



EST. **NORTHVIEW** 1980
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community Group Leaders' Guide – Oct 25/26 2025

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

This week's text has been widely debated.¹ Here's some additional leaders' notes:

BEFORE WE STUDY THIS WEEK'S PASSAGE

Doctrine of the Clarity of Scripture: The clarity of Scripture means that the Bible is written in such a way that its teachings are able to be understood by all who will read it seeking God's help and being willing to follow it.

- **This means: Scripture is clear in matters essential for salvation**
 - Who God is and what He cares about.
 - Who man is, his own sinful state, and his means of attaining salvation
- **This doesn't mean:**
 - That every single passage of scripture is equally clear.
 - **2 Peter 3:15-16:** *15 Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. 16 He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.*
- **Best practices when we come difficult passages:**
 - Read and think through the passage thoroughly on our own. Then...
 - Consult different translations
 - Consult commentaries
 - Discuss and debate constructively
 - Arrive at our own conclusions and keep an open mind
- **Please don't:**
 - Distort a scripture passage (attempt to make it say things it isn't saying) - 2 Peter 3:16 above
 - Throw up your hands and say that scripture is too difficult to understand
 - 437 verses in 1 Cor - 420/437 are not difficult to come to a consensus on meaning.
 - Cut off friends or family members because of different interpretations

¹ Leaders: you can also see a resource our Discipleship Pastor, Kristal, developed on this text for further study as an appendix at the end of this guide.

Open-Handed vs. Close Handed Doctrine:

- When we talk about theological differences, we distinguish between open-handed and close-handed issues.
- **Close Handed Issues:**
 - Those which are core to the Christian faith.
 - Denying them means you are not a Christian
 - Eg. That Jesus Christ is God (Jehovah Witness & Mormons believe otherwise)
- **Open Handed Issues:**
 - Those which are not core to the Christian faith
 - Debates may cause denominational differences, or differences in how churches are structured
 - Eg. Infant vs. Adult Baptism, Gender Roles
- **How do you know if a doctrine is open-handed or close-handed?** A helpful article:
 - Taylor, Justin. ["Not All Doctrines Are at the Same Level: How to Make Some Distinctions and Determine a Doctrine's Importance."](#) The Gospel Coalition website, 29 Sept. 2015.

How do we know if scriptural teaching is directed at a specific culture, or is "transcultural" (for all time)?

- As we read scripture, we want to identify which pieces are "principles" and which pieces are "application" of principles.
- Principles are transcultural, application of principles aren't necessarily transcultural.
 - Principle: Honor Your Father and Your Mother.
 - 21st Century application - Don't text and snapchat while your parents are trying to talk to you.

Leaders note: as a church, this is a benefit of preaching through books of the Bible verse by verse, chapter by chapter on the weekend. It helps us avoid only picking and choosing the texts we "feel like" teaching. We want to look to and preach the full and whole counsel of God, come to know him deeply, and experience more of his abundant wisdom and life.

Enjoy!

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 October 25/26 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 14:26-40**
Start the conversation with an "Icebreaker."
After speaking of the necessity and nature of love, unity, and intelligibility for how spiritual gifts are understood and practiced Paul speaks more broadly about order within the gathering of believers.
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:
This week Paul addresses order in the gathering. Christianity has always had a balance between individual freedom and order for the sake of the group.
Share an experience of where you experienced disorder in a gathering of believers (or another group) and the effects the disorder had on the benefit the gathering had for those attending. Where have things, in the name of 'order' been unbeneficial?

Study Step 1: Read 1 Corinthians 14:26-40

Familiarize yourself with this section of verses. (Note characters, commands, key/repeated words!)

