

Groups Guide



Purpose

Country Club United Methodist Church is a community of neighbors practicing living the love of Jesus together.

Vision

Guided by Jesus' love, Country Club seeks to become an oasis where all may experience God's transformative and refreshing grace.

Mission

Toward the realization of this dream, we commit to growing as apprentices of Jesus, nurturing engaging relationships with our neighbors, and cultivating creativity.

Welcome to Country Club United Methodist Groups! Thank you for your curiosity to learn more about our vision for how to share life together and about how to take next steps.

We believe the Church is not a building or a weekend activity, but a people. As such, we strive to live out the Gospel in our city throughout the week, practicing the Way of Jesus, then gathering each weekend as a collection of communities. Country Club Groups are the way we come together during the week to be the people of Jesus in our neighborhoods.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to our Apprenticeship Director, Stephanie Mutert at stephaniemutert@countryclubumc.org.

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**Learn the unforced
rhythms of grace.**

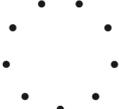
Matthew 11:29 (The Message)

Community Vision

be with Jesus

become like Jesus

do what Jesus did

 **Practicing
the Way**

Life with Country Club

Practice the Way of Jesus

We believe that to be an apprentice of Jesus is to order your life around three goals: be with Jesus, become like Jesus, and do what Jesus did.

Gather on Sundays

We gather as a church to pray, learn the Scriptures, and worship together as the people of God.

Live in Community

Throughout the week, we live in community where we eat, pray, and share life together. Country Club Groups are where we practice the way of Jesus, together, in Kansas City. We have three types of groups:

- **Connect Groups** to meet others interested in doing life together.
- **Explore Groups** to discover what helps you grow.
- **Community Groups** gather weekly to eat, pray, and practice the way of Jesus together.

Commit to One Another

As the uniquely equipped people of God called Country Club United Methodist Church, we commit to a shared life together committing to give and receive our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness, including:

- Praying with and for each other and our neighbors.
- Participating in the mission and ministry of the church.
- Investing our resources to further the Kingdom of God.
- Serving each other, our community and the world with our time and talents.
- Sharing the Good News of Jesus' redemptive love in all the ways we can.

Core Beliefs

Country Club is part of the United Methodist Church, sharing a common heritage with all Christians. Our overarching belief is that God loves us unconditionally as an act of grace that is neither deserved nor earned. The following statements are meant to help clarify this general belief.

God

There is one eternally existing God who has three distinct persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God is the creator of all that exists, both visible and invisible, and is therefore worthy of all glory and praise. God is perfect in love, power, holiness, goodness, knowledge, wisdom, justice, and mercy. God is unchangeable and therefore is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

Revelation

God has been revealed to us through Jesus Christ, who is the visible image of the invisible God, the holy scriptures, and through all of creation itself.

Humanity

Humans, both male and female, were created in God's image for God's glory. Humanity was created without sin and appointed as caretakers of the rest of God's creations.

The Fall

Choosing not to obey God caused humanity to "fall," introducing separation between God and humanity; a fracture affecting all of creation.

Salvation

Jesus Christ came to reconcile us with God. He lived a life without sin and willingly died on the cross to pay the penalty for our transgressions. God raised him from the dead and now, by grace, offers the free gift of eternal life to all who follow Christ, by faith, as their Lord and Savior. That is why salvation can be found in Christ alone.

The Church

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, the Church is meant to be the visible body of Christ, sent into the world to glorify God and proclaim the gospel, the good news, of Jesus Christ.

Resurrection

Jesus Christ is returning one day to judge both the living and the dead and to usher in the fullness of God's kingdom on earth.

Reconciling Congregations

Country Club United Methodist Church welcomes and affirms into the full life and ministry of our church people of every race, ethnicity, age, faith history, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, family configuration, physical ability, mental ability, educational status, and economic status. We celebrate the gifts that God sends through the diversity of God's people and declare ourselves to be a Reconciling Congregation.

Community Group Commitments

What is a Country Club Community Group?

A Country Club Community Group is a group of 10 – 15 people who gather weekly to eat, pray, and practice the way of Jesus together.

Active Participation in Your Own Spiritual Formation

Group participants work to regularly integrate and deepen the basic Practices of Jesus and life in the Holy Spirit: Bible reading, prayer, silence and solitude, sabbath, church gatherings, community, emotional health, and generosity.

