



EST. NORTHVIEW 1980
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community Group Leaders' Guide – November 16/17, 2024

This guide is designed to help you and your group be **deeply rooted followers of Jesus**.¹

You can take different approaches week to week - plan for your next meeting in advance.

IDEA #1 - BALANCE GATHER + GROW + GO.

The healthiest groups will give attention to all 3 discipleship categories: *Gather*, *Grow*, and *Go*.

You can't cover each of the 3 sections fully in 1 meeting. For balance, select one or two items from the *Gather* and *Go* sections in advance, and condense the *Grow* section (perhaps just do the sermon recap). You can also choose a different order (e.g., start in "grow", then hit "gather" + "go").

IDEA #2 - EMPHASIZE BIBLE STUDY.

Want a deeper "study" feel? Skip the "gather" section, and work through the "grow" section". Then, at minimum, take one thing from the "go" section: *prayer for the lost*.

IDEA #3 - EMPHASIZE SHARING LIFE.

Want a higher "relational" feel? Work your way through the "gather" section, and leave the "grow" section for this week. But try, at minimum, to take *prayer for the lost* from the "go" section.

You don't have to spend hours preparing like a scholar that "teaches".

You can spend your week a) walking with God to lead out of the overflow of that relationship, and b) taking 15 minutes familiarizing yourself with this guide to be a well-prepared shepherd that "cares" and "facilitates".

¹ If you don't know your group very well, we recommend starting with our "First Four" discussion guide before this one.

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.

- "Let's start with prayer."
Thoughtfully acknowledge God's presence in the room. Commit your time to him. Start by calibrating everyone to this reality. Could be one person that opens your time in this way, or several.
- What is one thing you're really grateful for right now? Take turns and share one by one.
- Does anyone have a story of where you've seen God at work? Is there a life situation or answered prayer we can join you in celebrating? (This can be a way to revisit prayers or plans from a previous meeting.)
We'd love to share and celebrate stories from our Community Groups to honour God, encourage one another, and contribute to cultivating a culture of prayer across Northview! (With permission, share them with us!)
- What is one thing you're really burdened with right now? If comfortable, take turns and share one by one.
Idea: be specific. "Is there a practical need or decision you're facing that you'd like the group's help with?"
- What are you praying about right now? How can we join you thanking God or seeking God?
Idea: get one person to share, and then get one person to volunteer to pray for them. Repeat this process until everyone is covered.
- End with prayer, or move to the Grow and/or Go sections in the pages below.

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 be shaped by studying Scripture.

- **Pray.** Acknowledge God's presence + ask for his help to hear what he's saying through the text.
Idea: ask another person to do this. A sample prayer: "Father, thank you for this time we have. We acknowledge that you are here with us and we ask for your help to hear what you're saying through your word by your Spirit. We commit our time to you for your glory and our good. Amen."
- **Share a takeaway from the Nov 16/17 sermon.** "Is there something the Holy Spirit highlighted for you?"
For each person to share an insight they got or an action step they are taking from the sermon could use up your time. This might be a good use of your time, but if you want to go further into the study of the text below, indicate this upfront.

- **Facilitate a brief study of 1 Corinthians 4:1-13.**

Start the conversation with an "Icebreaker."

In this passage, Paul describes the ministry of the apostles and how we are called to be faithful stewards of what God has given..

Share from your life to get a feel for this dynamic in the text - while also helping others get to know one another - by using this **Icebreaker question: Have you ever been given huge responsibility for a task that created pressure on you to perform well?** (Maybe your work had you organize something crucial or you were in charge of leading a group safely back and forth? Maybe you had to take the stage at an event where all eyes and ears were on you? Perhaps someone entrusted you with caring for them or others with something valuable? (Kids, a secret, their property.)

Study Step 1: Read 1 Corinthians 4:1-13

Familiarize yourself with this section of verses.

Study Step 2: Understand Their Story – (With answer key + leaders notes)

Ask *observation questions* to understand what the author is communicating to the original audience.

➤ **Take a look at vv. 1-5.**

- How are the Corinthians to view Paul and the other teachers? What were they entrusted with?
 - **"as servants of Christ" (1a)**
 - **"entrusted with the mysteries God has revealed..."(1b)**

