

# COMMUNITY GROUP

## GUIDE





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# WHAT IS A CHRIST CENTERED COMMUNITY GROUP?

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”

— Acts 2:42-47, ESV —

## WHAT IS A COMMUNITY GROUP?

Community Groups are a gathering of Christ-followers where Christian growth is fostered as members use their spiritual gifts through service and embrace Christ-centered teaching in pursuit of loving Christ. Members are challenged to be on mission, motivated by a passion for the glorification of God, locally and globally. The goal is to invite unbelievers to join as together members follow and grow together in Christ. Community groups are an encouraging environment to care for one another as together members seek Christ.

## **NWBC Community Groups:**

- × Community of Christ-Followers
- × Christ-Centered Teaching
- × Challenged to be on Mission
- × Care for People

## **Growing together in our love for Christ Through NW's core values:**

- × Worship
- × Prayer
- × Christ-Centered Community
- × The Word of God
- × Love in Action

# WHO ARE LEADING THESE GROUPS?

## Community Group Leaders Value:

### WORSHIP

Worshipping God daily as a living sacrifice

**Romans 11:33-12:2 & Psalm 98:1-4**

- × CG leaders know God and who He is, deeply
- × CG leaders sacrifice their life, as worship, in response to His majesty. Their lives are not their own, and their actions are evidence of this.
- × They acknowledge Jesus Himself teaches how all believers should live their lives (Luke 9:57-62)
- × CG leaders are grateful and full of praise because they see and acknowledge God working

### Example of a heart focused on the Worship of Christ:

Counting all things loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ.

(Philippians 3:7-11)

## PRAYER

Trusting Humbly in God

**Psalm 37:1-8**

- × CG leaders are continually humble and acknowledge God as sovereign. They seek to trust in God in every area of life.

**Example of the overflow of a heart in an attitude of dependence on God:**

Continually seeking the face of God as a matter of habit concerning all things.

(1 Thessalonians 5:17)

## CHRIST-CENTERED COMMUNITY

Knowing God and seeking him, wholeheartedly as part of the community of Christ.

**Romans 8:11-18; Hebrews 10:24-25**

- × Christians give their whole life to God in response to Jesus' sacrifice. As a result, their flesh has been put to death and God's Spirit dwells in them as their governing authority.
- × Christians are no longer slaves to the world and are free to follow Christ's teaching for his glory. They are witnesses to the world concerning God's holiness, wrath, and freedom from His wrath through Jesus' propitiation on the cross and victory over death through the resurrection.
- × They have become something completely new in place of what they were before knowing Christ. These are children of God. They have been made alive by the Holy Spirit and placed into the body of Christ. They are Christians who know God, members of the congregation, and currently part of a community group.

**Example of a heart intentionally prioritizing Christ and desires to be with his people.**

Growing as a faithful follower of Christ as others are building up your faith.

(2 Timothy 2:1-10)

## THE WORD OF GOD

Desiring to know God deeply through His Word

### John 8:31-32 & Psalm 25

- × CG leaders are seeking to know God through the truth. In His Word He equips them.
- × They deeply desire God and study Scripture for the purpose of knowing Him. Their focus is on loving and glorifying the Lord rather than knowledge to prop up external religious works.
- × CG leaders study Scripture and it brings joy and a holy response. Out of this relationship with the Lord in the Word, flows Christ-centered teaching.

### Example of the overflow of a heart seeking to worship Christ through the Word of God:

Throwing off what hinders in order to run the race in pursuit of Christ.  
(Hebrews 12:1-2)

## LOVE IN ACTION

Walking in the Faith of the Gospel Daily

### Galatians 2:20

- × The CG leaders daily submit to the grace of God through Christ to find the power of the Spirit to walk in light and truth. This occurs in community with other brothers and sisters. This is the same grace shared with others.

### Example of the overflow of a heart focused on loving Christ.

The believer joyfully and boldly lives on mission as they share the gospel with as many lost as they are able.

(Acts 5:40-42)

## Community Group Leaders Champion & Equip Potential Leaders

- × The goal of the community group is to bring glory to Christ through loving him and making disciples.

“You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus,<sup>2</sup> and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.”

2 Timothy 2:1-2, ESV

“And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him. And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach and have authority to cast out demons.”

