

LEADERS



CYPRESS CREEK CHURCH

TABLE OF CONTENTS

T

01 Who is Cypress Creek Church?

02 Mission + Vision

03 Partnership

COMMUNITY GROUPS

04 Community Groups

05 Multiplication of Groups

LEADER EXPECTATIONS

06 Community Group Leaders

COMMUNICATION

07 Leader Portal

08 Communication Best Practices

FACILITATING

09 Icebreaker Ideas

10 OIA Method

11 Resources for Hard Conversations

12 Healthy Facilitators

HOSPITALITY

13 Hosting Best Practices

14 Snack & Meal Ideas

15 Hosting Kids

RESOURCES

16 Cypress Creek Resources

17 Bible Resources

18 Crisis Care

19 Baby Dedication & Baptism

20 Service Opportunities

21 Prayer Ministry


22 Worship Ministry

01

WHO IS CYPRESS CREEK CHURCH?

Cypress Creek Church is a group of
imperfect people on a journey to follow
the ***only perfect Savior,***
Jesus.

We want to see:

- 
- Changed lives (*Salvation*)
 - Strong healthy families (*Healing*)
 - Community Groups (*Unity*)
 - Missional Living (*Activation*)

02

MISSION + VISION

// MISSION // *"Why are we here?"*

Love God. Love People. Make Disciples.

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

MATTHEW 22:37-40

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

MATTHEW 28:18-20

// VISION // *"Where are we going?"*

Building a Community. Changing a City. Reaching a Country & World.

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." ACTS 1:8

PARTNERSHIP (4G's)

What does it mean to be a part of Cypress Creek Church?

// GATHER //

In Sunday gatherings and in Community Groups.

"Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people." ACTS 2:46-47a

// GROW //

Spiritually in your relationship with God.

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles." ACTS 2:42-43

// GIVE //

Of your time, talents, and treasures.


"All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need." ACTS 2:44-45

// GO //

Live on mission.

"And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." ACTS 2:47b

As a Partner at Cypress Creek Church:



I have committed my life to Jesus Christ, and I trust Him for my salvation.

I support Cypress Creek Church's mission to love God, love people, and make disciples.

I'm committed to Growing, Gathering, Giving, & Going with Cypress Creek Church.

COMMUNITY GROUPS

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Why Community Groups?

Community groups exist to create a safe place that serves as a reminder that we are not made to live life alone. Community groups provide a smaller, more intimate setting to walk alongside each other through life, provide accountability by growing in relationship with Christ, and to share God's love with others.

Community Group Values

Community Groups are small groups within Cypress Creek Church, characterized by Jesus, relationship, and the desire to share Christ's love with others.

- **Jesus** - Community Groups provide opportunities for all people to experience the presence of Jesus through His Word, prayer, and worship. These groups are shaped by making Jesus central. (GROW)
 - *Is Jesus the main thing at my Community Group?*
- **Relationships** - Community Groups provide a safe environment to develop relationships that challenge, support, and encourage you to live Jesus-centered lives. Community Groups are the primary source of pastoral care at Cypress Creek Church. (GATHER, GIVE)
 - *How well is my group challenging, supporting, and encouraging each other to live Jesus-centered lives?*
- **Mission** - Community Groups take Jesus' commission seriously to "go and make disciples." To this end, they meet people wherever they are in life, and encourage each individual to enter into a personal relationship with God while sharing His love with those around them. By looking towards multiplication, these groups are fulfilling Jesus' commandment to go and make disciples! (GO)
 - *How is my Community Group being missional? Who are we inviting, serving, and reaching out to? What are our multiplication goals?*

Characteristics of Community Groups

- Presence over Time
- Biblical Application
- Listening to Understanding
- Encouragement
- Accountability
- Prayer

Community Group Seasons

Within the calendar year, there are three Community Group Seasons (Fall, Spring, Summer) that align with the school year calendar. While each year's specific dates will vary, the seasons are Mid-August to Mid-December, Mid-January to Mid-May, and Early June to Early August. As a Community Group leader at Cypress Creek Church, a one year (Fall and Spring Season) commitment is necessary.