- How does Paul view judgment of others/himself?
 - **“a very small thing” (4:3)**
 - **“Does care little if judged by court or humans” (4:3)**
 - **“Doesn’t judge himself” (4:3)**
- How is this contrasted to God’s judgment?
 - **“Judgment belongs to the Lord” (4:4)**
 - **“Don’t judge before the Lord comes” (4:5)**
 - **“He will expose and bring to light the heart’s motivation” (4:5)**
- **Take a look at vv. 6-8.**
 - Why does Paul want the Corinthians to learn not to go beyond “what is written”?
 - **“Not to be puffed up or in favor of one against another” (6)**
- **Take a look at vv. 8-13.**
 - What are the contrasts you see between the Corinthians and Paul and his ministers?
 - **Perceived Status**
 - **Corinthians: “Already... kings” (v. 8)**
 - **Paul: “A spectacle... to the world... the fools for Christ’s sake” (vv. 9-10)**
 - **Condition of Life**
 - **Corinthians: “You have... all you want” (v. 8)**
 - **Paul: “Hungry and thirsty, poorly dressed, buffeted, homeless” (vv. 11-12)**
 - **Response to Suffering**
 - **Corinthians: “You reign... without us” (v. 8)**
 - **Paul: “We bless... we endure” (v. 12)**
 - **Reputation and Treatment**
 - **Corinthians: “You are... wise... strong” (v. 8)**
 - **Paul: “We are... made as the filth of the world” (v. 13)**
 - *What is Paul trying to show them in this section?*
Paul seems to show them if he would judge them according to maturity and expose their heart they would not be able to stand! So in contrast they should not attempt to judge their leaders.
 - Take these observations into the next step below.

Study Step 3: Connect To God’s Story – (With answer key + leaders notes)

Ask questions to understand how this text fits in the larger gospel story.

We’ve selected a few connections that are here to a) expand on the content of the passage and/or b) clarify the content of the passage.

- Paul argues that *judgment* belongs to God and he will expose the heart’s intention. **Read Romans 14:10-12 and Revelation 22:12**
 - What do you learn about “judgment”?
 - **“We must all appear before the judgment seat of God” (Rom. 14:10)**
 - **“each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.” (14:12)**
 - **Judgment of each one’s deeds is given to the Lord (Rev. 22:12)**

- Paul intends maturity for the Corinthians: He teaches them as well as us so **“that you may learn by us not to go beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another.”**
 - Consider **Luke 18:9-14**. In this parable, Jesus contrasts the prayers of a Pharisee and a tax collector addressing an audience **“who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt.”** What parallels do you draw to the Corinthians?
 - **The Pharisee is self-righteous and looks down on others (18:11)**
 - **The tax collector seems contrite over his own sin (no view towards others) (18:13)**
 - **“For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.” (18:14)**
 - Read **James 2:1-9**. How does Jesus’ half-brother speak about partiality and favoritism in the church?
 - **Treating the “rich” different than the “poor”, “have you not discriminated/ made distinctions between yourself” (2:4) → disunity**
 - **God has chosen the poor (think back to 1 Cor. 1!)**
 - **You fulfill the law by “loving each other” 2:8**
 - **If you show partiality (or in Paul’s words “be puffed up in favor of one against another”) you committed sin (2:9)**
 - *Reflection Question: Taking the two texts above together, which attitudes is the NT promoting in mature Christians regarding how we treat others in the body of Christ? How can we be prudent about making judgments within the body of Christ and outside of it? What should we be aware of?*

Step 4: Apply To Our Story

Ask questions to discern what God is telling us to do with the help of the Holy Spirit.

- If the judgment / assessment that God has is regarding our faithfulness with what we’ve been given - then we need a sober self-reflection: Have I been a faithful steward? How can we measure if we have been?
- How do we invite the assessment of others into our lives so that we can benefit and grow from others who are willing to make us better people? (It might be helpful to look up Proverbs 27:6 here.)
- When looking at Northview and/or the global church of Christ, what are you compelled to pray for in light of these texts? (Wisdom to know the difference between condemning and discerning, humility and fairness?)

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.

- Pray for those far from God that you personally know, by name.

Leaders note: This is something that we're putting deliberately at the top here. Every time.

("5x5x5 cards" are available at each campus on the weekend, and our "Loving The Lost" group prayer guide is available upon request.)

- Is there something we could do this Christmas season as a group to bless others? A special note from Connor, our Local Outreach Coordinator:

Christmas is coming, which means I am busy starting some of our Christmas initiatives, one of which is our Christmas Hamper program in partnership with Abbotsford Christmas Bureau.

Providing a Christmas Hamper for a household in need is a wonderful way to demonstrate the love and graciousness that we have been given through Christ. Providing a hamper or two to your group is a great way to serve our neighbour. I talked to one community group leader last year who, through their group, was able to pool their time, money, and resources to help two families with eight members each! The leader remarked that they could provide way more than they could alone.

It was a great way for the group to work and pray together for families they had never met. Delivering the hampers was a joy, as the families were so thankful and shared a bit of their story and the hardships they faced that year.

I invite you to consider signing up to provide a hamper with your Community Group this year. If you would like to, follow the steps below. And if you have any questions, please email me at cbelsher@northview.org

1. Fill out this form: <https://forms.gle/9NTKNVgtbzykqoo9>.
2. Applications for providing a hamper are due Dec. 1st.
3. Get matched with a family starting in the first two weeks of December.
4. Contact the matched family within 48 hours to confirm food, gifts, and drop-off date.
5. Shop for the family!
6. Pray for the family before you drop off your hamper.
7. Drop off the hamper on the designated day for your matched family on the agreed-upon day.