Mark 3:13-15, ESV

### MODEL

Matt 9:35-10:9 & 1 Cor 11:1

### ASSIST

Mark 6:35-41 & 1 Thessalonians 3:6

### WATCH

John 4:1-2 & 2 Tim 2:2

### LAUNCH

Acts 1:7-11 & Acts 20:18-38

# WHO IS A CHRIST-CENTERED COMMUNITY GROUP MEMBER?

## A Member of a Community Group is a Christian

- × A Christian is a faithful disciple of Christ - 2 Timothy 2:1-7
  - A faithful person exhibits the characteristics of a soldier, athlete, and farmer.
  - They are consistently invested and present with what their community is doing.
- × A disciple of Christ:
  - A follower or disciple of Christ is someone, out of the overflow of their relationship as a child of God and having a passion for his glory, then proclaims his gospel, lives in Christ-centered community, and is on-mission seeking to share Christ with others.
  - Discipleship = Following the person of Jesus and inviting others to follow him with you (proclaiming the glory of Christ, living in Christ-centered community, and living on mission).

“And you were dead in the trespasses and sins<sup>2</sup> in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—<sup>3</sup> among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body<sup>1</sup> and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.<sup>2</sup> <sup>4</sup> But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—<sup>6</sup> and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not a result of works, so that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

## Expectations of group member

### Acts 2:42-47

- Practice Christ-centered community
- Grow spiritually by using their gifts and service
- Embrace Christ-centered teaching within the group. This occurs often through sermon discussion guides as well as other Bible studies
- Care for people through Gospel centered relationships. They break bread together with fellow members and whole gender specific group times for encouragement and accountability.
- Challenge to be on mission through efforts locally and globally
- As they make disciples together, they seek to multiply their community group.

# CHARACTERISTICS OF AUTHENTIC CHRIST-CENTERED COMMUNITY

## WORSHIP

**Hebrews 12:28-29**

- × The gatherings are marked by a reverence for the greatness of God. The group sets times aside to seek the face of God together and honor him in worship.

## PRAYER

**James 5:16; Psalm 42:1-2**

- × These The gatherings allow the group time to acknowledge their dependence and faith in the Lord as well as have times of petition, confession, and seeking God.

## CHRIST-CENTERED COMMUNITY

- × These gatherings exhibit unity that not only carries them on mission, but testifies to the unity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit  
John 17:20-23
- × Spiritual gifts, championed by the community group, are used in the context of a life lived in sacrificial worship  
Romans 11:33 - 12:8
- × These groups gather together often in order to have fellowship with one another and stir each other's heart for God and good works.

## THE WORD OF GOD

### Psalm 1:1-2

- × These groups not only contain people whose delight is in God's word, but the gatherings themselves help cultivate and grow others' desire for God's word.
- × The group keeps each other accountable to being the word day and night. Their word centeredness is what fuels Christ centered teaching.

## LOVE IN ACTION

**Matt 28:18-19, Romans 10:5-17, Acts 1:8, 2 Timothy 2:1-2, Genesis 12:1-3, Psalm 22:19-31, Psalm 40, Jeremiah 20:7-9**

- × Engage each member's field of influence with the gospel while creating a sending culture out of the community group. Missional living.
- × Motivated by his love and for his glory to share Christ with others is the heart of the Christian. Community Groups build one another up as they are on mission together locally and globally.

through  
Gospel  
centered  
relationships  
breaking bread | accountability  
gender-specific group time

# CARE FOR PEOPLE

growth  
is fostered  
through  
gifts  
and roles

# COMMUNITY OF CHRIST FOLLOWERS

ACTS  
2:42-47

missional  
efforts  
and  
multiplying  
groups

# CHALLENGED TO BE ON MISSION

through  
sermon  
based  
discussion  
Gospel proclamation followed  
by Gospel application

# CHRIST CENTERED TEACHING

# COMMUNITY GROUP HELPS

## Public Proclamation & Group Application

- 1 | Community Group Leaders seek to pursue the Word of God
- 2 | Community Group Members study the Word of God
- 3 | Gospel proclamation followed by gospel application.

Many CG's use Sermon-Discussion Guides:



The book of Acts records principles that demonstrate there was a direct link between the public proclamation of the gospel and the personal application in smaller groups after the message. In the book of Acts, proclamation happened in two ways: proclamation was demonstrated through the preaching of the gospel and power healings. Acts records eight examples where proclamation took place in a public place or large crowds and then was explained further or applied after the message in a smaller group.