Example Community Group Schedule

One Day Before Group — Touch base with co-leaders/pray

Send reminder in GroupMe

20min prior — Arrive and pray as leaders

10min prior — Ready to greet individuals as they arrive

5min after — Pray and eat

30min after — Worship

40min after — CG Outline Discussion

1hr20min after — Prayer requests & prayer

Community Group Outline

We utilize the 4 G's (Gather, Grow, Give, Go) to accomplish the goal of Community Group.



GATHER

Purpose:

- Invite involvement from everyone
- Connect to each other
- Ease into group life

Are group members more comfortable with each other and enjoy being together?



GROW

Purpose:

- Shift focus to God; spend time in worship and prayer
- Interact with God's Word
- An opportunity for God to speak directly to our hearts with His Word
- A time to respond to God

Is the group transparent with each other? Does the group apply God's Word specifically to their lives?



G I V E

Purpose:

- Focus on meeting the needs inside the group
- Pray for one another

Is the group showing up for each other and meeting practical needs? Is God using the group to serve those around us?



G O

Purpose:

- Focus outside the group
- Encourage missional living

Is Jesus working through us to reach others?

MULTIPLICATION OF GROUPS

What is Multiplication?

As Community Groups grow, both in size and depth, it's necessary to make room for others to join in on what God is doing within the group, as well as for new leaders to be empowered to lead. Multiplication is a natural result of groups that are on mission for those around them.

Key Signs for Multiplication:



Sign #1: Is Community Taking Place?

If a new Community Group multiplies that hasn't experienced true community, there's a good chance it won't survive. Before multiplication happens, those in the group should first experience what it means to be the family of God.

Sign #2: Is Everyone Participating?

A group is not ready to multiply unless the group members are actively ministering to one another, applying the word of God to real life, and actively using their gifts. The disciples who will eventually lead the new group are best prepared in this type of environment. Future disciples will also need to know how to identify their own gifts and help others in finding and using theirs. They need to first witness an organic, dynamic Community Group, so they can reproduce the same thing in the new group.

Sign #3: Is the Group Evangelizing?

If the original Community Group has not practiced evangelism together, most likely the new group won't practice it either. And if the original group is ingrown, future disciples who will lead the new group won't have a positive mental image of what they are supposed to do.

Sign #4: Are New Disciples Growing?

If no one is being formed or growing in the group to lead the next group, multiplication won't take place. It's possible to envision and even set goals for Community Group multiplication, but if a potential new disciple-maker is not being formed, multiplication won't take place.

What happens when we go?

Multiplication in the Book of Acts

CHAPTER 2

"All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them." ACTS 2:4

"Utterly amazed, they asked: 'Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?'" ACTS 2:7-8

"And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." ACTS 2:42

CHAPTER 4

"And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness," ACTS 4:29

"While you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus." And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness. Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all." ACTS 4:30-33

CHAPTER 5

"Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus." ACTS 5:41-42

CHAPTER 6

"Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them" ACTS 6:3

"And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith." ACTS 6:7

CHAPTER 8

"And Saul approved of his execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles." ACTS 8:1

"Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word." ACTS 8:4

"After they had further proclaimed the word of the Lord and testified about Jesus, Peter and John returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many Samaritan villages." ACTS 8:25

"But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea." ACTS 8:40

CHAPTER 9

"And the Lord said to him, 'Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying, But the Lord said to him, 'Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.'" ACTS 9:11,15

"So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied." ACTS 9:31

CHAPTER 10

"And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles." ACTS 10:45

CHAPTER 11

"When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, 'Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life.'" ACTS 11:18

"Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews. But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord." ACTS 11:19-21

CHAPTER 12

"But the word of God increased and multiplied." ACTS 12:24

CHAPTER 13

"Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off." ACTS 13:1-3

"When the congregation was dismissed, many of the Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who talked with them and urged them to continue in the grace of God. On the next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed. The word of the Lord spread through the whole region." ACTS 13:43-44,48-49

CHAPTER 14

"But they found out about it and fled to the Lycaonian cities of Lystra and Derbe and to the surrounding country, where they continued to preach the gospel." ACTS 14:6-7

"From Attalia they sailed back to Antioch, where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work they had now completed. On arriving there, they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. And they stayed there a long time with the disciples." ACTS 14:26-28