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 14:26-33a**

- Note: this section of 1 Corinthians is one of the first insights we have into some aspects of the early church worship service. What five aspects in verse 26 does Paul present as typical things that might be seen at the gatherings in Corinth? What ought to unify all of these activities?
 - **Hymn, lesson, revelation, tongue, interpretation**
 - **'Let all things be done for building up'**
- After framing—again—the essential focus of upbuilding not just in intention but “in order,” Paul speaks to tongues and prophecy within the gathering in verses 27 through 31.
 - Both tongues and prophecy are treated in many ways. What orderly limits are put on both?
 - **Both: Two to three in order (27, 29)**
 - **Orderly:**
 - **Tongues: 'each in turn' (27)**
 - **Prophecy: 'you can all prophesy one by one' (31)**
 - **Prophecy: 'The spirits of prophets are subject to prophets' (32)**
 - **Tested or reasoned/intelligible:**
 - **Tongues: 'Let someone interpret' if no one 'let each of them keep silent in church' (28)**
 - **Prophecy: 'Let the others weigh what is said' (29)**
- In verse 33 what broader theological truth does Paul give to why order is needed, even for spiritual gifts like tongues and prophecy?
 - **God is a God of peace, not confusion**

- **Take a look at 14:33-36**

Continuing to speak about order within the gathering, along with the groups of tongue speakers, interpreters, and those with a prophecy, women are spoken to as a category of people within the gathering.

- If we see God's character as one of peace and not confusion (14:33) stimulating Paul's thinking here, what practice in all the churches does Paul present to the Corinthians?
 - **'The women should keep silent in the churches.'**
- Paul relates this to submission, and speaks to two levels of authority. What are they?
 - **The Law of Moses**
 - **Leader's Note: we will look to this in the "Connect to God's Story" section below**
 - **The place of learning should be in their home under their husbands**
 - **'It is shameful for a woman to speak in church'**
 - **Leader's note: this could be seen as a third reason, but it seems best to link it to the cultural understanding of the time and Biblical precedent under the Law to learn from husbands at home as the women would have been uneducated.**
- Women are encouraged to learn in the gathering. This was a huge shift from Jewish and Roman culture, which discouraged, if not disallowed women to learn. Paul assumes they will learn, but is concerned about their questions disrupting the serve. If they have any questions, where is Paul advising them to speak up with these questions?
 - **The place of learning should be in their home under their husbands**

- **Read 37-40.**
 - Paul concludes this lengthy concern of spiritual gifts by reminding them that if they claim to be spiritual, what will they come to understand?
 - **'That the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord' (14:37)**
 - As is Paul's concern throughout the last few chapters, Paul concludes with a concern for the entire gathering.
 - Bringing in his conclusion from 14:1-2, Paul states what about prophecy and tongues in 14:39?
 - **'Earnestly desire prophecy'**
 - **'Do not forbid speaking in tongues'**
 - For all that is done in the service, what two principles should guide the Corinthians?
 - **'Done decently' and 'in order'**
- *Reflection question: It seems like Corinth had an issue with people using the freedom of the gathering to make it about them. Reflect on where you see freedoms potentially abused in the church today. Where has this Christian balance of freedom and order been abused in a culture that ignores God's reign?*
- 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.

- As noted above, this section highlights how an early church service in one of Paul's established Greek churches might look. Though Paul is speaking about the need for order in the gathering in Corinth, let us read **Acts 2:42-47** to note the normative activities that Luke states about the very start of the Church.
 - Have someone read Acts 2:42-47
 - What did the early followers devote themselves to?
 - **'The apostles' teaching'**
 - **'The fellowship' of believers**
 - **'Break of bread'**
 - **'Prayers'**
 - **'Day by day attending the Temple together'**
 - Like 1 Cor 14, how does Luke highlight "order" in the churches here in Acts?
 - **Order: the list itself implies it, but most explicitly: 'day by day' (Acts 2:46)**
 - **They placed themselves under the authority of the apostles' teaching (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor 14:33, 37-38)**
- In 1 Corinthians 14:33-36 Paul is speaking about order in the service for how others benefit, and therefore about how women are learning, *not qualifications for women in leadership*. It is good practice in Bible study to look to the surrounding context for more clarity. Let us remember **1 Cor 11:2-6** where Paul has already spoken about women in the service.
 - Get someone to read 1 Corinthians 11:2-6.

