

Group Leader

GUIDE

Thanks for your willingness to lead a Community Group. Groups are an integral part of what we do as a church. We believe that sustained life change occurs as we are growing in a relationship with Christ, and that this happens best when we are prioritizing intentional relationships with others who are seeking this same goal. Groups provide people with the opportunity to connect with others, grow in their relationship with Christ, and experience community. Our Group leaders create environments for people to develop and grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

As you prepare to facilitate your group, here are a few thoughts to keep in mind:

1. Don't try to do it alone.

Pray right now for God to help you build a healthy group (it's best to already know 2-3 people you can invite to be part of the group). Ask someone to help you facilitate the group. Involve group members in creating a great environment for your group.

2. Be friendly and be yourself.

God wants to use your unique gifts and personality. Be sure to greet people at the door with a smile...this can set the mood for the gathering.

3. Prepare for your weekly community Group session ahead of time.

Review the discussion questions and write down your responses to each question.

4. Pray for your group members by name.

Before your group arrives, take a few moments to pray for each person by name. Ask God to use your time together each week to touch the heart of each person in your group. Ask God to give you wisdom and understanding to lead the group well.

5. When you ask a question, be patient.

Someone will eventually respond. Sometimes people need a moment or two of silence to think about the question. If silence doesn't bother you, it won't bother anyone else. After someone responds, affirm the response with a simple "thanks" or "great answer" then ask if someone else would like to share.

6. Provide transitions between questions.

Ask if anyone would like to read Bible passages or the next question (this allows everyone to participate).

7. If you have a large group, breaking into smaller groups occasionally can be helpful.

With a greater opportunity to talk in a smaller circle, people will connect more with the study and each other. If your group has more than 15 people, a smaller circle also encourages a quiet person to participate and tends to minimize the effects of a more vocal or dominant person. You might consider making the smaller circles gender based at times.

8. Smaller circles are also helpful during closing prayer time.

People may be more comfortable sharing and/or praying with a few others. This also fosters leadership development in the group. As you ask people in your group to facilitate discussion or to lead a prayer circle, it gives them a small leadership step that can build confidence.

9. Rotate facilitators when needed.

By passing on knowledge, skills, and opportunities you are preparing others for future leadership while sharpening your own.

10. Cultivate relationships in the group.

Encourage connections outside of group meetings to help build community.

If you're a new group leader, we would love for your group to continue meeting after this study. Contact groups@thehills.org if you're interested in doing this.