CHAPTER 15

"This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question. The church sent them on their way, and as they traveled through Phoenicia and Samaria, they told how the Gentiles had been converted. This news made all the believers very glad." ACTS 15:2-3

"Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to choose some of their own men and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Judas (called Barsabbas) and Silas, men who were leaders among the believers." ACTS 15:22

"Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the believers. After spending some time there, they were sent off by the believers with the blessing of peace to return to those who had sent them. But Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, where they and many others taught and preached the word of the Lord." ACTS 15:32-33,35

"But Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the believers to the grace of the Lord. He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches." ACTS 15:40-41

CHAPTER 16

"As they went on their way through the cities, they delivered to them for observance the decisions that had been reached by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem. So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and they increased in numbers daily." ACTS 16:4-5

"After Paul and Silas came out of the prison, they went to Lydia's house, where they met with the brothers and sisters and encouraged them. Then they left." ACTS 16:40

CHAPTER 17

“Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and quite a few prominent women.” ACTS 17:4

“Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so. Many of them therefore believed, with not a few Greek women of high standing as well as men.” ACTS 17:11-12

“At that, Paul left the Council. Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.” ACTS 17:33-34

CHAPTER 18

“After spending some time in Antioch, Paul set out from there and traveled from place to place throughout the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.” ACTS 18:23

“When Apollos wanted to go to Achaia, the brothers and sisters encouraged him and wrote to the disciples there to welcome him. When he arrived, he was a great help to those who by grace had believed. For he vigorously refuted his Jewish opponents in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah.” ACTS 18:27-28

CHAPTER 19

“But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.” ACTS 19:9-10

“After all this had happened, Paul decided to go to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia. “After I have been there,” he said, “I must visit Rome also.” He sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he stayed in the province of Asia a little longer.” ACTS 19:21-22

CHAPTER 20

“When the uproar had ended, Paul sent for the disciples and, after encouraging them, said goodbye and set out for Macedonia. He traveled through that area, speaking many words of encouragement to the people, and finally arrived in Greece. He was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy also, and Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia. These men went on ahead and waited for us at Troas.” ACTS 20:1-2,4-5

“When Paul had finished speaking, he knelt down with all of them and prayed. They all wept as they embraced him and kissed him. What grieved them most was his statement that they would never see his face again. Then they accompanied him to the ship.” ACTS 20:36-38

CHAPTER 23

“The following night the Lord stood near Paul and said, “Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome.”” ACTS 23:11

“Then he called two of his centurions and ordered them, “Get ready a detachment of two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen to go to Caesarea at nine tonight. Provide horses for Paul so that he may be taken safely to Governor Felix.”” ACTS 23:23-24

CHAPTER 26

“First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds.” ACTS 26:20

CHAPTER 28

“For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ—with all boldness and without hindrance!” ACTS 28:30-31

LEADER EXPECTATIONS

COMMUNITY GROUP LEADERS

Who is a Community Group leader?

“Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are **willing**, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but **eager** to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but **being examples** to the flock.” 1 PETER 5:2-3 NIV

“In the same way, deacons are to be worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain.” 1 TIMOTHY 3:8 NIV

Community Group Leaders are...

- **Facilitators**
 - Using the outline as a starting point
 - Active listening as others share; keep a 80/20 balance of listening/talking as a leader of the group
 - Responding with compassion instead of lecturing, Scripture slamming, over-sharing from our own experiences, etc.
- **Encouragers**
 - Checking in with group members on a consistent basis, both at group and outside of group
 - Modeling care and compassion for each other
 - Responding to vulnerability with care, compassion, and prayer
- **Safe**
 - Create a healthy and secure environment for both kids and adults attending group
 - Set clear expectations and boundaries for the group when it comes to time, house rules, over-sharing, and group member expectations
 - Follow the Holy Spirit’s leading throughout the discussion time
 - Honor confidentiality; everything shared/prayer requested at community group stays within those at group

What does it look like to be a Community Group Leader?

// GATHER (in) //

Are we committed to gathering together and learning from each other? Are our group members more comfortable with each other and enjoy being together?

- Weekly Community Group
- Sunday Gatherings
- Semester Leader Rally/Meetings

// GROW (up) //

Am I prioritizing my relationship with God? Is our group transparent with each other? Does the group apply God's Word specifically in their lives?

