

# COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Fall 2024 - Welcome One Another - "Serve Together"

Monday, Sept. 16 - Sunday, Sept. 22 (Week 2)

**EMPHASIS FOR THE MONTH:** The month of September is all about building relationships and building trust within your group. You really want to be sure to give some time to just getting to know one another if people don't already know each other or know each other very well.

**ICE BREAKER:** What is one of your favorite gifts you have ever received, and why was it meaningful to you?

## **CAB ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

1. We are in need of ONE MORE volunteer to help with childcare for our upcoming semester of MomCo! MomCo meets on select Monday mornings from 9:15-11 AM right here at the church. If you or someone you know may be interested in serving in this way, please contact our MomCo Coordinator, Jackie Levesque.
2. We will be holding our next Child Dedication Class next Saturday, September 21 at 10 AM. Please fill out the form in the Monday newsletter to sign up to attend. Questions? Contact our BergenKIDS Director, Barbara Krieger.

**EXPECTATIONS: If you haven't done so already,** take this time to go over your group's expectations:

### **1. Commitment to Attendance**

- Encourage members to prioritize attending meetings regularly.
- Discuss the importance of consistency for building relationships and deepening discipleship.

### **2. Confidentiality**

- Emphasize the need for trust by keeping personal sharing within the group.
- Create a safe environment where people feel comfortable being vulnerable.

### **3. Respect for Time**

- Honor the group's meeting start and end times.
- Encourage everyone to be prompt and mindful of each other's schedules.

### **4. Participation**

- Encourage all members to engage in discussions and prayer times.
- Create space for everyone to share without feeling pressured.

### **5. Support and Encouragement**

- Set the tone of being a group that prays for, encourages, and supports one another.
- Make sure people know they're here to build each other up in Christ.

### **6. Follow-up and Communication**

- Agree on the best ways to stay in touch between meetings (e.g., group texts, emails).
- Make sure group members are comfortable reaching out if they need prayer or support during the week.



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## 7. Respect for Diversity

- Acknowledge that members may have different perspectives and backgrounds.
- Encourage respectful dialogue and unity in Christ, even when there are differences.

## 8. Serving One Another

- Discuss ways the group can serve the church and community together.
- Create a culture where members look for opportunities to help each other in practical ways.

**IMPORTANT!** - **IF THIS IS YOUR FIRST GROUP MEETING:** *As you prepare for your first group meeting this week, I just want to remind you: it's totally okay if you don't get through all (or even get to any) of the questions for this week. In fact, it's really important to spend time getting to know one another during these early meetings. Building relationships and establishing mutual trust is the foundation for what we'll do together as a group in the future. If that means spending the entire meeting sharing stories and learning about each other, that's exactly what needs to happen. Don't feel pressured to rush into the structure—we have plenty of time for that! Right now, it's all about connection. So, enjoy this time, and let God guide your conversations. If you need to just skip the questions and go right into prayer time.*

**PRAYER FOR DISCUSSION:** Leader or Co-Leader prays for the discussion time. Pray that the The Holy Spirit would assist in the conversing, processing, and listening of the discussion.

**SERMON DISCUSSION TIME:** Have someone read the passage: 1 Peter 4:1-10 and then read this sermon summary to jog everyone's memory:

*In this sermon from 1 Peter, the focus was on the theme of "Welcome One Another," stemming from Romans 15:7. Pastor McKinney emphasized the importance of and how to make the church feel like home. He outlined three key habits that contribute to this sense of belonging: fellowship together, serve together, and worship together. This week, the emphasis focused on serving together, coinciding with "Step Up Sunday," encouraging people who consider Church at Bergen their church-home to actively engage in the life of the church. Pastor McKinney explored the concept of stewardship, particularly in the context of serving one another with the gifts we have received from God. He pointed to 1 Peter 4:10, urging that each gift should be used responsibly for the benefit of others, underscoring that we do not own these gifts but are entrusted to use them wisely. This stewardship is rooted in the trust and responsibility placed upon us by God.*

**QUESTION #1:** Discuss a time when you felt entrusted with a significant responsibility. How did you handle it, and what did you learn from the experience?

**QUESTION #2:** 1 Peter 4:10 says, "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." What gifts do you believe God has given you?



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**QUESTION #3:** The sermon emphasized that we are stewards, not owners, of the gifts God has given us. How does this perspective change the way you view what God has given and entrusted to you, your gifts, talents, and resources?

**QUESTION #4:** What are some challenges you face in using your gifts to serve others? How can the group support you in overcoming these challenges?

**QUESTION #5:** How has serving others helped you grow in your faith and relationship with God?

**QUESTION #6:** How has this sermon and today's discussion changed your understanding of serving together?

**PRAY TOGETHER:** Spend time taking *and recording* prayer requests and then pray together as a group (*I strongly encourage you to send out the prayer requests weekly to your group to keep everyone informed and in the loop on how to pray for one another throughout the week. This also makes it easier to check-in with people who have shared requests to see how the Lord has been working in their lives*).