

Life Group Ministry Information and Procedures



Calvary Chapel Fredericksburg

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I. Vision and Mission Statements

a. Vision

To have all members in a life group where they develop authentic, accountable, Christ-centered relationships with one another.

Life groups are the core of our church. They serve as the primary setting for members to live out the Biblical principles of Fellowship, Discipleship, and Accountability.

b. Mission

To create an environment where people can regularly meet to know others and be known, minister one to another, mature spiritually and be identified and developed as leaders to multiply groups.

Transforming lives by the Spirit and in relationship with Christ Jesus through one-to-another ministry and fellowship

c. CCF Life Groups are based on these principles...

1. **Biblical Truth** – We study and apply God’s Word together, upholding the Bible as the ultimate authority to govern our lives.
2. **Fellowship** – We live out the “one another” passages and strive for a place to love and be loved, to serve and be served, and to know and be known.
3. **Mutual Ministry** – We give loving accountability, care and encouragement to grow and foster a place where there is a willingness to ask the tough questions.

d. Priorities and Goals

1. Our priorities are commitment to Sunday Worship, participation in a life group, then service in ministry.
2. To have a culture where we become a church **of** life groups, not **with** life groups, and to have 100% participation
3. To proclaim the whole truth of God’s Word and the Gospel, unify the body, and provide the foundation for equipping the saints during Sunday Services
4. To have life groups be the place where we deliberately disciple, equip, and minister one-to-another by studying God’s Word, supporting each other, and sharing our lives.
5. To provide a means for people to know others and be known in authentic, accountable, Christ-centered relationships
6. To identify and grow life group leaders as the means to multiply groups and to provide the entire body the opportunity to participate in a life group
7. Life Groups are also the primary means to identify and mature ministry leaders.

II. Organization and Responsibilities

1. The Life Group Ministry is led by the Life Group Pastor, who is supported by Flock Leaders who oversee 3-5 Life Group Leaders each.
2. Life Group Leaders are supported by hosts and leader apprentices.
3. Pastors/Elders and Life Group Pastor, Flock Leader, Life Group Leader, Apprentice, Host and Member roles and responsibilities are described below.

a. Pastor(s)/Elder(s)

Objective - Set the conditions to sustain and grow the life group ministry

1. Foster a culture where life groups are the primary means for discipleship and one-another care
2. To commit a pastor to lead the life group ministry and elders to be flock leaders
3. Coordinate church resources (office staff, website, communication plan) to support and foster life group participation

b. Life Group Pastor

Objective - Provide an environment where life group flock and group leaders can foster authentic Christ-centered relationships so that when life happens the body is bonded together to minister to each other.

1. Coordinate and oversee the administration of the Life Group Ministry
2. Develop and implement a Life Group communication plan
3. Meet regularly with flock leaders individually to discuss personal and ministry concerns. Encourage, exhort, edify, educate and empower
4. Provide pastoral care and counseling when someone is referred by a flock leader
5. Identify, screen and nominate group leaders for service as flock leaders
6. Assist with the identification and selection of new Life Group Leaders and Hosts.
7. Oversee life group leader training and screening
8. Manage approved life group curriculum
9. Meet with the Flock Leaders as a group on a monthly basis for prayer, time in the Word and ministry updates.
10. Meet regularly with and update the Senior Pastor on the Life Group Ministry
11. Coordinate an Annual Life Group Fellowship gathering for Leaders and Hosts

c. Life Group Flock Leader

Objective - To disciple Life Group Leaders and support them to create an environment where people can minister, encourage and share life together as they grow in relationship with Christ Jesus and each other

1. Meet regularly with flock leaders to discuss personal and ministry concerns. Encourage, exhort, edify, educate and empower
2. Provide pastoral care and counseling when someone is referred by a Life Group Leader
3. Assist with the identification and selection of new Life Group Leaders and Hosts.
4. Pray for those in his or her groups who are sick
5. Intervene in crisis situations that arise in the groups under his or her care
6. Identify and equip Life Group Leaders to be future Flock Leaders
7. Assist Life Group Leaders in identifying and training Apprentices
8. Assist Life Group Leaders in multiplying groups
9. Has regular contact with Life Group Leaders: in person, by phone or via email for encouragement, updates and personal care
10. Meet with Life Group Leaders once a month for prayer, equipping, ministry accountability and personal discipleship
11. Serve as an example and source of encouragement for Life Group Leaders
12. Assist the Life Group Leaders by providing resources that would inform potential volunteers and life group leaders of types of service projects and mission trips. Provide details of how Life Group members can plug into a trip or service opportunity.
13. Provide feedback on Flock activity to the Life Group Pastor
14. Attend regular training sessions with other Flock Leaders

d. Life Group Leader

Objective - To create an environment where people can minister, encourage and share life together as they grow in relationship with Christ Jesus and each other.

