

# SMALL GROUPS

Small Groups are a vital part of life here at Freedom Life Church. From the earliest days of the Church, believers have gathered together in homes to share life together, care for one another, and pursue a greater relationship with Christ alongside one another. Sunday morning services are a great time to come together as a church body, but we believe that groups are where we truly *connect, care, and grow*.

## WHAT DO GROUPS LOOK LIKE?

Every Small Group looks and functions slightly differently, because we're all unique. With that said, there are a few common characteristics found in every group experience. FLC Small Groups are:

1. Christ-centered – FLC leadership is passionate about our church community growing in our knowledge and faith in Jesus Christ. Every FLC Small Groups leader has made a commitment to put Jesus first and to accurately represent our church's core beliefs.
2. Welcoming – Small Groups are open to people from any background, and any point in their walk with the Lord. No matter who you are, there's a place for you.
3. Casual – Though every group is focused on connecting, caring, and growing, the venues in which that can happen are diverse and FLC Small Group leaders have the freedom to express their personality and interests in their group structure.
4. Safe – As your group grows and cares for one another, you can be confident that your fellow group members are on your team. Our journey through life can be difficult at times and having people who "have your back" is essential.

## CAN I LEAD A GROUP?

We want to make it easy for our church to care, connect, and grow with each other. For those interested in leading a Small group, we have just a few requirements to ensure that all groups fit the goal of being Christ-centered, welcoming, casual, and safe.

Here are our expectations of Group Leaders:

1. To be a regular attender of Freedom Life Church (group leaders are encouraged to pursue the steps to become a member).
2. Be in agreement with the Vision and Core Values of FLC.
3. Be welcoming to people from all backgrounds in your group.
4. Please do not serve alcohol at your group meetings. Our church is made up of believers with all sorts of diverse backgrounds and past experiences, and the consumption of alcohol is a sensitive topic for many. In 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians chapter 8, Paul writes about laying down personal freedoms for the benefit of others. We ask you to please do this during your group meetings.
5. Welcome new attendees into your group (unless your particular group topic or format makes this impractical).
6. Be responsive to communication from FLC leadership and allow us to help with any potential issues or concerns.

## KEYS TO GROUP SUCCESS

### **1. Don't start with a blank signup sheet.**

Many people are more comfortable signing up for a group that already has a handful of members. (Nobody wants to be first.) Do yourself a favor and invite a few friends to join your group before signups begin, and write in their names on your signup sheet. This is the core of your group.

### **2. Play to your strengths.**

Allow your personality to come through in the way you lead your group.

### **3. It's okay to have a good time.**

Fight the expectation that every group meeting has to be a 10/10 serious time of growth and depth. Trust is built over time and people who laugh together, share with each other.

### **4. Create a welcoming environment.**

While you don't need to be Martha Stewart, doing things like providing snacks, greeting people at the door with a smile, and providing places for everyone to sit goes a long way towards making people feel comfortable in your home.

### **5. Ask good questions.**

Small Groups are a place for discussion, digestion, and application. Do your best to ask open-ended questions that allow group members to answer personally from their experiences. Ask, and then sit back and let the conversation happen.

### **6. Pray and expect God to move.**

Leave time at the end of your meeting for group members to share prayer requests and then pray together. Assign a group member to write down prayer requests and then follow up on a weekly basis, expecting that as you pray, God will answer.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

### **1) Choose your discussion content:**

a. Sunday Morning Discussion – go deeper into Sunday morning's sermon with written questions the church will provide for you each week.

b. Bible study DVD or curriculum

c. Book-based

### **2) Pick a time and location.**

**3) Think through your target group:** for example - married couples, young families, empty-nesters, or open to all.

### **4) Complete your registration.**