



EST. **NORTHVIEW** 1980  
**COMMUNITY CHURCH**

**Community Group Guide – June 8/9, 2024**

This guide is designed to help you and your group be **deeply rooted followers of Jesus**.

**THIS GUIDE WILL BE DIFFERENT THAN USUAL DURING THE “REBUILD” SERIES.**

The last few weeks we’ve been in a “topical” weekend sermon series.

Typically, our sermons aim to be more “exegetical” (teaching through a book of the Bible verse by verse), than “topical” (using biblical principles and texts to speak to themes in life and culture). As such, our Group Guides will be unique for 2 more weeks!

Typically our Group Guides follow a specific 4 step framework for discussing scripture. But alongside this atypical style of sermons, we’ve adjusted the “Grow” section of the guide to be far less thorough in interacting with one primary passage of verses in the text and more “thematic” in nature (like the sermons themselves).

Don’t feel pressure to cover everything, but prayerfully consider what would work best for your group!

**A note from Pastor Mark:**

*This week’s study is a very intimate study. Our sexuality is a God-given gift and is an area of great delight and yet, for some, an area of great pain. As you move into this discussion, please give prayerful thought to the painful experiences of others in your group. While we always want to hold up God’s ideals of marriage and family, all of us are broken to one-degree or another (including our sexuality). Would you pray that God may give freedom, joy, and healing to each one of us as we seek to live out God’s ideal for marriage and family relationships?*

# GATHER

**Deeply rooted by sharing life seeking the presence of God.**

This community based context can to heighten your awareness of God's presence in your time together, and give one another space to talk about what's really going on in life.

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- Pray. Thoughtfully acknowledge God's presence in the room. Commit your time together to him.
- What practical needs should everyone know about? What can we do as a group to help?
- What decisions are you facing? Is there any input you'd like from us as a group?
- What are you praying about right now? How can we as a group join you in prayer?
- Does anyone have a story of where you've seen God at work? Is there something we can join you in celebrating?

# GROW

**Deeply rooted by being formed through the word of God.**

This biblically based content overlaps with the current weekend teaching at your Northview campus and positions you, as a group, to shape a biblical view on a specific topic.

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- **Pray.** Acknowledge God's presence, and ask for his help to hear what he's saying.
- **Facilitate a guided reflection on the topic and scriptures from the weekend sermon.**

## Looking back.

- Maybe you already know each other's stories well, but if not, take a moment around the room to share the story of your home/family as a child. What were the factors that shaped you as a kid? What was the greatest strength in your family, and what was the greatest challenge?
- Did your parents encourage or discourage your journey of faith? What impact did the faith and commitment level of your parents have on your life?

## Looking to Scripture.

- Marriage and family is a massive topic throughout the scripture - the family was/is the first and most basic unit of society. As goes the family, so goes the culture. As we look at the Old Testament history, we see God's warnings to guard our families. We also see from Ezra 9 that when God sets out to renew his people, he sets out to renew our families.
  - Read Read Ezra 9:1-15 & 10:1-3 & 9-10
    - What stands out to you as you read the text?
    - What questions does it raise in your minds?
    - What comparisons do you see between the issues of that day, with ours?
- Continue your conversation with some of the wider biblical context:
  - Old Testament:
    - Read Deuteronomy 7:1-6 and talk about the implications of intermarriage with the pagan nations. What is God's central concern?
    - Marriage to foreigners was not strictly forbidden in Israel - Think of Rahab (Joshua 2:8-14 & 6:25) and Ruth (Ruth 1:15-18). Both these "foreign" women made professions of faith and were included in Jesus' family tree! God loves the foreigner (Isaiah 56:1-8).
      - So, what is the critical issue at stake in this "inter-marriage" conversation?
  - New Testament: Read 2 Corinthians 6:14-18.
    - What are the challenges of a spiritually mixed family?
    - What boundaries are biblically wise when it comes to dating relationships?
- Finally: Read Ephesians 5:1 all the way to 6:4 and talk about the counter-cultural impact of a godly family in the time and place we live in today.
  - What "spiritual fruit" do we see happening in loving families?
  - What commands do we see in this text that can help us continue to encourage each other to pursue God's ideal, in a day when this message is increasingly seen as politically incorrect?
  - How can we do better at loving those who have been broken by sexual sin, are struggling with temptations, or whose homes have been fractured by sin?

## Pray together and/or move to the "GO" section.

- Prayer - for kids - youth - young adults (perhaps your own!) - as they are being "prepared" for family life.
- Prayer for our church - that we can become more and more an equipping center for the family.
  - Pray especially for our upcoming Northview Day Camps running in July!
- Prayer for the needs represented in your community group - your own families and friends.

- Perhaps especially for those who are walking through difficulty or drifting from God's ideal.

# GO

## **Deeply rooted by participating in the mission of God.**

**These culturally relevant applications are meant, with the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, to prompt actions that bring the life of God's kingdom into us and out to others.**

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- Pray for the "lost" in your sphere of influence. Use the **5x5x5 cards** as a tool.
- Is there something that seems especially relevant for us to do personally based on our discussion?
- Is there something we as a group should plan to do together based on our discussion?
- Is there something we as a group should plan to do to spend time with someone who doesn't yet follow Jesus? Or to make/strengthen connections with our neighbours?