

LIFEGROUPS

LEADERSHIP MANUAL FOR LIFEGROUPS AT
HILTON HEAD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SUMMER 2021



MODELING CHRIST

One of the central marks of biblical leadership is to lead and walk as Jesus did. To be a leader within the Body of Christ is to be one who exemplifies the servant's heart of our Lord. LifeGroup leaders model Christ by:

1. Giving preference to one another in honor (Ro 12:10)
2. Regarding one another as more important than yourselves (Php 2:3)
3. Serving one another (Ga 5:13)
4. Ridding oneself of pride; being of the same mind (Ro 12:16)
5. Being subject to one another (Ep 5:21)
6. Clothing yourselves in humility toward one another (1 Pe 5:5)

LifeGroup Leaders are:

1. Members of HHPC : in good standing and in alignment with the core theological foundations of HHPC
2. Spiritually vibrant: passionate about their relationship with God
3. Of good reputation: those who honor God, are wise, and maintain a biblical lifestyle
4. A compassionate servant: willing to care for the physical and spiritual needs of others
5. Highly relational: Good interpersonal skills with sensitivity in relational dynamics

LIFEGROUP CYCLE



1

LEADERSHIP RECRUITMENT

Potential leaders for new groups are identified (June 2021)

2

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Current and potential leaders participate in training workshops, seminars, and round table discussions (July 2021)

3

LIFEGROUP SUNDAY

For two weeks each cycle, LifeGroups are promoted on Sunday mornings to solicit new sign ups and gather data of people interested in a LifeGroup (August 2021)

4

GROUPS LAUNCH

Groups are formed and then launched. (September 2021)

5

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Potential leaders for new groups are identified from within LifeGroups (October-December 2021)

6

LIFEGROUP SUNDAY

For two weeks each cycle, LifeGroups are promoted on Sunday mornings to solicit new sign ups and gather data (January 2022)

Should groups be prepared to launch and begin during the summer or mid-cycle, these time frames will/are to be adjusted. Still, the process of developing leaders should continue regularly throughout the year as we seek to train and equip the saints of God for the work of ministry. Inquirers' Weekends are strategic times to begin new groups, integrate new members, and train new leaders.

LIFEGROUP LEADER COVENANT

GROUP PURPOSE: To experience deep community in a small group environment as we care for and serve the needs of others. As we share life together, I will covenant with one another in the following ways:

- 1. PRESENCE:** To give priority to the group meeting. As the leader, I will delegate responsibilities as needed. I also seek to be present to God's transforming work within my life and within the lives of others as we gather together in group environments.
- 2. SAFETY:** To create a safe place where people can be heard. I will refrain from quick answers, fixing, or judgments.
- 3. CONFIDENTIALITY:** To keep *anything that is shared strictly confidential. What's said in the group stays in the group. (*With exception of self harm, abuse, etc)
- 4. ACCOUNTABILITY:** To give permission to group members to hold myself and one another accountable to spiritual growth and faithfulness to the Word of God.
- 5. SCRIPTURE:** To uphold the authority of God's Word. While everyone's thoughts and opinions are valuable and encouraged, I will ultimately rely on the truth of Scripture as our final authority.
- 6. GROWTH & MULTIPLICATION:** To pursue multiplication within groups. Healthy communities grow as they extend invitations to others. At a designated time and date, we will seek to multiply the group's experience by releasing new leaders and starting new groups.

I covenant together with the other LifeGroup Leaders to honor this agreement.

Signed _____ Date _____

CORE PRACTICES

1

Center our lives around God's Word

2

Experience life in deep community

3

Care for one another

4

Live missionally by serving together

PATHWAYS

FOR A LIFEGROUP EXPERIENCE



PATHWAYS

The core pathways that shape and define a LifeGroup's experience are as follows:

- **SHARE YOUR HEART**
- **SHARE IN GOD'S WORD**
- **SHARE IN PRAYER**
- **SHARE IN MISSION**

SHARE YOUR HEART



How often have you been in your group when someone deeply shares, but you're just not sure where to go with it? Perhaps you sense there's more "underneath" their statement or question. So...

- Do you just stop and pray?
- Do you just move on?
- Do you embrace the awkward silence?

Proverbs 20:5 tells us that "The purpose in a man's heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out. "

So how do we draw out and dive into the deep recesses of one's soul?

