well as time to discuss your Life Group Covenant. 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!

LEADER NOTES

⇒ AGENDA

Looking for more guidance on your first meeting? You can find the "First Night Agenda" about how to make your first night great on the Leader Tools page of our website.

lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/make-your-first-night-great/



Here's a quick 90 second video from the Life Group Study Question writing team (Ned, Connor and I) about your first meeting:

<https://vimeo.com/northcoastvideo/review/311541306/8452a742a1>

HOW WE MEASURE OUR SUCCESS WEEK TO WEEK: Hearing from everyone at every meeting and keeping God's Word at the center.

Make sure you leave plenty of time to answer the question in the "Looking Ahead" section and spend time going over the Covenant with your group.

- **Welcome and Eat** – Potluck
- **Group Sharing** – Discussion Note: You can transition from the Getting to Know You section to the Looking Ahead section.
- **Study Questions Discussion** (optional)
- **Go over the Covenant** – Use the last question in this Leader's Guide and transition into reviewing the Covenant.
- **Try to get to the "Looking Ahead" section with 45 minutes left in your meeting** so you have plenty of time to have everyone answer and go over the Covenant.
- Close in prayer
- Eat (more) dessert

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Add these questions if you have new people in your group or a completely new group. If it hasn't happened while eating dinner, have everyone in the group share how long they have been attending North Coast, if they have been in a Life Group before, and their occupation. **Note:** You'll probably only have time to do two of these questions at most, so choose accordingly.

- 1 At times we all need a place to chill out and relax. Where is the most relaxing place for you to be?

Good question to have everyone answer.

- 2 We all have a variety of highlights and memories from our elementary school years. Who was your favorite or craziest teacher in elementary school?

Good question to have everyone answer.

- 3 As we start 2019, what are one or two things you're looking forward to in the New Year?

Discussion Note: You can transition from the "Getting to Know You" section to the "Looking Ahead" section.

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

Note: Question one in the next section is another type of "Getting to Know You" question. You may want to make that one of the questions you focus on.

WHERE DID YOUR JESUS STORY START?

Because of the potluck, make sure you have enough time to spend on the "Looking Ahead" section. You may not have time to cover this question this week.

1 Whether you've been following Jesus for a long time or are still in process of making that decision, we can all point to at least a general time when we first heard the story of Jesus. Jot down as much as you can remember about who, when and where you first heard the Jesus story.

***Discussion Note:** We're not looking for exact times as many won't remember, but more of when the idea of Jesus was introduced into their world. If you have new people in your group, do be aware they may not have made a commitment to follow Jesus yet.*

***Additional Questions:** "What was your response when you first heard about Jesus?" If you know your group, you may want to add this question; "If you've made a commitment to Jesus, how and when did he go from being more than a story or name to becoming the 'Good News' that he's saved you?"*

2 We are given the great opportunity to live out the Good News and point others toward Jesus. How do the following verses help us know what this looks like?

1 Corinthians 9:19, 22-23 – ¹⁹ Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. ²⁰ To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. ²¹ To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. ²² To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. ²³ I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

Matthew 5:9 – ⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

John 13:35 – ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

2 Timothy 2:15 – ¹⁵ Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

Looking back at what you just wrote, what are some specific examples of how you can point others towards the Good News?

LOOKING AHEAD

One of the key reasons we meet in Life Groups every week is to gain the encouragement and support we each need to keep our focus on Jesus. Before you go over the Covenant in your group, take a moment and write down your responses to the two questions below:

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

Important question to have everyone answer.

Is there anything specific you want to focus on in your life to point others toward Jesus?

Possible Goal Setting Question for this next quarter: Everyone may not have an answer. You could use the verses above as an area for them to focus on. You may not have time to have everyone answer. If you do, it could be a good question to make your theme and overall prayer request for this next quarter.

