



EST. **NORTHVIEW** 1980
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community Group Guide – March 29/30, 2025

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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- "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 for 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 weekend sermon.** Is there something the Holy Spirit highlighted for you?"
Be sensitive to time by indicating upfront if you plan to move through the other sections of the guide below. It might be helpful to say something like: "we want to start by hearing one thing God highlighted for you in the message, and then in a few minutes we'll move into a short study of the Scripture passage the speaker used."
- **Facilitate a time of reflection and prayer on 2 Corinthians 5:17-21.**

Going Deeper with God's Word:

Following a weekend where we took a break from our sermon series, this group guide looks a little different, taking a slow, meditative approach to reading God's word in community. Studying God's word is beautiful, and it often yields great insights into the truths found in scripture. There is also a rich Christian history of meditation or a slow and thoughtful reading of the scriptures. This guide is designed to slow us down so we not only read God's word but also give God's word a chance to read us. As we provide the space for the Spirit to speak through the word, he can move it from our head down into our heart. If this feels different and stretching, we hope it will be the kind that helps us grow into community groups that more wholeheartedly seek the presence of God together.

Read 2 Cor 5:17-21 In Three Parts:

Part 1:

Read 5:17. As we struggle against temptations and our flesh, we sometimes forget this truth: we have been made into *new* creations, "the old has gone, the new is here!" (v.17). Below are some reflection questions and a prayer prompt to facilitate applying that truth.

- Share with the group your experience with baptism, what led up to you deciding to do it, what changed because of it? If you haven't been baptized is it something you have considered?
- With the whole group, ask; what area of your life, emotions, relationships, self-discipline, finances, etc., has been most transformed by Jesus?
- With the whole group, ask: what in your life do you desire to see further transformed by Jesus?

- Prayer Prompt: As a group or in smaller groups, pray for one another, praising God for what he has done and asking God to help you take the steps to see transformation in the area you said.

Part 2:

Read 5:18-19. Paul highlights one of his favorite words that tell us what God has done for us through Jesus' death and resurrection, "reconciliation." Jesus illustrated this word beautifully in the parable of the prodigal son, with a wayward son reconciled to his Father. Below are some reflection exercises and prayer prompts.

- Psalm 1:2 tells us to meditate on God's law (His word), that is, to slowly allow the truths to sink deep into our hearts. Take a moment to meditate on this truth: If you have faith in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, you are reconciled to God through him. I would encourage you to do something a little different, for example:
 - Turn on some soft instrumental music, have each group member read the text slowly, and allow the repetition to sink the truth deeper into your heart. (Search *Soaking in His Presence* on YouTube, to find good instrumental music)
 - As a group, worshipfully listen to a song that speaks to our forgiveness and reconciliation through Jesus. (e.g., "In Christ Alone")
- Prayer Prompt: As a group or again in smaller groups, finish this section by praying for someone in your life who has yet to be reconciled to God and ask that God would draw them in.

Part 3:

Read 5:20-21. Paul finishes with a plea and a reason to accept it. The plea is "Be reconciled to God" (v.20). What's the motivation? God made Jesus to be sin who knew no sin so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

- Sometimes, we find it hard to believe we are reconciled with God because there is a barrier to receiving God's love. Often, this can be sin. The invitation of Paul illustrates the beauty of the gospel; the invitation is always open right here and right now to be reconciled to God through Jesus. Take a moment either individually to confess something to God, silently on your own (or, if comfortable, separate into female and male groups and take time to confess that thing and pray for one another).
- Ending: Here are a couple of options as you end your time. You can do one or both if you choose.
 - End the night with some worship, be it by following words on a screen or if someone is musical in your group leading a song of praise to God.
 - End the night simply with prayer, that God would continue to foster intimacy and vulnerability in your group to encourage one another as we seek God's presence together.

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.
(Use your **5x5x5 cards** or our "Loving The Lost" Group Prayer Guide.)
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.)
- Is there something that seems especially relevant for us to do personally based on our discussion?
Leaders note: This is something that may overlap with the "Apply To Our Story" step in the "GROW" section above, but here it is meant to help narrow down a specific thing that people actually plan to commit to doing.
- Is there something we as a group should plan to do together based on our discussion?
Leaders note: Depending on the applications you've discussed in the "GROW" section, there could be opportunities to serve others as a group. Or, perhaps to gather for worship, prayer, and/or equipping together.
- 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?