Throughout the year we'll offer training on pursuing the heart. These workshops will model skills and questions that, with the Spirit's help, can reveal the underlying issue or concern. This is the "drawing out" process that helps lead to understanding. Jesus modeled this well - that loving others is moving toward them in their pain, struggle, and strife.

SHARE GOD'S WORD



We are regularly and constantly shaped by the influences and voices of our culture every day. We desire to be renewed in our hearts and minds by the influence of the Holy Spirit and the voice of Christ. We desire to gather together to learn and be renewed in our hearts and minds through intentional group meetings on Sundays and throughout the week.

Centered on God's Word

LifeGroups are environments where we gather in friendship and community as we center our lives on God's Word. However, LifeGroups are not intended to become Bible studies or deep dives into theological debates and arguments. Instead, they are a place where we can grow in applying the Truth of God's Word to our everyday living by using these principles:

OBSERVATION

Q: What is contained within the Biblical text? What does it actually say?

This involves gaining facts and setting the context for correct interpretation and application of the text.

INTERPRETATION

Q: What does it mean? This involves understanding the true message the author intended for readers and its ongoing truth for us today.

APPLICATION

Q: How can the truths of the Biblical text be applied to everyday living? This involves embracing the truth into our head, heart, and hands so our lives are transformed and renewed.

SHARE IN PRAYER



Prayer is the center-point of life with God. It should be woven into the fabric of our moment-by-moment living. Prayer is our opportunity to interact with the Creator God and participate in his work of bringing redemption to earth.

Below are some suggestions for engaging a LifeGroup experience in the formative practice of prayer.

NOTE: No attempt should be made to include all of these in one setting.

KEEP REQUESTS BRIEF AND FOCUSED

Prayer requests should be personally meaningful and relevant to the person sharing.

SENTENCE PRAYERS

Keep your prayers simple and to a few sentences in length. The group can pray as long as you'd like and members can pray more than once as long as it remains focused and brief.

WRITE IT DOWN

Have someone in your LifeGroup take notes and email all members so that you can be praying throughout the week. Also, exchange requests on a note card and pray for that person's request during the week.

PRAISES

Thank God for what He has done and is doing.

PRAY THE SCRIPTURES

Select a Psalm or other passage of Scripture and pray it aloud.

PRAY THROUGH A HYMN

Select a great hymn of the faith and pray through the lyrics.

PRAY BEYOND YOUR OWN NEEDS

Remember to include both "daily bread" and "Thy kingdom come" prayers.

SHARE IN MISSION



**“The church is the one institution
that exists for those outside it.”**

William Temple 1881-1944

We strive to embody our faith, locally and around the world, as we offer the hope of Christ to our neighbors in word and in deed. The Bible teaches us that by the intentional stewardship of our time, talent, and treasure, Christians bring nothing less than a foretaste of the Kingdom of God into reality within their given community.

We don't simply want to do service projects or community outreach. We want to live missionally and be mobilized to care for the needs of our neighbors in the places we work, live, and play.

It is our expectation that during each cycle of a LifeGroup, members of a group will partner with local SERVE initiatives to reach into and serve the needs of our community.

Contact Shannon Bedenbaugh for more information about local SERVE opportunities.
E: sbedenbaugh@icloud.com

GROUP FACILITATION

FACILITATION VS TEACHING

It is the expectation that each LifeGroup Leader will appoint someone to facilitate conversation and discussion within the group gathering. This can be the leader him/herself or someone else within the LifeGroup.

It is imperative that the facilitator understand that they are not dispensing information, they're facilitating transformation. A lecturer or a Sunday school teacher dispenses information—they speak, you listen. But in a group, the facilitator is simply guiding and shepherding the people in the group so that they experience life change.

LISTENING VS FIXING

Within our LifeGroup environments, we prioritize listening rather than fixing. To create a safe place where people can be heard, quick answers, fixing, or judgments should not be part of the group time. Listening is an act of love, and to love one another well, we must listen well. Honor transparency and vulnerability as people share with honesty and authenticity.