Leader's note: If people want to get into the complications of this text surrounding headship, you

can direct people back to our guide on 1 Cor 11:2-16 (ask and we can email it to you). For our purposes here, we will only be noting what Paul is allowing and therefore not dismissing surrounding women in the gathering.

- Within the topic about head coverings, what does Paul say about women in verse 5? What action are they performing?
 - **Praying and prophesying**
- Without getting into what 'headship' looks like for us today, or for the Corinthians, what literal behaviour is Paul addressing in this passage?
 - **Men having their head uncovered (1 Cor 11:4), and women having their head covered (1 Cor 11:15)**
- If women in Corinth were praying and prophesying in a dishonouring way, this shows that they were able to speak in the gathering, but were to do so in a certain way. Returning to 1 Cor 14:33-36 and its context of order, what new insight around Paul's commendation as the overall church practice does this bring to our understanding of women speaking in church? What might this imply about the cultural context for Paul's words in 1 Cor 14:33-36?
 - **The refrain from speaking is about *keeping order (just like tongues and prophecy, as well as why the headcovering was to be used the way it was), and secondly to show the culture that Christian women, though encouraged to learn, are still respectful and upstanding moral women in that they learn and submit to their husbands' authority instead of being disruptive in public with their new freedom to participate.***
 - **Paul is concerned most about the way the action is done (here about the way women learn in the gathering) and perceived within the given culture, not about limiting the participation of the individuals entirely.²**
- Note: The reference to 'the Law' in 1 Corinthians 14:34, "should be in submission, as the Law also says" has been debated. For our purposes here, the submission of wives to their husbands seems to fit the immediate context best. Along with 1 Cor 11 (always look to the immediate context and then the context of the book itself first) you may also look to Ephesians 5:22-33 to see the marriage relationship from a biblical perspective.
 - If this is the case, the issue is about respectful learning as moral and Christ-like women, and for a wife to use her voice towards her husband in a certain way. As we have seen already, it cannot mean that women are never allowed to speak at a Christian gathering.
 - **Leaders Note: It appears what Paul was addressing was a wife publicly challenging/dishonouring her husband in church, either in the prophecy which he gave or the interpretation of a prophecy he offered as an elder. This reflects a deviation from God's created design for husbands and wives (according to "the Law"), and that he addresses it by pointing back to God's larger purpose for husband/wife relationships.**
- *Reflection: There is an overall principle of interpretation that we can highlight here. When the Bible is clear on things, we can be clear, but where it is unclear we need to have humility and bring in careful reasoning, and like the text states, weigh out what is being said amongst one another. In the Mennonite heritage of Northview we call this a "Community Hermeneutic." That is, one tool for interpretation is to interpret and practice within the community and not alone. Reflect on how this principle has been helpful to you in your Community Group, Bible study, etc. as we learn to follow Christ together in community.*

² Once again, Paul is not speaking to the qualifications of and limits of who speaks in the gathering, but to the way by which women learn within the gathering in 1 Corinthians 14.

Step 4: Apply To Our Story

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

- How does seeing God as a God of peace change the way we understand the need and focus of order during the gathering of the Body of Christ? More broadly, how ought God's character be something we reflect, not just in our personal walk, but our corporate walk as the Body of Christ?
- Though God wants us to give according to our gifts, He desires to order all of our contributions towards His ordered ends. Where can you order yourself within the gathering for the sake of the Body? Try to be specific. For example, you could multiply the benefits you have received in your orderly Community Group by making space for more people in your current group, or by starting new groups for the benefit of others.
- Respond in prayer, thank God for being a God of peace and order. Pray for the Church to be a place of order so that everyone may benefit, especially the outsider and the hurting.

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?

LEADERS' APPENDIX FOR 1 CORINTHIANS 14

Outline of Whole Passage:

Our Spiritual Gifts Build up the Church when...