Active Participation in Country Club UMC

- Regular attendance and involvement in the Sunday gatherings
- Agreement to and engagement with our Core Values:

Curiosity

Creativity

Community

Compassion

Collaboration

Active Participation in Your Community

- Regular Group attendance unless you're out of town, sick, or there is an unforeseen, unavoidable circumstance
- Engagement in the three-part rhythm of Group life: play, learn and share
- Normalizing the Holy Spirit in your group by listening for and responding to the Holy Spirit living in you
- Being present and respectful with each other (e.g. no phones, engaging honestly in discussion, etc.)
- Creating hospitable space to safely share, knowing what is shared in the group stays in the group
- Sharing responsibilities (e.g. food, clean up, personal needs that arise, praying together, etc.)
- Communication to the Group Facilitator when you will not be joining the Group

Active Participation in Kansas City

- Involvement in your Group's monthly missional initiative
- Praying for Kansas City (e.g. for salvation, restoration, etc.)

Community Group Rhythms

Rhythms

Monthly Rhythms

Week 1 - Connect as community to play
Week 2 - Connect as community to learn
Week 3 - Connect as community to learn
Week 4 - Connect as community to share
Week 5 - If there is a fifth week,
 groups pause and rest

Learning Rhythm

Welcome and open with prayer
Connection over a meal or snacks
Discussion of Practice Reflection on
the last week
Video: Part 1
 Discussion after the video
Video: Part 2
 Discussion after the video
Closing Prayer

Connect to play

This looks different within each group dynamic and is meant to build a sense of belonging together, but always with the key ingredient: laughter. It could look like a birthday celebration, dinner and a movie, game night, story sharing, a prayer night, attend a sporting event, go to a theatre production or whatever your group dreams up to do.

Connect to learn

Formation as followers of Jesus happens when we engage one of the nine Practices of the Rules of Life in the Practicing the Way curriculum: prayer, scripture, solitude, fasting, Sabbath, community, generosity, witness and service.

Connect to share

“Being like Jesus” is measured not by our ability to perform good deeds or help others for our own sake, but by our willingness to see our neighbors on the margins. To better know these neighbors we join missional partners, building relationships with our partners and those we serve together.

Missional Partners:

Della Lamb, Harvesters, Key Ingredients Pantry at Keystone UMC,
Newhouse KC, and Brookside Charter School

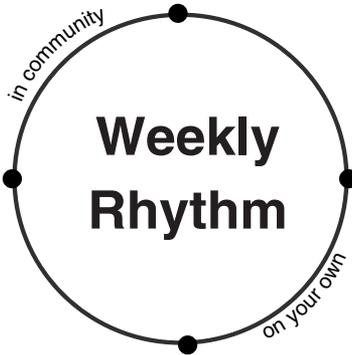
Values that Shape a Healthy Community Group

Formation

Learn

about the Way of Jesus in community

Process Together
what is coming up for you through your experience



Practice
on your own with spiritual exercises using tools and resources shared

Reflect

on your personal experience with God

Hospitality

Creating environments of welcome and loving presence

Community

Growing in the context of community and the importance of life around a table

Community Group Facilitator & Coordinators

What is a Group Facilitator?

A Group Facilitator serves as a coordinator of their Group, leading and empowering their Group in its discipleship to Jesus and organizing the different ways the community shares leadership.

Each Country Club UMC Group shares responsibility, allowing everyone to operate out of their strengths and passions while remaining emotionally healthy.

Communication Coordinator

The Communication Coordinator works in partnership with the Community Coordinators to keep the Community communication organized. This looks like maintaining a calendar and managing any necessary group communication for the weekly gathering and other activities.

Food & Hospitality Coordinator

The Hospitality Coordinator works in partnership with the Community Coordinators to plan out where the Community will gather and what they will eat each week. Eating together will vary based on the group and time of day.

Mission Coordinator

The Mission Coordinator works in partnership with the Community Coordinators to plan, organize, and facilitate the Community's monthly mission.

Other Roles

These could include anything like making sure everyone's birthday is celebrated, helping plan a trip, planning activities besides the night you meet, planning holiday-themed parties, reminding everyone about prayer requests, or anything else you may want to contribute.