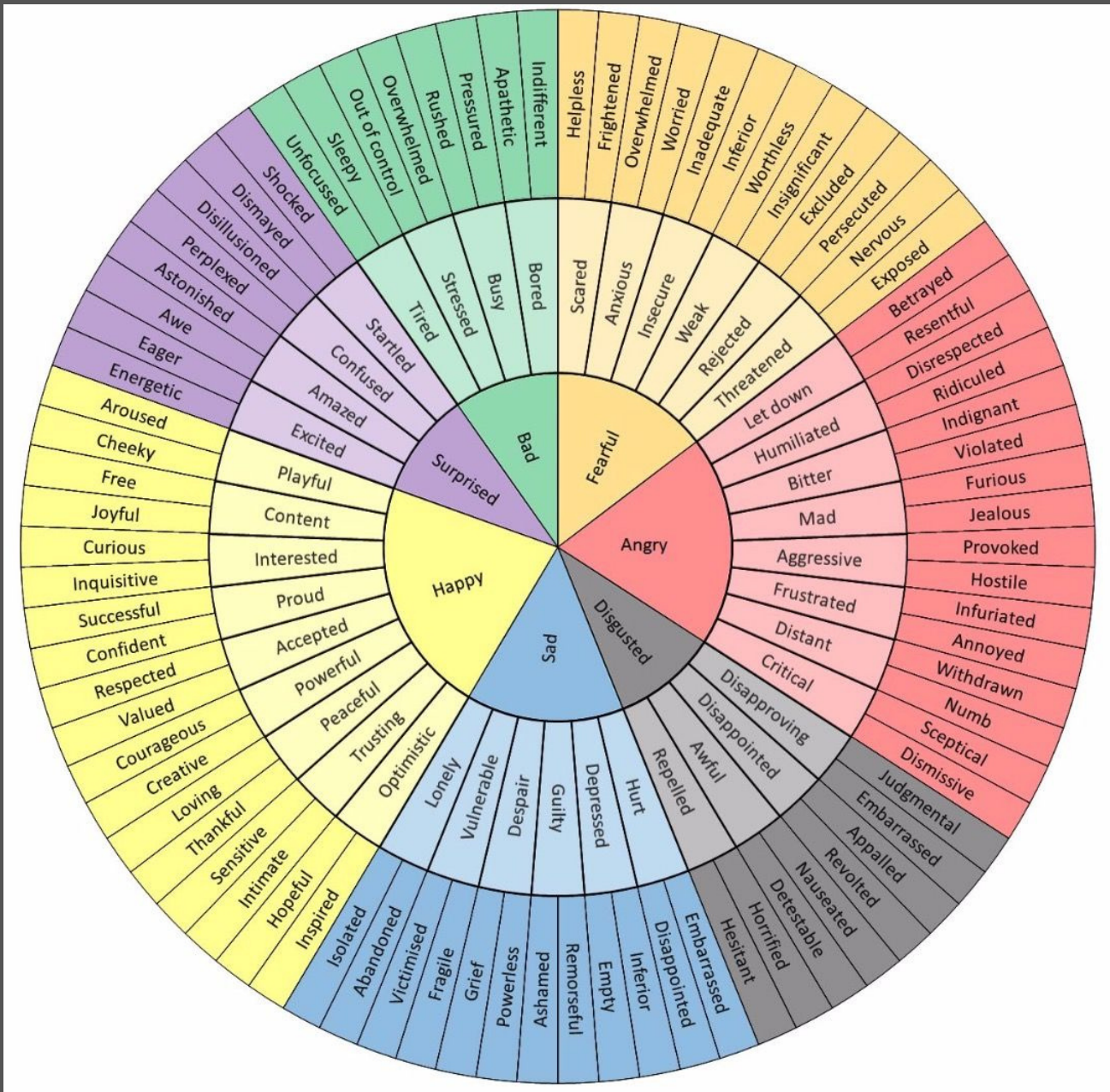
TIME MANAGEMENT

In every group, the tension of navigating time management is always present. Be it that one person who seems to dominate conversation, people drifting off task, or seeking to incorporate each of the pathways into one group meeting, time management is a necessary skill of a facilitator. Our LifeGroup coaches are available to assist as needed in working through difficult group dynamics.

In summary, facilitators are those who:

- Steer, guide, and shepherd conversation that engages the heart
- Listen more than they speak
- Avoid fixing, but rather "cover" others with the truth of God's word and prayer
- Manage time well within the group meeting

SHARE YOUR HEART



Christopher Cobb, (C) 2000.