- Daily time with God
- Discipleship

// GIVE (to) //

Are we showing up for each other to meet the needs inside our group? Are we consistently praying for one another?

- Crisis Care (hospital visits, late night house drop-ins, house help, meals during a stressful week)
- Pursuit (checking in via text or call, coffee with new visitors, etc)
- Prayer (praying for group members)

// GO (out) //

Are we planning "third place" gatherings that give us opportunities to reach others? Is God working through us to reach others?

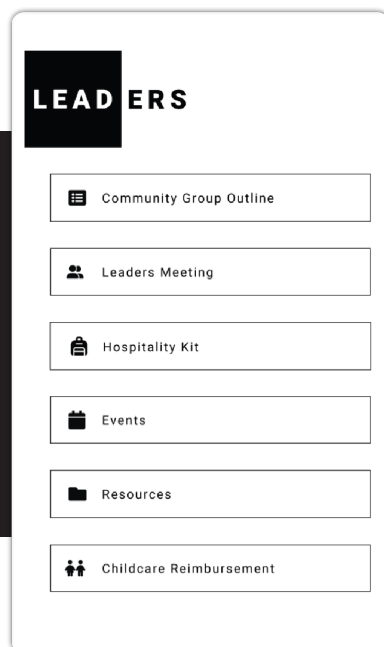
- Gatherings outside of Community Group time
- Inviting those in our areas of influence, neighborhood, Sunday mornings, etc.
- Multiplication

COMMUNICATION

07

LEADER PORTAL

The Leader Portal is your one stop shop for weekly resources and ongoing helpful content intended to help support you as you lead.



Details:

- Access at ccc.guide/lead with your email address. *Updated weekly by Monday at 3pm.*
- Check your email for Pastor Jose's **Community Group Weekly** on Mondays as well, for the latest information and updates!
- You can view the weekly **Community Group Outline** via the Leader Portal on mobile or download the outline PDF to view and/or share with your group.
- **Scan the QR Code to get started!**



COMMUNICATION BEST PRACTICES

Community Group Communication

At the beginning of each Community Group season, it is important to establish an effective way to communicate as a group to share information, send reminders, exchange prayer requests, and provide encouragement to each other.

Communication Keys:

- Send regular reminders and updates that are pertinent to the entire group
- Confidentiality is crucial!
- When exchanging prayer requests, it is important to ask for permission and honor the person/request by sharing only necessary details
- Encourage prayer request updates/praises throughout the week as people are comfortable sharing

GroupMe Tips:

GroupMe (compatible with iOS, Google, and Microsoft devices) is a group text messaging app.

- Download the “GroupMe” App.
- When creating a group on GroupMe, it is best to create a “closed group” for privacy and security.
- At the start of each Community Group season, create a NEW GroupMe thread.
- Ask each participant permission before adding them into the Group. (You can add or remove people to a GroupMe as needed)
- Update your app regularly as they often have updates. The updates typically help resolve most app errors.
- You can schedule events, share photos, and create polls all within the app.
- Each person can choose to “mute” their GroupMe notifications as well and still remain within the group thread.

FACILITATING



***Adapted from Daniel Seigel*

ICEBREAKER IDEAS

Icebreakers are a fun way to get to know each other and ease your way into a deeper group discussion, especially if your group is newer or doesn't know each other very well.

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

- If you could have any superpower, what would it be and why?
- What is one thing you are currently thankful for?
- If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?
- What is a favorite childhood memory?
- If you could have dinner with any historical figure, who would it be and why?
- What is a book or movie that has impacted you in a meaningful way?
- If you could learn any new skill, what would it be and why?
- What is something you've always wanted to try but haven't yet?
- What is your favorite type of music and why?
- What is your favorite quote or saying?
- If you could have any job in the world, what would it be and why?
- What is a goal you are currently working towards?
- What is a talent or hobby you have that not many people know about?
- If you could only eat one type of food for the rest of your life, what would it be?
- What is something that brings you joy?
- If you could travel back in time, where and when would you go?
- What is a lesson you've learned the hard way?
- If you could only keep three possessions, what would they be and why?
- What is a personal accomplishment you are proud of?
- If you could change one thing about the world, what would it be and why?
- What is your favorite way to relax and unwind?
- If you could have any animal as a pet, what would it be and why?
- What is your favorite family tradition?
- If you could visit any planet in the solar system, which one would you choose and why?
- What is something you wish you had more time for?
- If you could only watch one TV show or movie for the rest of your life, what would it be?
- What is a fear or phobia you have?
- If you could live in any era, which one would you choose and why?
- What is a lesson your parents or mentors have taught you that has stuck with you?
- If you could have any job in the world, what would it be and why?
- What is something you've always wanted to learn but haven't yet?
- If you could only listen to one album for the rest of your life, what would it be?
- What brought you to this Community Group?

