



LIFE GROUP

LAUNCH

PARTICIPANT GUIDE

DYNAMIC LIFE

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WHAT ARE LIFE GROUPS?

WEEKLY READING

When was the last time you went on a trip where you took a flight? Was it work related, a vacation, or to see family or friends?

The common stages of a plane ride are: take off, the flight, and the landing. These stages offer a great analogy that will help as you think about the different stages your group will travel over the next two years together.

» **Take Off: 1st 90 Days**

Chart your course / Align expectations / Prioritize relationships

» **Flight: Middle Months**

Stay on course / Avoid routine / Plan the landing

» **Landing: Last 90 Days**

Talk about the group ending and what's next / Celebrate successes



Introduction to Life Groups

Life Groups are small groups where people meet regularly to help the next person take their next step in relationship with Jesus Christ. In Life Groups, everyone will have the opportunity: **Experience** the gospel, **Engage** in community and **Equip** one another to live as ambassadors.

Experience the Gospel The Good News is foundational to Christian belief through salvation and the life-long process of Christian Growth. (examples: Bible studies, learning scripture, praying, group discussion)

Which of the following descriptions most closely expresses where you are in your spiritual journey?

- “ Not really sure.
- “ Curious about Jesus but not yet at a place I consider myself a Christian.
- “ Consider myself a Christian but I haven’t been actively pursuing growth in my journey.
- “ Consider myself a Christian but still have significant questions about Christianity.
- “ Consider myself a Christian and have pursued opportunities personally and with others to continue to grow in my experience and understanding of the Christian faith.

Engage in Community A Gospel-centered community’s goal is to love the Lord and one another as God loves us. (examples: vulnerability during group discussion, enjoying a meal, celebrating fun occasions, helping through challenging times, hosting group meetings and cookouts for neighbors.)

Equip One Another as Ambassador Ambassadors are people who live in one place but who represent the culture and values of another place. As Christians, we are called to live as ambassadors in the places where we live, work, and play (2 Cor 5:20).

If you're curious about
how you can know God

READ THIS

WHY LIFE GROUPS?

God hardwired the human heart with a desire to belong to something that is bigger than itself. This design is a reflection of the relational triune God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—and His creation of man for relationship with Him. Likewise, from the beginning, people were made for community with Him and with others.

Over 2,000 years ago, this was also true of Jesus. He often went out into large crowds to teach but His close relationships were with His small group of 12 disciples. That's who Jesus "did life with". After Jesus' resurrection, a small community began which the Bible calls an "Ecclesia" or assembly (Acts 9:2, 19:9). Together this small group of Jesus followers cherished, celebrated, and shared the good news of the gospel with others.



LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT FOREST HILL'S VISION, MISSION & VALUES:

MISSION (Why we exist)

Helping the Next Person take the Next Step in their relationship with Jesus

VISION (Where we are going)

Bring Heaven to Greater Charlotte One Person at a time.

FIVE MARKS OF A DISCIPLE

» Believe in Jesus

How does a disciple internally change when they believe in Jesus? By cultivating a personal relationship with Christ through faith, worship, and trust and professing Jesus as Savior and Lord.

Savior: We come to Jesus in faith, recognizing Him as the One who has saved us from sin and death through His sacrifice.

Lord: We continually submit to Jesus as Lord, aligning our lives under His authority and sovereign will.

How does a disciple live out that they believe in Jesus? By publicly confessing Jesus as

glory and commit to generosity, volunteering regularly in a Forest Hill ministry and serving often in our community.

» Choose Community

How does a disciple internally change when they choose community?

By developing Christ-centered relationships and experiencing spiritual growth through fellowship.

How does a disciple live when they choose community?

By actively participating in and contributing to the church community through participating in worship service, being a part of

a group and caring for others.

» Serve the Cause

How does a disciple internally change when they serve the cause?

By having their hearts transformed by Christ and becoming more loving and humble as they participate in serving.

How does a disciple live when they serve the cause?

By actively serving in the church and broader community, following the example of Christ's service through ministry teams, outreach programs, and caring for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of others.

» Invest in the Kingdom

How does a disciple internally change when they invest in the Kingdom?

By living with an eternal perspective and prioritizing God's kingdom over earthly desires.

How does a disciple live when they invest in the kingdom?

By generously giving their time, talents, and finances for the advancement of God's kingdom through tithing and giving offerings regularly, supporting missionaries and ministries, volunteering time and skills for kingdom work.

» Live as an Ambassador

How does a disciple internally change when they live as an ambassador?

By embodying Christ-like character and values in everyday life through being rooted in the Gospel.

How does a disciple live when they live as an ambassador?

By boldly sharing the Gospel with others and representing Christ in all areas of life.

HOW DO LIFE GROUPS WORK?

Healthy groups can be a great source of learning and growth, while unhealthy groups can lead to frustration and even stagnation. Setting healthy group expectations upfront creates a safe space where members can grow both relationally and spiritually. Here are a few areas to consider as you work together towards creating a healthy group:

Show up (be present)

- **Attendance:** Make group a priority. You will get out of group what you put in, and if you're not there, everyone is affected.

Join in (be prepared)

- **Communication:** Notify the leader if you need to miss a group meeting. Your input is valuable—prepare for and participate in the group discussion and keep in touch outside of group.
- **Confidentiality:** It's important to create a safe place, establishing trust, so that everyone can connect and grow. What's said in group, stays in group—no gossiping.
- **Show kindness:** Encourage one another, care and celebrate one another, support each other in difficult times, and be respectful.



- **Listen well:** This is the best posture to care and learn. Seek to understand, rather than judging or trying to fix.
- **God's Lens:** Use Scripture as the basis of Authority and truth. Everyone is created in God's image; we can learn to see and love others as God does.

Be yourself (be real)

- **Authenticity:** Be transparent, honest, and real.

Believe: You have a unique perspective and set of experiences to contribute. Use your gifts within the group.
- **Freedom:** You and your group members are likely in different places when it comes to your life circumstances, spiritual journeys, and relational experiences. Experience the freedom to be where you are in those areas.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What excites you most about being a part of a Life Group?
2. Which one of the 3 "E" statements about groups is most appealing to you in this season of your life? Which of the 3 areas would you like to grow in over the next 2 years?
3. Why did God create community?
4. How is the smaller environment of your Life Group more conducive to engaging in community?
5. How do Forest Hill's Mission, Vision and Five Marks of a Disciple relate to God's mission for the world?
6. What ways can your group practically live out the Mission, Vision and Five Marks of a Disciple?
7. How does understanding your expectations help as you begin this group?
8. Why do you think it is important for everyone in your group to agree to show up, join in and be yourself?
9. How will you personally take steps to show up, join in, and be yourself?

IS THIS LIFE GROUP FOR YOU?

Hopefully, you enjoyed getting to know the people in your group and learning about Life Groups. Feel free to ask your leader any questions you may have as you consider moving forward with joining this group. Take time to decide if this group will be a fit for you.

If you decide to stay in this group, that's great! We're excited for what God is going to do in you and through you in this group! If you don't think this group is a good fit, please be sure to let the group leader know and ask them to help you get in touch with their campus staff contact to learn about other options.





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CHURCH