- 1) Our Message is Clear (1 Cor 14:1-25)
- 2) Our Meetings are Peaceful (1 Cor 14:26-40)
 - Tongue speaking is controlled
 - Prophetic speaking is controlled
 - Women's speaking is controlled

Contextual Reading Q's for 1 Cor 14:34-35 (Women's speaking is controlled)

- 1) **What does it mean that women speaking are controlled? Control imposed upon them by others (eg. silenced by others) OR, exercise self control?**
 - Context seems to indicate a call to exercise self-control.
 - Tongue speakers called to exercise self-control - not speak in tongues if no interpreter
 - Prophetic speakers called to exercise self-control - the spirits of the prophets are subject to control of the prophets (v 32)
 - Women called to "remain silent" - call to women to exercise self-control.
- 2) **What does "remain silent mean"? Never speaking publicly in the gathered assembly of the church?**
 - Can't be b/c of 1 Cor 11:5 - Every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head.
 - In 1 Cor 11:5, Paul is acknowledging that women are praying and prophesying in the church - but he is correcting their practice - the way they are doing it.
 - What they are doing is dishonoring husbands and/or confusing gender identity and/or dishonoring authority structure in church.
- 3) **What are the interpretative options, since both 1 Cor 11:5 and 14:34 are in the same book?**
 - **Option #1 - 14:34-35 wasn't written by Paul.** These verses were inserted later on by a scribe who was trying to curb women's influence in the church.
 - Problem with this option is that there is all ancient manuscripts include these 2 verses. It might be a plausible argument if some of the ancient manuscripts omitted them.
 - Some manuscripts have these verses located at a different place in Chapter 14 (at the end of the chapter) but all of the manuscripts include these verses.
 - **Option #2 - 14:34-35 is addressing disruptive women.** Disruptive women should be silenced.
 - Disruptive tongues silenced / disruptive prophecy silenced / disruptive women silenced.
 - Women could pray & prophecy at the right time - prayer & prophecy don't require formal education and therefore Paul allows it.
 - Women were not trained to exercise public leadership over mixed groups & their formal involvement would have been seen culturally as disruptive, so Paul asks them to be silent in more formal leadership settings so as to not bring scandal to the gospel.
 - This may not be a directive for all time - now that women have more formal education & training (Egalitarian Gordon Fee / John Stackhouse opinion)

- **Option #3 - 14:34-35 is about women remaining silent in a specific situation - when prophecies are being weighed & evaluated.**
 - Verses just prior to this - v 29 - “two or three prophets should speak, and the others should weigh carefully what is said”.
 - The others - elders - leaders of the churches who are called to sift & guard the doctrine of the church. (1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9)
 - Women shouldn't jump into formal, public doctrinal debates
 - b/c it may dishonor husband - public debate rather than private discussion suggests rebellious spirit not submissive/partnership spirit (1 Cor 11 issue)
 - s/b in submission as the law says - created order. (v 34)
 - b/c it may dishonor church leadership (1 Cor 11 issue)
 - b/c it may dishonor gender distinctives (1 Cor 11 issue)
 - Paul appeals to the same authorities as he does in 1 Cor 11 (creation order v 34, cultural disgrace v 35)
- **Northview Practice - Closest alignment to Option #3**
 - Women pray and prophesy in gathered assembly of church (using description of prophecy as in v 3 - speaking to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort)
 - Formal, evaluated “doctrinal teaching” w/i gathered assembly conducted by men.
 - Elders of the church (male leaders) guard the doctrine of the church.
 - Women have input / can ask q's - sermon review & preview etc.
 - Women called to exercise gifts in all aspects of church other than preaching to the gathered assembly on a weekend service, and fulfilling elder role (formal guarding of the church's doctrine). Paul's directives in 1 Cor 14:34-35 are for when the whole church is together. When all church is together there needs to be clear leadership structure.
 - At Northview women...
 - Teach Mixed Adult Classes / Leadership Breakfasts etc.
 - Lead Community Groups
 - Lead Worship
 - MC Services, Lead Communion, Baptize etc.
 - Participate in Doctrinal Discussions - sermon review / preview / setting sermon schedule / pastoral discussions
 - Are engaged in formal theological study - Immerse Program, Internship Program, Sponsorship for other Theological Programs