

# LIFE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

For the week of February 28, 2021

*This guide is designed to give helpful hints in preparing & leading your group in discussion.*

## LEADER NOTES

### ⇒ MID-QUARTER TRAINING

Make sure you attend the Mid-Quarter Training session for Leaders and Hosts (Vista Campus groups only). Click the link to RSVP: [lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/mid-quarter-training](http://lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/mid-quarter-training)

## MEETING NOTES

### ⇒ SERVE YOUR CITY

As Life Group leaders and hosts, we want you to be the first to know more about this exciting news! Watch [this short video](#) from Community Service Pastor Connor McFadden for a first look at our upcoming project, Serve Your City.

#### **What is it?**

Serve Your City is a church-wide, three-week campaign coming after Easter. Each week, we will focus on serving our community in three intentional and practical steps:

- Week 1: **GIVE** (*donate financially*)
- Week 2: **SERVE** (*participate in community service projects with your Life Group, with your family or on your own*)
- Week 3: **LOVE** (*intentionally show love to someone in your life*)

#### **When is it?**

March 6: **Serve Your City project sign-ups open!**

Week of April 11: **GIVE** *financially*

Week of April 18: **SERVE** *on a project*

Week of April 25: **LOVE** *someone*

#### **How can you help?**

1. Tell your group members about Serve Your City!
2. *Start getting your group excited about thinking through what kind of project they'd like to do! There are three options for projects: at-home, onsite or create-your-own. Sign-ups start next weekend on all campuses and online.*
3. **Starting next weekend:**
  - Head to [northcoastchurch.com](http://northcoastchurch.com) and click on "Serve Your City" to view service projects that have been created for you to serve. *Note, you may also create your own.*
  - Sign up to serve! We love to see Life Groups serving together! You will have the option to sign up your whole group for a project, or you can also sign up as individuals.

### ⇒ PRAYER

- Take prayer requests.
- If you haven't divided into male/female groups already, you may want to do so for prayer.

### ⇒ ATTENDANCE

Submit your group's attendance online at [northcoastchurch.com/attendance](http://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](http://lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/how-to-post-attendance)

Find all of our leader resources online: [lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/leader-tools](http://lifegroups.northcoastchurch.com/leader-tools)

## QUICK REVIEW

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?

## MY STORY

**Facilitation Tip:** *Have some fun with this set of questions on waiting, and make sure everyone has a chance to participate.*

1. We heard this weekend that God wants us to learn to wait well, which is a challenge for many of us because there seem to be less and less things we have to wait for (think fast food and overnight delivery). But there are things that still require us to wait. How many things can you think of that we still commonly have to wait for in our society?

**Additional Question:** *What things did we have to wait for 25 years ago that we don't have to wait for now?*

Which of the things you thought of is hardest for you to wait for?

Standing in line is one of the hardest times of waiting for many people. Prior to the pandemic, can you think of anything you liked doing so much you were willing to wait in line to do it?

**Additional Question:** *What situation in which you have to wait in line is the one you dislike the most?*

2. When we find ourselves struggling in God's waiting room, we often try to put on a brave face so no one thinks we lack faith or are a complainer. However, being honest with God and with other people is one of the most helpful things we can do. When it comes to being honest with others while you're stuck waiting or going through a tough time, put a checkmark next to the statement below that best represents how you tend to respond in that situation.

**Facilitation Tip:** *This would be a good question to break into smaller groups (breakout rooms on Zoom) to discuss. If you do break into smaller groups to answer this question, it would help if you gave the groups one or more of the additional questions listed below. (If you're using breakout rooms in Zoom, you can type the questions into the chat box so people can refer to them while they're in their breakout room.)*

- I downplay what I'm feeling.
- I overshare with too many people.
- I acknowledge what I'm feeling but tend to keep it to myself.
- I share appropriately with the important people in my life.
- I complain about the situation more than I share how I'm doing.
- I have one or two people I share with.
- I'm not sure how I feel until I've talked to someone about what I'm going through.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Questions:**

*How important do you think it is to have at least one other person you can be honest with about what you're going through?*

*How has your willingness to be open with people about what you're going through changed over the years?*

*Have you taken any steps to be more open with people?*

## DIGGING DEEPER

1. Larry mentioned that when we're stuck in waiting, we need to focus on what God wants us to do more than what we want Him to do. In Colossians 1:9-14, the Apostle Paul wrote down a prayer for the believers in the church at Colossae in which he first asked for them to understand God's will and then to live it out in daily life. How might what Paul prayed for impact a person's attitude and actions when they're stuck in God's waiting room?

