



EST. NORTHVIEW 1980
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community Group Leaders' Guide – April 5/6, 2025

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 April 5/6 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 Cor 11:17-34**
Start the conversation with an "Icebreaker."

Synopsis: Paul turns his attention to a serious issue within the Corinthian church: their mistreatment of the Lord's Supper. As we explore this passage, we will be reminded of Christians' great honour of participating in this ordinance and the danger if we take it in an unworthy manner. The observation questions below will set us up for better discussion in the following sections.

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: Share a time, whether as a kid or adult, when you felt left out. How did that make you feel about yourself? How did that make you feel towards those who you felt excluded by?**

Study Step 1: Read 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

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.

- **Read 11:17-22.** What harm is being caused by the Corinthians' meetings?
 - **"...Their are divisions among you..." (v.18)**
 - **Certain Corinthians (The wealthy) are excluding members from private suppers. (v.21)**
 - **The result is that some go hungry while others have excess. (v.21)**
 - **Humiliating the poor. (v.22)**

- **Read 11:23-26.** What is the Lord's Supper according to Paul?
 - **It is remembering Jesus' broken body in the bread "which is for you..." (v.23-24)**
 - **It is remembering "...the new covenant in (his) blood..." in the cup. (v.25)**
 - **Participating in the Lord's Supper is "...proclaiming the Lord's death until he comes." (v.26)**

- **Read 11:27-32.** What are the consequences Paul lays out for taking the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner? What is the purpose of these consequences?
 - **"...guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord." (v.27)**
 - **Eating and drinking judgment on ourselves. (v.29)**
 - **Some have become "weak and sick" while others have "fallen asleep"/ died. (v.30)**
 - **These consequences are disciplines meant to correct so that "...we will not be finally condemned with the world." (v.32)**

- **Read 11:28 again, then vv. 33-34.** What commands does Paul give to the Corinthians in 11:28-34?
 - **"Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup." (v.28)**
 - **"...when you gather to eat, you should all eat together." (v.33)**
 - **"Anyone who is hungry should eat something at home..." (v.34)**

- **Leaders: Optional reflection question. Having worked through the passage, your group could take a minute or two and individually ask the Spirit to highlight a phrase or word from the text. After, share what part of the passage was highlighted to you.**

- 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.

- This passage is important in understanding what we are doing when participating in the Lord's Supper. At the core, it is remembering the "new covenant" (v.25), which Jesus has established through his blood (death on the cross). **Look up Jeremiah 31:31-34.** Read about the new covenant Jeremiah prophesied, which we know is fulfilled by Jesus.
 - Where is God going to put his law in this new covenant?
 - **"...I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts." (v.33)**
 - Relationally, what will this new covenant accomplish between people and God?
 - **God's people will really be God's people. (Last half of v.33)**
 - **God's people will all really "know" Him. (First half of v.34)**
 - What will this new covenant mean for sins?
 - **"For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (v.34)**
 - *Reflection question. What information from Jeremiah do we get that sheds more light on the work of Jesus?*² *What new covenant reality are you most grateful for today?*
- What does it mean to eat the Lord's Supper in an "unworthy manner" (v.27)? In context, it seems Paul's criticism of the Corinthians is directed at their lack of love towards one another. Their sin is primarily relational. **Look up Acts 2:42-47.** Read about the communal context in which the early church participated in "breaking bread" (v.42) (The Lord's Supper).
 - What did the earliest believers "devote" themselves to?
 - **"...teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." (v.42)**
 - How did the earliest believers treat their things?
 - **"And all who believed were together and had all things in common. 45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need." (vv.44-45)**
 - What were people doing "together" (v.46)? What was their heart posture while sharing meals?
 - **"And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes..." (v.46)**
 - **"...they received their food with glad and generous hearts, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people." (vv.46-47)**

² Jesus is saying that the shedding of his blood is the means of establishing that new covenant. It provides forgiveness of sins and opens the way for the activity of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer. The whole Jewish system is replaced by the Christ, and everything centres on the death of the Lord; it is that death which establishes the new covenant." (Leon Morris, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 7, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1985) 158.)

- *Reflection question. How were the earliest believers acting towards one another as they broke bread (The Lord's Supper) together in Acts? What are some contrasts to our passage in 1 Corinthians 11:17-34?*

Step 4: Apply To Our Story

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

- Paul commands the church to examine themselves. Take a moment to practice this with either option.
 - Option 1: Individually pray Psalm 139: 23-24 and listen to God's answer. Then, ask God individually to forgive and restore. As a group, discuss how that experience was.
 - Option 2: Individually pray Psalm 139:23-24 and share what God brought up and pray in light of the promise of James 5:16 for one another. (This could be done by splitting into smaller groups: i.e. men with men, women with women.)
- As a church, our situation doesn't perfectly fit the situation of the Corinthians; however, there are some principles we can take. One is this: the church needs to be unified in Jesus Christ and not in anything else. The rich in this text were unified around their shared social status, while the poor were excluded. How do we exclude others from participation in the church body in matters other than in situations of unrepentant sin?
- In light of this passage, how can we pray?
 - Lord, please help our church to be unified in Jesus Christ and grow in our love for all our brothers and sisters in Christ.
 - Lord, thank you for what Jesus has done on the cross and in His resurrection, which has saved us from sin and death and given us eternal life.

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 attached to our weekly group leader email.)
- 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?