

Small Group Class – Outline

What is a small group?

A Christian small group is a gathering of believers, typically fewer than 20 people, that meets regularly to foster deep relationships, grow in their faith, and support one another through biblical study, prayer, and open discussion. These intentional communities serve as the "cells" of the church body, providing accountability and a sense of belonging that strengthens the larger church community and helps individuals become more faithful and mature disciples of Jesus Christ.

Why do small groups?

“It is in small groups that people can get close enough to know each other, to care and share, to challenge and support, to confide and confess, to forgive and be forgiven, to laugh and weep together, to be accountable to each other, to watch over each other and to grow together. Personal growth does not happen in isolation. It is the result of interactive relationships. Small groups are God's gift to foster changes in character and spiritual growth.” - Dr. Bilezikian

Casting the Vision: To create groups that foster community, growth, and outreach.

Grace Crossing Small groups are designed to be a place where the community of Grace Crossing can form deeper connections while fostering growth and influence within the Church and surrounding communities for the Kingdom of God.

Four Reasons Why Small Groups Fail:

1. They don't have a leader who can move the group toward a common vision.
2. They ignore having a written covenant.
3. They don't really have discussion about the Bible; they just have discussion.
4. They don't pray. (List based on Lifeways small group Pastor Rick Howerton)

Small group details for leaders:

Schedule – At the very least once a month, at the most once a week.

Location – who is hosting, what does it mean to host? (making dinner, providing snacks, or just location)

Size – How big is too big for your group?

Clear expectations – Establish with Group with the vision as the guide what this small group's goal is. Along with establishing content.

Build Trust – What is said at small group stays with small group. Value each other's privacy.

Promote Healthy Communication: Don't dominate conversations, involve each other. Listen first, understand everyone has a different perspective. You might learn something from another person. Never miss an opportunity to grow.

Tips for Leading a Small Group:

Before the Meeting:

- Prepare:

Plan discussion, gather materials, and familiarize yourself with the content.

- Communicate:

Remind group members about the meeting, location, and any preparation needed, and send out materials in advance.

- Set the Stage:

Ensure the meeting space is comfortable and conducive to discussion, with minimal distractions.

- Consider Dynamics:

Be mindful of group dynamics and strive to create a warm, welcoming atmosphere. (Child care,

During the Meeting:

- Start and End on Time:

Respect everyone's time by starting and finishing promptly.

- Facilitate, Don't Dominate:

Guide the discussion, encourage participation from everyone, and avoid dominating the conversation.

- Active Listening:

Pay attention to what group members are saying, both verbally and nonverbally, and respond thoughtfully.

- Ask Open-Ended Questions:

Encourage deeper thinking and discussion by asking questions that require more than a simple "yes" or "no" answer.

- Manage Conflict:

Be prepared to address disagreements or conflicts in a respectful and constructive manner.

- Involve Everyone:

Create opportunities for all members to participate and share their thoughts.

- Be Flexible:

Be prepared to adjust the plan if a member has a specific need or if the discussion takes an unexpected turn.

- Encourage, Encourage, Encourage:

Offer positive feedback and encouragement to group members.

After the Meeting:

- Follow Up:

Connect with group members throughout the week, offering support and encouragement.

- Evaluate:

Reflect on the meeting and identify areas for improvement.

- Consider Sharing the Load:

Delegate tasks and responsibilities to other group members to foster community and shared ownership.

- Pray:

Continue to pray for the group members and their individual needs.

Sources:

[Launching and Leading a Small Group Effectively – Cru.org](#)

[A Great Small Group Leader Does These 6 Things – sandycove.org](#)

[5 Tips for Leading Your Small Group – The Gospel Coalition](#)

Resources offered by Grace Crossing:

Location for hosting small groups. Full use of facilities except Sanctuary.

Assistance with study resources.

Advertising your group.

Book Studies:

[Galatians: Gospel Matters: 7 Session Bible Study – Timothy Keller](#)

[1 Peter: Living Well on the Way Home: 6 Session Bible Study – Juan R. Sanchez Jr](#)

[Judges: The Flawed and the Flawless: 6 Session Bible Study – Timothy Keller](#)

[Together – Community that Marked the Acts 2 Church – Ben Mandrell](#)

<https://www.lifeway.com/>

[Right Now Media](#)