**Colossians 1:9-14 New International Version (NIV)**

*<sup>9</sup>For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, <sup>10</sup>so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, <sup>11</sup>being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, <sup>12</sup>and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. <sup>13</sup>For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, <sup>14</sup>in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

**Note:** *In verse 9, Paul prays for them to be filled with the knowledge of God's will. In verse 10, he lists what will happen when they understand God's will – they will live in a way that pleases God; they will do good deeds that bear fruit; they will get to know God better; they will be strengthened with power, resulting in endurance and patience; they will be thankful.*

*How different would waiting be if, while we were waiting, we focused on pleasing God, serving others, growing our relationship with God, depending on God for His power and being thankful?*

**Additional Questions:**

Larry mentioned a few people in the Bible who had to wait. Can you think of any others?  
What's the greatest challenge/hurdle you have in living like Paul describes?  
Which of the things Paul describes is hardest for you to focus on when you're in God's waiting room?  
What's hardest for you when God has you in His waiting room?  
When was a time that God had you in His waiting room?

Which of the things Paul prayed for would you most like others to pray for you to have or experience?

**Facilitation Tip:** You might want to pause your discussion right here and pray for the things people bring up, or you can return to these answers when you get to your prayer time.

2. One of the challenges of waiting is learning to be honest with God about what we're feeling, while at the same time not showing a lack of faith in God's care for us and His plan. Psalm 13 is a very honest expression of David's struggle with waiting for God to work. What sticks out to you the most about this psalm?

**Facilitation Tip:** This would be a good question to break into smaller groups to discuss. This would allow more people to share their answers.

**Psalm 13 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup> How long, LORD? Will you forget me forever?  
How long will you hide your face from me?  
<sup>2</sup> How long must I wrestle with my thoughts  
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?  
How long will my enemy triumph over me?  
<sup>3</sup> Look on me and answer, LORD my God.  
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,  
<sup>4</sup> and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him,"  
and my foes will rejoice when I fall.  
<sup>5</sup> But I trust in your unfailing love;  
my heart rejoices in your salvation.  
<sup>6</sup> I will sing the LORD's praise,  
for he has been good to me.

Do you think there is a difference between being honest and complaining? If so, what is it?

*There is a thin line between these two things, and in a lot of ways, they're not much different. The idea that "I'm just being honest" can be a complaint. It's when we get locked into constantly complaining that we get stuck. One way to think of the difference is that honesty is letting God know what I'm feeling, and complaining is when I start questioning God's character, love and plan.*

**Additional Questions and Verses:**

How do [Philippians 2:12-16](#) & [Proverbs 17:22](#) help us balance our complaining vs. honesty?  
What could be a downside to never hearing someone complain or be honest about disappointment?  
Should someone be willing to complain more?  
Is there a point where our honesty begins to reveal a real lack of trust?

How can we honestly complain to God without it becoming a lack of trust?

What do you think impacts people's willingness to be honest with God?

How easy is it for you to be honest with God about what you're going through?

**Additional Questions:**

What does it look like when you are honest with God?  
What is the relationship between being honest with God about what you're going through and being honest with other people about what you're going through?  
Which is easiest for you – being honest with God or with other people?

Has your willingness to be honest with God changed over the years? If so, what do you think has caused that change?

In this psalm, David balances his honesty at the beginning with praise at the end. How hard do you find it to be both honest with God about what you don't like and yet still praise Him?

### TAKING IT HOME

1. Looking back on this week's sermon and study, what's most important for you to remember?
  
2. Do you feel like you're currently in God's waiting room in an area of your life? If so, what's most challenging about the waiting for you right now?

How might the members of your Life Group be praying for you in this area?

*The answers to this question can become a part of your prayer time as well as the answers to the follow up question under the first Digging Deeper question.*

### PRAYER REQUESTS

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#### SERVE YOUR CITY

Coming soon! Serve Your City is a three-week, church-wide event in which we will focus on giving, serving and loving our community. Sign-ups start next weekend, March 6-7, on all campuses and online at [northcoastcommunityservice.org](http://northcoastcommunityservice.org).

## Groundhog Day *Lessons From God's Waiting Room*

### The Passage

Three Chapters/ Two Years/ Nothing to Show for It  
Acts 23:12-26:32

### Waiting Well

Waiting is not **WASTED** time. It's a **VITAL** part of the journey.

- Waiting **VERIFIES** the **GENUINENESS** of our faith.  
1 Peter 1:3-7
- Waiting **PREPARES** us for our **FUTURE**.  
1 Peter 5:6-7/ Genesis 50:20/ Exodus 23:27-30

Remember, God's will has two parts: a **WHAT** and a **WHEN**.

- Rushing the **WHEN** always messes up the **WHAT**.  
Numbers 9:17-23/ Acts 7:23-36
- Never do the **WRONG THING** to speed up the **RIGHT THING**.

When you're stuck waiting, focus on what **GOD** wants **YOU** to do, not what **YOU** want **GOD** to do.

- Sometimes God just wants us to **WAIT IT OUT**.  
Jeremiah 29:1-14
- Sometimes God wants us to **GET READY** for the future.  
Luke 2:41-52
- Sometimes God has the same **AGENDA**, but a different **CLOCK** and **CALENDAR**.  
2 Peter 3:8-9/ Isaiah 55:8-9/ Habakkuk 3:16-19