

# Life Group

CONNECT | GROW | SERVE



## Bringing Life to Our Church 10 Reasons Why We Do Them

Life groups are smaller groups of roughly 4 – 12 people who want to grow as followers of Jesus Christ. These groups are endorsed, supported, and, with our Sunday and Wednesday Services, the key vehicle where people belong, build, and become all that Jesus has called us to be!

### **Biblical**

The early Church met, not only in the temple, but in life groups (Acts 2:46, 5:42) As well, most of Jesus' recorded ministry is spent ministering to his own 'life group,' the 12 core disciples mentioned throughout the Gospels.

### **Intimacy**

Life groups express our human need for intimacy. In a world that can feel impersonal and lonely, life groups provide an environment that encourages closeness.

### **Caring**

Life groups are a natural environment for caring to take place. Life happens for all us with its challenges, dysfunction, and hurt. The life group environment is a warm, casual atmosphere for us to feel comfortable giving and receiving the care each of us need.

### **Entrance to Our Church**

Churches are always the people, never a building. As such relationships are critical to feeling a part of a 'church.' Life groups offer a great place to know and enter our 'church' then because there is the time to listen and develop stronger, more meaningful relationships with others in our 'church.'

### **Discipleship and Maturity**

Some would say Sunday or Wednesday Services are powerful but can feel 'intimidating' with so many people. The life group environment offers, for some, a less intimidating atmosphere to grow, mature, and follow Jesus Christ

## **Evangelism**

Salvation is the most important decision of our lives. Most people need to consider important decisions, like salvation, carefully before making a choice. The life group environment offers a more personal environment where questions can be asked and answered thoughtfully before people must make decisions for Jesus Christ.

## **Shared Leadership**

For health, maturity, and growth, we need more followers of Jesus to be leaders. The life group environment allows more people to share the responsibility of leadership in caring, discipling, praying, mentoring, and developing leaders. Life groups offer opportunities for bible teaching, topical teaching, worship and music leading, intercessory prayer, hospitality, care, and all sorts of other supernatural spiritual gifts.

## **Commitment**

Life groups provide an environment for people to move from being event-based in their Faith, ie. Attending a church, to being fully committed followers of Jesus Christ. People can dialogue, dream, grow, and stand with each other in accountable relationships as we seek God's Will together in life groups.

## **Holy Spirit Active**

The Holy Spirit can be very meaningfully active in life group environments. In these smaller groups, there can be the time and supported, endorsed leadership to explore deeper places for healing, the prophetic gifts, even deliverance as the Holy Spirit becomes more active in our church.

## **Health**

As powerful as Sunday and Wednesday Services are, the smaller, more intimate life group environment can never be fully duplicated within these environments. Dialogue and the sharing of ideas can sometimes be secondary goals in Services. As a natural place for dialogue, the sharing and collaboration of ideas, dreams, and God's purposes, life groups bring better health to our church

# LIFE GROUP LEADERS

1. A Life Group is totally committed to the Pastoral Leadership and Vision of RPC
2. A Life Group loves and cares for people and is faithful to people through all seasons of life.
3. A Life Group Leader lives an exemplary life consistent with the Word and the standards of our Church.
4. A Life Group Leader is Facilitator not a Dictator
5. A Life Group Leader is primarily a Shepherd, a Teacher and a good Conversationalist
6. A Life Group Leader is respectful and supportive of all other Life Group Facilitators and Life Group in the Church.
7. A Life Group Leader is more committed to fulfilling the Missions of the Church than fulfilling their personal ambitions and fulfillment.
8. A Life Group Leader continues to hone his/her Leadership skills. He/ she has a teachable spirit.
9. A Life Group Leader maintains a joyful spirit.

# Asking Good Questions (selected)

One of the most important skills in small-group facilitation is not having all the right answers but asking the right questions. Here are a few secrets to good question-asking:

- Ask open-ended questions. Avoid the yes/no, true/ false, multiple-choice questions- “Is Jesus the sheep or the shepherd in this parable?” Similarly, avoid questions that let people off the hook with a simple Sunday-school answer- “Why did Jesus die on the cross?” You want to ask questions that require people to share some actual thoughts and feelings
- Ask follow-up questions. Many people default to staying pretty surface-level with their answers to your questions, so get the habit of not letting them off the hook. Ask more questions that follow up on their response. Here are some examples of good follow-up questions for the short/ simple answers that people often give:
  - What makes you say that?
  - How do you feel about that?
  - How do you think that would’ve affected you if you had been living in the time of Jesus?
  - How would you explain your answer to a non-Christian friend or neighbor?

# Life Group

## Simple Life Group Guidelines

It is vitally important to the health a life group that the life group leader lays a foundation by setting some guidelines for the group time. Having some guidelines set up will give the people in the group some boundaries to operate within. It also helps in creating an environment that is safe for transparency, vulnerability, sharing and growing closer in relationship with each other and with God. Setting some basic life group guidelines for how you will honour one another in our group discussions is important.

### **SAFE GROUP:**

We will strive to create an environment where everyone can be real, open, and feel safe sharing honest with their struggles and victories.

### **RESPECT YOUR PRIVACY:**

We will respect the privacy of what is shared within a life group.

### **LISTEN:**

Let's value one another during the discussions by really listening to what is being shared. Try to avoid thinking about how you are going to respond, or what you are going to say next.

**PAUSE:**

Allow a pause in conversation after someone shares. Give the person sharing the chance to finish and the group the opportunity to consider what was just shared before responding.

**SILENCE:**

It is important to allow silence in the group as it provides an opportunity for someone to share and for members in the group to process the topic or question being considered.

**NO "CROSS TALK":**

Be considerate of others as they are sharing. No side conversations.

**NO FIXING:**

We are not here to fix each other. Jesus does that part. Give encouragement; speak truth and point to Jesus. Don't try to solve or fix each other.

**FREQUENCY:**

Meet regularly, but not necessarily weekly. Find a regular schedule that does not become burdensome.