PERSON	PUBLIC PROCLAMATION	PERSONAL APPLICATION
Jesus	Luke 8:4–8 <i>Parable of the Sower</i>	Luke 8:9-15 <i>Parable Explained</i>
Jesus	Matthew 6:33 <i>Kingdom Assignment</i>	Acts 1:3-4, 8 <i>Assignment Explained</i>
Peter	Acts 2:14–36 <i>Pentecost Sermon</i> <i>Scripture after Worship</i>	Acts 2:37–47 <i>Response and Application</i> <i>of Sermon</i>
Philip	Acts 8:26–28 <i>Ethiopian Reading</i> <i>Scripture after Worship</i>	Acts 8:29–40 <i>Philip Explains Text,</i> <i>Ethiopian Saved and</i> <i>Baptized</i>
Paul/Silas	Acts 17:10 <i>Preaching in Berea</i>	Acts 17:11–15 <i>Examination of Preaching</i>

\*Source: Kenneth Priest

## **5 Steps to Read & Teach a passage of the Bible**

**1. Understand the Bible as the very Word of God.**

2 Timothy 3:16-17

**2. Read the Bible in a Christ-centered way.**

Luke 24:44-47

**3. Read the Bible within the context of Scripture.**

2 Timothy 2:15

**4. Interpret the Bible by the context of Scripture.**

Matthew 22:23-33

**5. Apply the Bible to bring about life change.**

Philippians 4:9

## Examples of a Community Group Gathering based on Northwest's Core Values:

<b>Worship</b> Romans 12:1-2	<b>Prayer &amp; Care</b> Acts 4:31	<b>Fellowship</b> Hebrews 10:24-25	<b>Word of God</b> 2 Timothy 3:15-16	<b>Love in Action</b> 1 John 3:16-17
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### Community Group Session

- 20 min** initial gathering & greeting
- 10 min** worship & thanksgiving
- 10 min** prayer & care
- 20 min** time together in the Word of God
- 10 min** love in action/mission focus

## Examples of a Community Group gathering based on the Rhythms of CG

Christ-Centered Community includes Bible Study, Fellowship, Discipleship, & intentionally Missionally-Focused time.

**BIBLE STUDY:** Gospel proclamation followed by gospel application. Sermon-based and others.

- × We prioritize the reading and studying of God's Word during CG time together.
- × We expect the Holy Spirit to work through the Word of God in our lives.
- × We highlight the Scripture, examine it, apply it, and respond to God in prayer together.

**FELLOWSHIP TIME:** Christlike care for people. Breaking bread together over a meal. Music/fun.

- × Group mealtimes allow for a deeper level of intimacy among members.
- × These times of fellowship are time for us to intentionally invest in people and learn.

**DISCIPLESHIP TIME:** Growing in Christ together. Gender specific group time. Accountability.

- × These discipleship times are intentionally for the purpose of revealing blind spots.
- × This is a time for us to renew our minds and speak candidly about our lives together.
- × This is a time for vulnerability, confession, and accountability.
- × Questions to ask during a Discipleship Group:
  - What am I experiencing?
  - Why am I experiencing this?
  - How should I respond?

- × The group should be quick to listen and slow to speak. As the group responds, we apply the gospel to the confession.

**Missional Focus:** Daily mindset of individual members. Group efforts together, local/global.

- × The entire group practices evangelism together in a non-threatening place.

## POSSIBLE EXAMPLE

Possible Example if the small group gathered as a group, once a week, every week:

Bible Study | 3x per month

Fellowship Times | 2x per month

Discipleship Time | 1x a month

Missional Focus/Missional Hangout | 1x a quarter

**\*Every group is different.**

This is an example of how a group might plan each month.

	1 <sup>st</sup> Week	2 <sup>nd</sup> Week	3 <sup>rd</sup> Week	4 <sup>th</sup> Week	5 <sup>th</sup> Week (once a quarter)
<b>Bible Study</b>	X		X	X	
<b>Fellowship Time</b>		X		X	
<b>Discipleship Group Time</b>		X			
<b>Missional Focus</b>					X



**Northwest**  
baptist church