Transition Statement to Covenant: *“It’s great to hear what each of you have said about what you want out of your time in the group. One of the great benefits of being in a Life Group is the opportunity to have help from others as we seek to be strategic and intentional about our spiritual growth. The Life Group Covenant is designed to serve as intentional guidelines to help us make the most of our time together.”*

Pass out Covenants and go over them with your group. See below or you can download the [Leaders Guide to the Life Group Covenant](#), by going to northcoastchurch.com/groups and clicking on “Leader Tools.”

Close in prayer: *Next week the Study Questions will include an introduction to praying in a group so if you have a new group or a lot of new members, it’s suggested that you wait until week two to do any group prayer.*

Eat dessert: *Mingle with everyone.*

Mark Reading Challenge

- Read Mark in one sitting (takes about 1-2 hours)
- One chapter per day – read through Mark twice in a month
- Bible Apps w/ Text or Audio – Bible Gateway App or The Bible App by YouVersion

THE PURPOSE OF LIFE GROUPS

Life Groups exist to promote spiritual maturity and personal growth through meaningful Christian relationships and the study of God’s Word. (Romans 8:29 & Hebrews 10:24-25). Here’s how it will happen:

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 the community in which we live (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.



Israel Study Tour - June 18-29, 2019

Join Dave Enns and Connor McFadden as they lead North Coast’s next Study Tour that will bring the land and lessons of the Bible to Life.

- For more information and to register go to gtitours.org/trip/nc19
- For questions contact Connor McFadden cmcfadden@northcoastchurch.com



COMMUNITY SERVICE IMPACT

Community Service is dedicated to being the hands and feet of Jesus and showing God’s love in tangible ways through service to the community. There are many options for you to serve. For ideas, check out

NorthCoastCommunityService.org

LEADER NOTES

These notes are designed to be a resource as you lead your Life Group each week.

AGENDA

First Night Meeting Agenda

We've created a First Night Agenda document that will guide you through all the details of your meeting. It was included in your Leader Packets that were mailed last week. You can also view it online or download a copy here:

<https://lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/make-your-first-night-great/>

Here are the first few tips to get you started:

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 – see Leader Guide above)
- Pray for the building of relationships and spiritual growth of the group

Items Needed for the First Meeting

- Dinner / dessert plans decided
- Life Group Covenants – small ones to handout and a large one for everyone to sign (these were mailed to you last week in your leader packet, and can also be found online here:
<https://lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/life-group-covenants/>)
- 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. You can check your roster online to see all the member of your group and their contact information. You can find instructions on how to check your roster here:
<https://lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/how-to-view-your-roster/>
- Inform them of the location and time of your group, as well as any entrees to bring for dinner

Life Group Covenants

- Covenants & Leaders Guide were all mailed to your meeting location or get them online.
- Go over Covenant – use last question in homework to transition into this. (See Leaders' Guide to Covenant for more info).

WRAP UP

Attendance

Submit your group's attendance online through the Leader Toolbox here:
northcoastchurch.com/attendance. If you're not sure how to post attendance, you can check out the guide here: lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/how-to-post-attendance/

Where Do You Start The Jesus Story?

The beginning:

3 questions that have to be asked:

Mark 1:1-5, Luke 3:1-18

❶ What is the **Good News**?

“Jesus”: The Good News was a **real person**.

“Christ”: The Good News is that we **have a Savior**.

“Son of God”: The Good News is that **God came to us**.

❷ How do I get this **Good News**?

This Good News comes by **repentance** and **confession**.

❸ When did my **Good News** begin?

The result of this Good News:

Mark 1:6-8

Our life will point to our **Good News**, not our **good self**.



LEADERS GUIDE - LIFE GROUP COVENANT

This form is downloadable at http://www.northcoastchurch.com/fileadmin/docs/Life_Group/covenant_guide.pdf
When discussing – use the proactive leadership style – clear direction, yet flexible

Leaders _____ Ph.# _____

Hosts _____ 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.

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 & COVENANT

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** 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. *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. **Homework & Attendance** Joining a Life 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. **Desserts** *Have everyone sign up for a night to do 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.*

9. **Other**

We agree together in Christ to honor this covenant.

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

Have the members sign the group Covenant now if they are ready. If not, they are welcome to wait until the third week of the quarter.

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