1. Prepare and lead the meetings.
2. Communicate with those interested in the life group, explaining the - who, what, when, where, etc. of the group, addressing expectations, commitment, and FAQs.
3. Maintain contact with members to be aware of personal problems and needs.
4. Minister to group members at meetings, at services, and during the week as needed to pray for, encourage, provide biblical counsel, pursue missing members etc.
5. Invite others to join your group or another life group
6. Exhort members to grow in the Lord and to be obedient to His Word
7. Encourage mutual ministry between group members
8. Encourage group members to participate fully at CCF (membership, serving, giving, etc.)
9. Visit members in the hospital and encourage group to coordinate meal(s) for members in the hospital or for ones with special needs.
10. Connect socially beyond life group context (pot lucks, cook outs, other activities)
11. Partake in Communion together
12. Encourage your group to coordinate and/or participate in outreach and other ministry events in the church or community

13. Develop ability to facilitate group discussion and provide biblical care and counseling
14. Discern/identify, develop, and train an apprentice Group Leader
15. Regularly meet with Flock Leader to discuss personal and ministry concerns. Encourage, exhort, edify, educate and empower
16. Communicate special needs or issues that are beyond your experience or expertise to your Flock Leader for guidance or additional support
17. Provide feedback to the Flock Leader such as significant victories, breakthroughs or crises in the lives of members
18. Maintain signed covenants
19. Update Roll Call Church Software to identify who is a member of your Life Group

e. Life Group Apprentice

Objective - To assist the Life Group Leader in ministry to the group and develop skills and gain experience needed to lead a life group.

1. We will not publicly solicit volunteers for Life Group Leaders and Hosts. We will approach those individuals who may be qualified to lead through our apprenticeship approach
2. Participate in apprentice approach and training with the Life Group and Flock Leaders
3. The apprenticeship approach will follow these four steps:
 - I lead, you watch
 - I lead, you help
 - You lead, I help
 - You lead
4. Attend Uncommon Leadership 101

f. Life Group Host Role and Responsibility

Objective – Provide a home to meet in and play a vital role to assist, encourage, and help provide support to the Life Group Leader.

1. Provide a clean, comfortable home environment, one in which it is easy to relax, study and minister to one another.
2. Provide a warm and friendly environment. Help members feel loved, accepted, and welcomed.
3. Provide support and feedback for the Leader. Support the Leader as they lead the discussion and the group.

4. Additional suggestions:
 - Greet members as they arrive. Take special notice of newcomers or those who are a little shy or disconnected.
 - Ensure enough lighting and chairs in meeting space. If additional chairs are needed, please contact the church office to borrow folding chairs.
 - Consider whether your home is child-friendly (if group is going to have children present).
 - Help encourage your group to coordinate meal(s) for members in the hospital or special needs

g. Life Group Member(s)

Objective - To minister, encourage and share life with group members as they grow in relationship with Christ Jesus and each other.

1. Sign and abide by the Life Group Covenant
2. Regularly attend Life Group meetings

III. Qualifications

a. All Leaders and Hosts

1. Testimony and evidence of salvation
2. Committed member of Calvary Chapel of Fredericksburg
3. In agreement with CCF vision, culture, and By-Laws
4. Faithfully attends Sunday morning services
5. Able and willing to commit to the required responsibilities
6. Evidence of abiding in Christ and bearing spiritual fruit
7. Has identified his or her spiritual gift and uses it here in service for Christ
8. Completes a ministry application and screening

b. Flock Leader Specific Qualifications

1. A member of CCF for at least two years
2. Meets the qualifications of a deacon described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13
3. Completed Uncommon Leadership 101
4. Has at least one year of experience as a Life Group Leader

c. Life Group Leader Specific Qualifications

1. A member of CCF for at least six months
2. Has been a regular member of a CCF Life Group
3. Meets the qualifications of a deacon described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13
4. Completed Uncommon Leadership 101

d. Life Group Apprentice Leader

1. A member of CCF for at least six months
2. Has been a regular member of a CCF life group
3. Recommended by Life Group Leader

e. Life Group Host

1. Relates well with others
2. A member of CCF for at least six months

IV. Inviting and Signing Up

Through active engagement by leaders and life group members, we will provide multiple means to invite participation, answer questions, encourage participation, and get people signed up

a. Inviting Participation

1. **Personal invitation** - Pastors, Elders, Flock/Group Leaders, and group members will proactively invite people to their group or encourage and facilitate their joining a group
2. **General Communication** – we will employ the below means to communicate the Life Group Ministry and Life Groups to the body. We will not advertise groups as being closed.
 - **Website.** There will be a designated page where groups will be listed, with information about location, leader, etc. There will also be a link to request more information or to join a group.
 - **Weekly Bulletin.** A regular section of the bulletin that will direct people to the Life Group Info Center / kiosk, periodically highlight a specific Life Group, share a praise / testimony from a Life Group member, and encourage people to get plugged into a life group.
 - **Info Centers** (Fellowship Hall and Office-side entrance). Maintain current Life Group cards, Info booklets, forms, etc.
 - **Video Slides** promoting Life Groups will loop, along with other info slides, before and after services in the sanctuary and fellowship hall (and other future TV locations throughout the building.)
 - **Video Announcements.** There will be a standard verbal plug for life groups at the end of the video announcements each Sunday morning
 - **Pulpit exhortations from the Pastor.** In addition to sermon illustrations, times of refreshing the people about the vision of Life Group ministry will be given by the pastor.
 - **Testimonies.** Life Group members will have opportunities to share testimonies from the pulpit (or videoed) relevant to Life Groups and connecting in one-another ministry.
 - **BASICS Class.** Instructor will highlight the importance of life group community and encourage individuals to survey the Life Groups and join one.