OIA METHOD

The OIA Method is the inductive method of studying God's Word, where we **observe** what the passage says, **interpret** what it means, and finally **apply** how we need to respond personally.



Observation

What does the passage say?

After reading the passage, look back and observe what the passage is saying. Try to look for repeated words, key phrases, and cross-references. Also, think about questions that you have after reading. Allow your curiosity to lead you further in understanding.

Who? What? When? Where? Why?
What other questions arise from the passage?

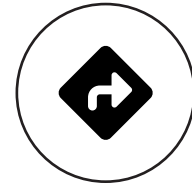


Interpretation

What does the passage mean?

After observing what was said in the text, interpretation seeks to understand what God, or the book's author, is seeking to communicate through the passage. Context is crucial to determining the meaning of the text. Outside resources like Bible dictionaries and commentaries also help when seeking historical context for passages.

What is the context?
Why is the author bringing this up?
What is God saying through this passage?



Application

How do I need to respond?

It's easy to breeze through passages, especially those familiar to us, without taking time to stop and think about how we can practically apply the truths we studied.

How should I live my life in light of this passage?
How does this truth compel me to be transformed?
What does it look like to put this into practice?

RESOURCES FOR HARD CONVERSATIONS

Conflict resolution is a necessary part of any community. When a difficult conversation or conflict arises, Cypress Creek Church's pastoral team is committed to support you as a leader.

- **Goal is unity and peace** ("If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." // Romans 12:18)
- **Check your own emotional state** ("Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice." // Ephesians 4:31)
- **Stay curious** ("My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry," // James 1:19)
- **Find a solution that leads to growth and health** ("Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification." // Romans 14:19)

At times a member of your group who is personally dealing with a difficult issue personally will approach you. Because you are not expected to be a counselor, simply ask these four questions during the conversation and contact someone on the pastoral team for guidance to make the next steps relatively straightforward.

- **How long have you been dealing with this?** You are looking for the duration of this issue. (One day? One year?) Is this an immediate need or an ongoing situation?
- **Who else knows?** You are looking for the involvement/support of others – have you talked to anyone else about this? If so, Who? How often? When was the last time you talked to someone about it? How did they respond?
- **Have you received any advice or counsel on how to deal with this?** Many times they already know what they need to do.
- **Do you have any plans for your next steps?** This prompts them to begin to make a plan. If they have no plans, you might ask: Would you like me to check on some other resources? (Do not make calls for them but find referrals and let them make the calls.)

HEALTHY FACILITATORS

PRAY for yourself, your Community Group, and the needs of the group.

CREATE a safe and secure environment.

Value confidentiality

Practice hospitality

ENCOURAGE others to participate by listening and responding.

LISTENING.

Active listening help others feel heard.

Reflect - "what I heard you say was"

Question - "tell me more about that"

Understand - "help me understand"

Validate - "that makes sense"

Care - "it matters that you feel that way"

RESPONDING.

Open-ended questions (that begin with words like: why, how, when or what) allow for others to elaborate their thoughts and perspective.

Use wisdom with self-disclosure

Avoid giving advice. God is the giver of advice!

Overtalkers - You can state boundaries before you ask a question (i.e. "give us a brief one-sentence answer," "who hasn't shared yet?" "let's hear from others,")

Nontalkers - Notice who is not talking, be sensitive to their needs. Some people are shy, some may need extra thought time before they share, some might be in a difficult place and just can't share. You can make them more comfortable in the group by getting to know them better individually over time. The icebreaker questions, sharing/praying in smaller groups, and sending out the Community Group Outline ahead of time can also help everyone participate more in the group discussion.