Nine Core Practices in a Rule of Life

For the first few centuries of the church, the phrases *Way of Life* and *Rule of Life* were used interchangeably. It is a schedule and set of practices and relational rhythms that create space for us to be with Jesus, become like him, and do as he did, as we live in alignment with our deepest desires.* Practicing the Way focuses on nine Core Practices.

A community of communion with God in a culture of distraction and escapism through the practice of **Prayer**.

A community of courageous fidelity to orthodoxy in a culture of ideological compromise through the practice of **Scripture**.

A community of peace and quiet in a culture of anxiety and noise through the practice of **Solitude**.

A community of holiness in a culture of indulgence and immorality through the practice of **Fasting**.

A community of rest and celebration in a culture of hurry and exhaustion through the practice of **Sabbath**.

A community of love and depth in a culture of individualism and superficiality through the practice of **Community**.

A community of contentment in a culture of consumerism through the practice of **Generosity**.

A community of hospitality in a culture of hostility through the practice of **Witness**.

A community of justice, mercy, and reconciliation in a culture of injustice and division through the practice of **Service**.

Groups

Not all groups are Community Groups - here are some of the other groups you may be interested in at Country Club UMC.

Connect Groups

Meet others interested in doing life together.

Bee Creative

Creativity is such an import part of being a balanced individual, and people don't always take the time to do their favorite art or craft. Women are invited to join a small group to share your favorite hobby, whether it be knitting, crochet, embroidery, painting or jewelry-making -- the third Friday of every month in the Church Library from 10-11:30 am. There will be treats and seasonal crafts will also be planned. Contact: Cheryl Baird, cjbaird@hotmail.com.

Dinner for 8

Groups form throughout different seasons of the year. This is a great place to join others around a table, share a meal and get to know people. Contact Stephanie Mutert for more information at stephanie.mutert@countryclubumc.org.

Men's Group

The men of Country Club gather monthly (typically the 3rd Saturday of the month) to share a meal, and to grow closer to God and to one another. In addition, the men gather periodically for social events and events with the men of St. James UMC. Contact Terry Kilroy at terry.kilroy@lathropgpm.com for more information.

Traveling Table

Each Sunday after church, a group gathers around tables at local restaurants to get to know each other and share a meal. For more information contact Ann Vernon at annmvernon37@gmail.com.

Explore Groups

Discover what helps you grow.

Disciples Adult Sunday School Class

This group of adult men and women opens by sharing joys and concerns, then have lessons in a discussion format. Study comes from various guides, current events or videos that class members prepare and lead. All adults are welcome. Contact Susan Fershee for more information at susan.fershee@gmail.com.

Rhythms of Grace Sunday School Class

A laid back, living room setting to invite curiosity about who Jesus was and what Jesus did to lead us into deeper relationships with each other and Jesus on Sunday mornings at 9:30 am on the third floor. This group is meant for families with teens, young adults and anyone interested a space on Sunday mornings to connect with others in a small group. Contact Stephanie Mutert at stephanie.mutert@countryclubumc.org for more information.

Wednesday Sisters Zoom Group

With a deep focus on prayer and commitment to support each other through life, this group of women meets every Wednesday night on Zoom at 6:30 pm to share prayer requests, and to sit with the scripture and passages used on Sunday mornings in the sermon. They meet the last Wednesday of the month in person at Kingswood. Contact Ann Vernon for more information at annmvernon37@gmail.com.

Next Steps:

Give yourself some time to pray and reflect:

- Where do you sense the Holy Spirit wants you to be with Jesus, become like Jesus and do what Jesus did?
- What type of a group do you feel drawn to as you pray and reflect: Connect Groups, Explore Groups or Community Groups?

Try out the group you feel led to, and if it doesn't fit right, meet with Stephanie Mutert to talk about what could be a better fit. Email her at stephanie.mutert@countryclubumc.org to set up a time.

2026 Community Groups are starting during Lent and will be using the Practicing the Way Companion Guide. What day and time of the week could you commit to 8 weeks of being in a group?

- Sunday mornings, 9:30 am - 10:30 am on the 2nd floor
- Monday nights, 6 pm - 8 pm in the Library
- Wednesday nights, 6:30 pm on Zoom (Wednesday Sisters Group will also be using the Practicing the Way Companion Guide during Lent.)

Use the QR Code to sign up when you know what works for you.





COUNTRY CLUB

United Methodist Church

countryclubumc.org