- **Welcome Reception.** Life Group ministry vision, goals, and objectives will be shared at each Welcome Reception.
- **Banners.** Various places and various times.
- **Life Group Focus Sundays.** (Scheduled annually). Life Group leaders will display information about their Life Group in the fellowship hall on a given Sunday(s), and they will be available to talk with church members.

b. Signing Up

1. Means
 - Computer Kiosk at church
 - Online via website
 - Completing available forms
 - Contacting church office
2. Method
 - Once someone signs up or shows specific interest in a group, the Life Group Pastor will meet with them / talk to them / email them explaining the group basics, commitment, covenant, expectations, that it is O.K. if group is not the right fit to try another, and answer other FAQs.
 - The Life Group Pastor will confirm that space is available in the desired group before coordinating for the Life Group Leader to contact the individual.
 - If a Life Group Leader is contacted directly and their group does not have physical room, they will coordinate for the Life Group Pastor to contact the individual/couple to assist them in finding a new group.
 - The Life Group Leader will follow up with new attendees after two or three group meetings to see how it is going for them, assess if it is a good fit, and coordinate signing of the covenant. If the group is not a good fit, the Life Group Leader will facilitate locating another group

V. Life Group Types

1. **Connect Groups** - Not a special focus but an environment to encourage one another to mature in the faith, where members experience care, growth, and accountability in the context of authentic relationships.
2. **Emphasis Groups** - Accomplishes the same as a connect group but has a focus of marriage, parenting, addictions, etc.

VI. Training and Education

1. Training will be tailored to the position and customized to the individual and situation.
2. Uncommon Leadership 101 will be made available in group or individual settings for Apprentice Leaders. 101 is focused on equipping leaders to fulfill the mission of making disciples in Life Group settings.

3. Life Group Tools and Tips (distributed periodically)

VII. Curriculum

1. All curricula must relate to the Word of God and its application to transforming our lives – bible studies, marriages, parenting, or material related to specialized support or over-comers groups.
2. Life Group Leaders will use curriculum that has been approved by CCF Pastors. A list of approved curriculum will be available on the Life Group page of the CCF website.
3. The Life Group Flock Leader will submit the curriculum requested by the Life Group Leader to the Pastoral staff and upon approval will inform the Life Group Leader.
4. The list of approved curricula relevant to Connect and Emphasis Groups (addressing the below and other categories) is available on the CCF website or from the Life Group Pastor.
 - **Sermon based** - Pastor Mark or guest speakers will provide a work sheet with key questions to be discussed from the previous Sunday morning service. Sermon based curriculum will be made available for download online
 - **Family** - marriage, parenting, financial budgeting, and other related Family subjects.
 - **Expository Bible Studies** - books of the bible by approved commentators (DVDs or print).
 - **Topical** - Spiritual Growth, Spiritual Warfare, Apologetics, Foundational.
 - **Specialized** - support and over-comers groups with specific curriculum.
 - **College and career** - men and women gather for biblical topical studies relating to their age and stage in life, Prayer, accountability, and fellowship.
 - **Singles** - pre- marital discipleship subjects, single parenting.
5. CCF will budget for the purchase of leader materials. These items would be available for check out via the Life Group Pastor. We expect members to purchase their own participant materials.

VIII. Child Care

Because our desire is for adults to engage in each other's lives and the topics are for adults, children and youth do not attend groups with their parents. We leave it up to each family and life group to work out their own childcare.

IX. Resources

1. The following resources are available for download from the Life Group page of the CCF website:
 - Life Group Covenant
 - Approved Curriculum

2. Applicable Life Group Resources from Harvest Bible Chapel for consideration and use are listed below and located at the following website:

http://www.harvestbiblechapel.org/content.aspx?content_id=164688&site_id=10780

- Communion in Small Groups Curriculum
- Counseling By Topic
- Discipleship Wheel
- Five Moral Fences
- Get-To-Know-You Exercises
- Group's Position Spiritually (GPS)
- Ice Breaker Games for Small Groups
- Journal Your Prayers
- Leading Small Group Worship
- One Another Verses
- One Month Bible Reading Plan
- Personal Spiritual Health Assessment
- Praying for Others At Church
- Praying God's Word
- Praying the Names of God
- Scriptures By Topic
- Soul Care Four Hearts Tool
- Soul Care Fruit to Root Tool
- Soul Care Playbook Tool
- Spiritual Growth Points
- Ways To Pray In Small Group