HOSPITALITY

13

HOSTING BEST PRACTICES

The way we host a Community Group is key to creating a safe and welcoming atmosphere for those attending. Check out the tips & tricks below to set up for success!

- Communicate clearly with your group about the address, date, time of your group, along with any location information like parking, doorbell, or other details in advance.
- Plan for enough seats for your group!
- Free yourself up and let someone in the group open the door or be a greeter at the door.
- Make sure the space is clean and clutter-free before group. Don't forget to put up the dogs and cats before group each week!
- If there are kids in your group, make a space for them to be able to gather together -- make sure the space is age-appropriate and allows kids room to play and enjoy themselves.
- Be prepared for individuals to arrive early. This is a great opportunity to connect with them and empower them to serve.
- Practice honoring the group's time by starting and ending on time! Stop 10 - 15 min. for ending time for prayer requests and prayer.
- Send (or have someone else send) a simple reminder of group, sending your meal a couple of days beforehand, and asking for volunteers to complete the meal.

SNACK & MEAL IDEAS

Each Community Group operates differently when it comes to serving food/drinks. Below is a list to help you get started and find what works best for your group.

Simple Drinks:

- Small bottled water
- Coffee, cream, sugar, sweetener, mugs
- Hot tea (variety)

Simple Snacks:

- Popcorn
- Pretzels
- Fruit tray
- Hummus & carrots
- Cookies
- Brownies
- Trail Mix

Ready for a meal? Have someone bring the main dish, while others in the group bring all the rest.

Sloppy Joes

(Manwich is the easiest)

- Buns
- Chips
- Baked beans
- Fruit tray
- Tossed green salad
- Dessert
- Ice
- Sweet and Unsweet tea
- Lemonade

- Shredded lettuce
- Chopped onions
- Tortilla corn
- Picante sauce
- Fruit tray (or watermelon if in season)
- Dessert
- Ice
- Sweet and unsweet tea
- Lemonade

- Tortillas
- Picante sauce
- Fruit tray or watermelon if in season
- Ice
- Sweet and unsweet tea
- Lemonade

Shredded Cilantro Lime Chicken Tacos

- Flour and corn tortillas
- Shredded cheese
- Sour cream
- Rice
- Beans
- Guacamole
- Queso
- Chopped tomatoes

Ground Beef Tacos or Mexican Stack

- Flour and corn tortillas
- Shredded cheese
- Sour cream
- Guacamole
- Queso
- Rice
- Beans
- Chopped tomatoes
- Shredded lettuce
- Chopped onions

Pulled Pork

- Hawaiian buns
- Coleslaw
- Baked beans
- Fruit tray or watermelon if in season
- Chips
- Dessert
- Ice
- Sweet and unsweet tea
- Lemonade

Spaghetti and Meat Sauce

(and/or meatless sauce)

- Tossed green salad
- Bread sticks
- Fruit tray or watermelon if in season
- Dessert
- Ice
- Sweet and unsweet tea
- Lemonade

Lasagna

- Tossed green salad
- Bread sticks
- Fruit tray or watermelon if in season
- Dessert
- Ice
- Sweet and unsweet tea
- Lemonade

Chicken spaghetti

- Tossed green salad
- Rolls
- Vegetable dish (green beans)
- Fruit tray or watermelon if in season
- Dessert
- Ice
- Sweet and unsweet tea
- Lemonade

Easy Crock Pot Roast

- Tossed green salad
- Rolls
- Vegetable dish (green beans, mashed potatoes, mac and cheese, corn, etc...)
- Fruit tray or watermelon if in season
- Dessert
- Ice
- Sweet and unsweet tea
- Lemonade

Grilled Hamburgers

- Buns
- Sliced cheese
- Mayo
- Mustard
- Ketchup

- Baked beans or beans
- Fruit tray or watermelon if in season
- Chips
- Dessert
- Ice
- Sweet and unsweet tea
- Lemonade

Stuffed Baked Potatoes

- Butter
- Sour cream
- Grated cheese
- Anything to add to your potato
- Tossed green salad
- Fruit tray or watermelon if in season