This is a helpful resource for moving deeper into our stories as we share our hearts and what we are experiencing. Moving from general emotions in the center of the wheel to very specific emotions on the exterior of the wheel, we are afforded a number of descriptive words to help express our emotions and state of soul.

Facilitating a group and meaningful conversation includes learning to ask good questions. Below are some suggested questions to help move someone and a conversation deeper into the chambers of the heart. Additionally, the chart takes conversation further into places of repentance, belief, and obedience.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

(I think _____ about this situation _____ in my life)

WHAT DO YOU FEEL?

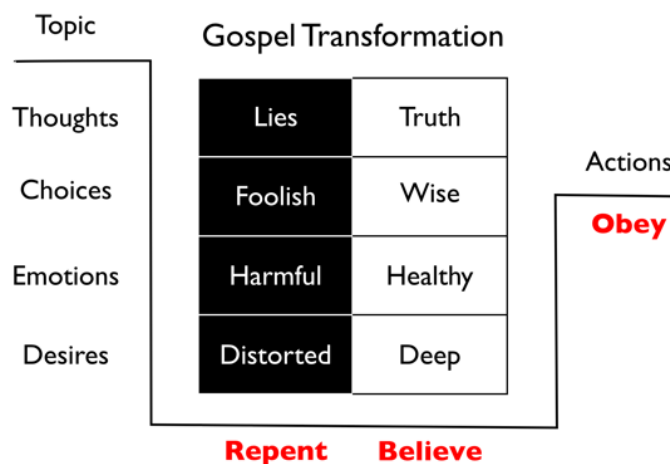
(I am angry, frustrated, excited, confused, hopeful, weary, feel betrayed, etc)

WHAT DO YOU DESIRE?

(I desire to be at peace with this person, I desire to be free of my anxiety, I desire to be obedient to God's Word in this area of my life)

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

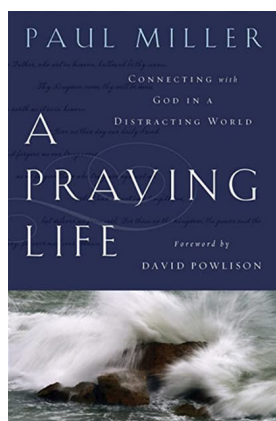
(What would it look like for me to be courageous in obedience? What is the cost if I do nothing?)



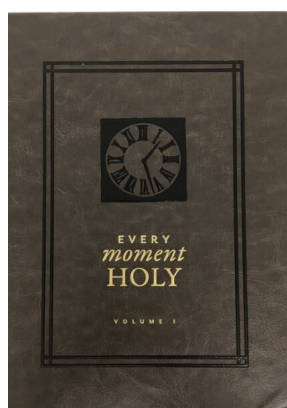
Below are several resources to assist you in your journey as you grow in the practice of prayer:



5 Things to Pray will enlarge your vision and equip you to pray passionately and powerfully for the salvation and renewal of your city and community. Each chapter takes a passage of Scripture and suggests 5 things to pray for an area of city life. When we pray in line with God's priorities as found in His Word, our prayers are powerful and effective (James 5 v 16).



In **A Praying Life**, Miller shows the difference that constant communication with Christ makes in the everyday experiences of life, especially the life of the family. Reading this book will help you make prayer a more important part of your own life story by integrating prayer into the daily routines of life.



Every Moment Holy brings new liturgies for the ordinary events of daily life, such as "A Liturgy for Feasting with Friends", "A Liturgy for Laundering" or "A Liturgy for the First Hearthfire of the Season." These prayers are ways of reminding us that our lives are saturated with sacred purpose, even when we are too busy or too caught up in our busyness to notice.

RELATIONAL HEALTH

Within our group environments and as we share life together, we pursue unity and peace as we love and care for one another.

UNITY : ONE ANOTHERING

1. Be at peace with one another (Mk 9:50)
2. Don't grumble among one another (Jn 6:43)
3. Be of the same mind with one another (Ro 12:16, 15:5)
4. Accept one another (Ro 15:7)
5. Don't bite, devour, and consume one another (Ga 5:15)
6. Don't boastfully challenge or envy one another (Ga 5:26).
7. Gently, patiently tolerate one another (Ep 4:2)
8. Be kind, tender-hearted, and forgiving to one another (Ep 4:32)
9. Bear with and forgive one another (Co 3:13)
10. Seek good for one another, and don't repay evil for evil (1 Th 5:15)
11. Don't complain against one another (Jas 4:11, 5:9)
12. Confess sins to one another (Jas 5:16)

PEACEMAKING

Peace Faking: someone who sees that there is a problem, but is conflict avoidant and will not say anything. They will have peace at all costs, which is not biblical. This is not true, real peace. Relationships may be void of conflict, but they are cold, distant, and fake.

