

LIFE GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE

For the week of February 4, 2024

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

LEADER NOTES

GETTING READY FOR YOUR FIRST MEETING

Each week in this section you'll find the most important information for your group.

GOALS OF THE FIRST MEETING

- Meet new members, rekindle old relationships
- **Cast vision for the session with your group**
- **Clarify your group's direction / expectations / commitments using the Life Group Covenant Form**
- Briefly discuss the sermon topic (if there is time)
- Pray for the building of relationships and spiritual growth of the group

Items Needed for the First Meeting

- **Life Group Covenant Form**— Review this with your group. This was mailed to you last week in your leader packet, and can also be found online here:
- Nametags for in-person groups (print or 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 on Planning Center Groups to see all the members of your group and their contact information.

AGENDA FOR YOUR FIRST MEETING

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

(<https://www.csmedia1.com/springfieldfaithcenter.org/life-group-leader-packet.pdf>)

HOW WE MEASURE 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 go over the Life Group Covenant Form with your group.

- **Welcome & Eat** - Potluck is a great option.
- **Group Sharing** – Discussion Note: You can transition from the "Be Friendly" section to the "Looking Ahead" section.
- **Study Questions Discussion** (optional – we do encourage you to spend time on the "Who is Jesus?" question.
- **Go over the Life Group Covenant Form** – Use the last question in the Leader Guide to Study Questions below to transition into reviewing the Commitment Form.
- Close in **prayer**.
- **Mingle** afterward.

LIFE GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

For the week of February 4, 2024

BE FRIENDLY

Discussion Note: Use these questions especially if you have new people in your group or if you are a completely new group. If it hasn't come up in conversation before the meeting officially starts, have everyone in the group share how long they have been attending Springfield Faith Center, if they have ever been in a Life Group (small group) before and their favorite hobby.

Discussion Tips: Remember to set time limits to ensure everyone has an opportunity to answer the questions. Possibly use the "Tag— You're It" method to ensure everyone can share. Once one person is finished sharing, they select the next person to share.

What is your favorite food? What "junk food" is hardest for you to resist?

Low Risk. Good to have everyone answer this one.

Reflect on the "Ice Storm of 24": In what ways were you impacted by the storm? What did you learn about yourself from the storm? What did you learn about God?

Low Risk. Good to have everyone answer this one.

Leader Tip: I know that not everyone was impacted the same, and there may be some who weren't impacted other than colder weather. However, this question allows people to relate to one another, which helps build trust.

As we move into 2024, what personal goals have you set for yourself?

Low Risk. Good to have everyone answer this one.

BE OPEN

#1 Genesis 3 offers an answer to a lot of common "why" questions of our human situation. Why are things this way? Why do bad things happen to good people? Why is there so much hurt and pain in our world? (and so on). The answer—humans failed to trust in and depend on God for everything, and therefore they fell into sin. Read Genesis 3:1-7. When God asked what had happened, the woman said that the serpent deceived her.

How does the serpent deceive the woman? How did the serpent tempt her into distrusting God?

Medium Risk. Some may not be comfortable to share in a larger setting.

Leader Tip: The serpent deceives the woman by tempting her to distrust the Word of God (what God "said"). Also, the serpent tempts her into believing **lies** about what God had said—he twisted God's words—and the lies about who she is. In other words, the serpent deceives her in her understanding of her identity. According to Genesis 1:26-27, the first humans were already "like" God, for they were made in his image and likeness. Why would she need to be like God when she already was?

#2 Even though the first humans failed to trust in and depend on God, God does not fail to show his goodness and faithfulness to them. When God describes the consequences of their choices, he still gives Adam the chance to confess his sin and repent.

Read the exchange between God and Adam in Genesis 3:9-11.

What do God's questions to Adam demonstrate about God's grace and forgiveness?

Medium Risk. *Some may not be comfortable to share in a larger setting.*

Leader Tip: *God's extends grace in the question to Adam. He could have just come and dealt out the consequences, but in his mercy and grace, he gives Adam the chance to confess. He still gives Adam the freedom to do the right thing. God values the relationship so much that he would take time to find out what had happened.*

How does passage help us understand how God responds to us when we fail?

Medium Risk. *Some may not be comfortable to share in a larger setting.*

Leader Tip: *Answers will vary. The key is to focus on God's desire and longing to be in relationship with us, and his mercy and grace to not shut the door on us when we fail.*

BE VULNERABLE

What has most impacted you in our *Creation to Chaos* series so far? What has God been highlighting for you specifically?

Medium Risk. *Some may not be comfortable to share in a larger setting.*

Leader Tip: *Answers will vary. You may not have time to cover this question this week. Make sure you have enough time to spend on the "Looking Ahead" section.*

LOOKING AHEAD

What are you hoping to get out of this winter session of Life Groups?

Do you have any personal goals for the study?

Is there a new way that you would like to be able to apply the Scripture and sermon discussions?

BONUS QUESTION

Is there anything specific you need prayer for, or is there any other focus you would like to have in order to grow this first session? Use this question as an option if it flows well with your group

Possible Goal Setting Question for this Winter Session: *Everyone may not have an answer, and you may not have time for everyone to answer. If there is enough time, these questions could be good to use as 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. **IF NEEDED USE THE LEADER’S GUIDE TO THE COVENANT FOUND IN YOUR TRAINING BINDER.**

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.