Fajitas Night

- Chicken and beef fajita meat
- Flour and corn tortillas
- Shredded cheese
- Sour cream
- Guacamole
- Queso
- Rice
- Beans
- Chopped tomatoes
- Shredded lettuce
- Chopped onions
- Tortilla corn
- Picante sauce
- Fruit tray or watermelon if in season
- Ice
- Sweet and unsweet tea
- Lemonade

Chili

(could even be Frito Pie night)

- Cornbread or fritoes or both
- Grated cheese
- Sour cream
- Chopped onions
- Chopped tomatoes
- Shredded lettuce
- Cookies for dessert
- Picante sauce
- Fruit tray or watermelon if in season
- Ice

- Sweet and unsweet tea
- Lemonade

Soup/Stew Night

(Great for October-March! Have a couple people volunteer to bring their favorite soup)

- Cornbread or crackers
- Dessert
- Fruit tray or watermelon if in season
- Ice
- Sweet and unsweet tea
- Lemonade

Pizza Night

(Great when there is a special on pizza. Take a vote and order the group's favorite pizza! You can save this for especially hectic weeks)

- Tossed Salad
- Dessert
- Fruit tray or watermelon if in season
- Ice
- Sweet and unsweet tea
- Lemonade

HOSTING KIDS

If your group is a Family Community Group, there are a couple keys to success as you host the kids and families in your group!

Who Will Care for the Kids?

- Kid's Childcare Workers, rotating members of community group, or a combination of both. Cypress Creek Church helps connect and provide reimbursement for childcare workers. Anyone who cares for the children must be approved and background checked.

How Do We Arrange Childcare?

- When there are children ages 6 and under present, we recommend one childcare helper per 6 children. Community Group Leaders can coordinate directly with our Kids Pastor to arrange a childcare worker(s) as needed.

How Do We Pay For It?

- The church covers up to **3 Childcare Workers** per Community Group weekly.
- Community Group Childcare Welpers are paid **\$40** for the group time each week.
- Community Group leaders can coordinate with the helpers on the best form of payment and then ask for **reimbursement** from the church.
- You can submit a reimbursement from Cypress Creek Church [directly on the Leader Portal](#) or by following the link at the QR Code!

Take Two:

- "Take Two" are resources provided by the Cypress Creek Kids Ministry that are tailored to help kids take a second look at the themes and scripture they look at in their classrooms on Sunday mornings.
- "Take Two" mirrors the adult Community Group experience where they dive deeper into God's word, share their lives together, and live on mission.
- All Community Groups can have access to these resources and any needed supplies by reaching out directly to our Kids Pastor.

Point of Contact:

- Scarlett Kiowski, Kids Pastor
- scarlett@cypresscreekchurch.com



RESOURCES

CYPRESS CREEK RESOURCES

[Sunday Messages Podcast](#) //

Weekly messages from Sunday mornings at Cypress Creek Church

[Conversations Podcast](#) //

A panel conversation diving deeper into the previous Sunday's message, unpacking how we can apply it further in our daily life.

[Series Page](#) //

Catch up on any of the messages, podcasts, and/or devotionals from the various message series online.

[YouTube Channel](#) //

Like + Subscribe to Cypress Creek Church's YouTube channel to stay connected with all the messages, series, and more.

[Daily Devotionals](#) //

Go deeper into God's Word and each current series through the Daily Devotionals by getting a new devotional in your inbox every morning.

[Cypress Weekly](#) //

Weekly email newsletter designed to help you stay connected and be encouraged by what God is doing in the life of our church.

BIBLE RESOURCES

Check out the resources below for trusted sources that can help you dig into God's Word as you facilitate your Community Group.

- [Bible.com/app](https://www.bible.com/app)
- [BlueLetterBible.org](https://www.BlueLetterBible.org)
- [BibleProject.com](https://www.BibleProject.com)
- Dictionary of New Testament Background
- The New Testament in Its World (NT. Wright & Bird) 2019 Zondervan
- New Bible Dictionary
- IVP Bible Background Commentary (NT & OT)
- NET Bible 1st Edition Notes
- NIV Biblical Theology Study Bible, ed. D.A. Carson
- New Studies in Biblical Theology, series ed. D.A. Carson, Apollos series*, e.g., Five Festal Garments (#10), Barry Webb 2000.
- A User's Guide to Bible Translations, Dewey (IVP)
- How to Read a Book: The Classic Guide to Intelligent Reading Adler & VAN Doren (1972), Simon & Schuster
- Logos Bible Software