Peace Taking : failing to pursue the peace, purity, and unity of the Body of Christ in word and in deed.

Peace Making: to be at peace means that there must be honest, humble and loving discussion surrounding the present issue(s). There must be ownership and repentance on the one hand, and grace and forgiveness on the other. Each and every party should own what they need to own and be gracious in their response to one another.

SHEPHERDING & CARE

Though the responsibility of shepherding and providing congregation care are primarily reserved for the elders and deacons of HHPC, LifeGroups are a place where shepherding and care are embodied as we live in community together. What follows are both expectations and opportunities for LifeGroup leaders to aid in the ministry of shepherding and care within the body of Christ.

KNOWING

- Take initiative to establish personal relationships and ongoing contact

FEEDING

- Seek to help others grow in their love and understanding of God's Word.
- Aid in the spiritual growth of group members by pointing them to Scripture to face the challenging circumstances of life.

LEADING

- Lead within the congregation and community as they reflect and live out the vision, mission, and values of HHPC.
- Demonstrate Christian conduct and character
- Support the leadership of HHPC by promoting and pursuing the peace and purity of the church

PROTECTING

- Remind their group of the importance of peacemaking
- Pray for the protection of group members and families with the reality of spiritual warfare in mind

LifeGroups can be a place of "first response", alerting our deacons, elders, and staff of physical needs as they arise.

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BIBLICAL HOSPITALITY

Christian hospitality is one of the most misunderstood concepts in the church today. So, then, what is hospitality? Hospitality can be understood as this: *it is meeting the stranger and embracing that stranger as a neighbor, and meeting a neighbor, and by God's power, embracing that neighbor as someone who will be part of the family of God.* (Rosaria Butterfield, "The Gospel Comes With a Housekey").

Hospitality vs. Entertainment

Hospitality is not entertainment. It is not meant to show off what you know how to do well. It is not throwing large parties, having a spotlessly clean home, or being a culinary wizard. Hospitality is living your transparent, Christian life before others.

The key point of this definition is the emphasis on displaying Christ to those whom we welcome into our homes. This is extremely important to grasp particularly in a culture where the outward appearance of stability and success is desired more than walking side-by-side with others in order to glorify the name of Christ.

What Hospitality Looks Like

Hospitality is not about showing off your house, your decorating skills, or your cooking abilities. It is not just having friends over to play games or sharing your favorite food. It is not about you or your possessions. Hospitality is about God and how he uses you and your possessions to serve those you come into contact with – both friends and strangers, both believers and unbelievers.

Anyone can show hospitality to those around them. It doesn't take fancy china or expensive food. Hospitality is about investing in other's lives and learning how you can best serve those around you. It includes both the fellowship of saints and extending the love of Christ to the stranger and non-believer.

“Hospitality from a Biblical perspective is to recognize that God is more interested in caring relationships than the mold behind the shower curtain...It need not matter if we live in a single-room apartment or a split-level ranch, the only real requirement is allowing God to use our lives and our possessions...Our homes and our lives are indeed the most powerful combination of ministry to our world.”

Hospitality with Confidence, Grace Pittman

SHARE A MEAL



“Nothing, not a conversation, not a handshake or even a hug, establishes friendship so forcefully as eating together.”

Jonathan Safran Foer

In LifeGroups, we live out a proper theology of the meal and why it is such a gift to share in table fellowship together. While gathering around a table may not be feasible for every LifeGroup gathering, meals are an integral part of life in community.

When we see Jesus sharing meals with people in the Scriptures, we see a greater reality represented --a new world, a new kingdom, a new outlook.

Meals embody God's grace and provision, as well as give form to community and mission. Remember that meals help connect people, ease fear, and create space for conversation.

"The food we consume, the table around which we sit, and the companions gathered with us have as their end our communion with God and with one another."

Tim Chester, "A Meal With Jesus"