CRISIS CARE

Ways to care for those in need:

- See the hurt/need
- Move in and listen with compassion
- Pray – take this cup, your will be done (Matthew 26:36-46)

When to refer for further help:

- Talk of self-harm, abuse, or addiction
- You sense you are not able or trained on the issues
- After you meet many times with no/minimal improvement
- You realize there is a systemic issue that needs to be addressed (marital or family)
- The person or their issues push your buttons and impede your ability to show compassion and empathy

Referral Options:

- Reach out to the Pastoral Team
- Counseling Resources:

Center for Relational Care
relationalcare.org
(512) 249-6200

The Timothy Center
timothycenter.com
(512) 331-2700

Vic King
vicking3@gmail.com



BABY DEDICATION & BAPTISM

Baby Dedications

[Baby Dedications](#) are a time when parents get to publicly commit to raising their kids to the Lord in front of the Cypress Creek Church family (1 Samuel 1:27-28). We would like to come along side families in this journey!

If a family in your Community Group has a baby/toddler(s) they are interested in dedicating, please have them fill out the form via the QR code below and someone will get back to them shortly.



Baptisms

Three Reasons we get baptized as followers of Jesus:

- To follow Jesus' example (Matthew 3:13-17)
- As a response to what Jesus has done for us (Matthew 28:16-20)
- As an outward expression of an inward reality (Colossians 2:12)

If someone from your Community Group is wanting to find out more about being baptized, have them [fill out the form](#) via the QR code below and someone from the pastoral team will reach out with next steps!



SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

“In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” ACTS 20:35 NIV

Explore the different ways you can serve the community together as a Community Group [directly on the Leader Portal](#) or via the QR Code below! Check back at the list of service opportunities periodically as they change throughout the year when new needs arise for local organizations.



Reach out directly to localmissions@cypresscreekchurch.com with any questions.

PRAYER MINISTRY

Prayer coverage takes place in every facet of church life, beginning in Community Groups, strengthening us to be a house of prayer for all nations. Prayer Ministry is offered in many ways, both on Sunday mornings and all throughout the week!

Ways to Pray for your Community Group:

- Pray for Holy Spirit to draw people to come
- Pray that folks feel safe to share and be transparent
- Pray for Jesus to be glorified through word and deed in your group
- Pray for God's peace, unity and power to be present during group
- Pray that God would raise up leaders within your group
- Pray that through your group, all would be encouraged in their walk with Christ

Keys to Prayer in Community Group:

- Remind your group weekly of confidentiality – what is said in group, stays in group (this would include not sharing with those who were absent, unless given permission to share)
- When you feel the need to include more prayer coverage – ask permission to share the request with Cypress Creek Prayer Team before forwarding.

Prayer Ministry Team

Cypress Creek Church has a very active Prayer Ministry Team that meets each Monday nights at the church to pray for submitted [prayer requests](#) and to provide confidential prayer counsel to anyone desiring to come in for prayer. Just a few examples where this could be beneficial: a significant health issue/a personal decision they are facing/a battle or struggle that they don't feel comfortable sharing in Community Group or need extra prayer for.

- If you or someone in your Community Group desire to come in for prayer, you can contact our Prayer Pastor to schedule a time to come in.
 - Rhonda Patterson, rhonda@cypresscreekchurch.com



WORSHIP MINISTRY

Keys to Worshipping in Community Group:

Empower

- Encourage someone in your group who has the ability to play and sing to serve the group in that way.

Begin and end in prayer

Pick familiar songs

- This gives the best chance of everyone being able to participate
- If planning songs ahead of time, you can send lyrics through your group chat or have lyrics up on a TV for people to follow along

Remember that worship is more than just music

- Talk through who God is and what He has done/is doing in your life
- Read through a psalm, reflect, and pray
- Leave room to pray together as a group and individually

Worship Resources for Community Group

- [YouTube Playlist](#) to worship along in Community Group to the songs we sing together on Sunday Mornings
- [Spotify Playlist](#) of the Worship Team's recent worship song picks

Other Worship Needs

- Reach out to our Worship Pastor, Joel Hernandez at joel@cypresscreekchurch.com

