

August 2024

ABOUT CITY GROUPS:

*Welcome and thanks for your willingness to serve as a City Group leader! We believe **City Groups** are a key component to discovering overflowing life through Jesus. Groups provide accountability, belonging, discipleship, and care to every person at **Peak City Church**.*

In this training, you will learn about our approach to groups and how you can contribute to the spiritual growth of the people around you.

Let's get started!

"So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for each other will prove that you are my disciples."

John 13:34-35

"Bear one another's burdens. In this way you fulfill the law of Christ."

Galatians 6:1

"If one person falls down, another can help them up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up."

Ecclesiastes 4:10

WHY CITY GROUPS?

It is all about **Biblical Community!**

12 remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility **EPHESIANS 2:12-14**

1. Biblical community is _____.
2. Biblical community is anchored to the _____.
3. Biblical community flows from our commitment to _____.

OUR APPROACH TO GROUPS (The Free-Market System):

The free-market system allows leaders to turn their existing relationships, gifts, interests, passions, and hobbies into disciple-making City Groups. This concept incorporates any **life-giving** activity that is of interest or enjoyment to the group leader.

THREE FEATURES:

- 1.) Free market leaders use their _____ with their _____.
- 2.) City Groups are built on _____ needs & _____ interests.
- 3.) Meet _____ or _____ on a _____ calendar.

CITY GROUP BASICS:

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF EVERY CITY GROUP:

New groups start every semester at [GroupLink](#). GroupLink for fall 2024 is **August 27**.

Although there will be a wide variety of group types, meeting times, & locations; the following elements should be incorporated into every City Group:

1. _____
Laid back time for group members to talk and get to know each other.

2. _____ **or** _____
This will vary based on what kind of group you're leading. It could be an activity like Frisbee or outreach or a discussion about a book or Sunday message.

3. _____
Ask for prayer requests from group members and pray at the beginning and/or the end of each group meeting.

4. _____
*This is what differentiates your Small Group from your neighborhood supper club. Whether it's through activities or discussion, **always include the Word of God**. This can be as simple as sharing a verse and reflection you read that week, and as in-depth as a line-by-line study through a book of the Bible.*

5. _____
Each City Group should actively involve and encourage members into some area of service. Groups serve together in outreach at least once a semester.

THINGS TO AVOID IN YOUR GROUP:

1. **Business/Pyramid/Multi-level marketing**

2. **Offerings**

3. **Unapproved speakers/materials**

4. **Overly controversial topics**

LEADERSHIP:

THE CITY GROUP LEADER:

Leadership Requirements:

- 1.) LOVE PEOPLE
- 2.) COMPLETE NEXT STEPS
- 3.) ACTIVELY ATTEND PEAK CITY ON SUNDAYS
- 4.) COMMITTED TO PERSONAL SPIRITUAL GROWTH

THE LEADER'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

The primary job of a group leader is to:

Help people take their _____ in their walk with Christ.

EXAMPLES:

Bring him/her to church. Encourage them to be baptized. Challenge them to complete Next Steps. Connect them to opportunities on the Dream Team. Encourage them to develop a daily devotional time. Offer (or direct them toward) sound, Biblical advice to help them better honor God with their resources, relationships, priorities, etc.

TIPS TO BE SUCCESSFUL:

1. _____ for group members. Tell them you are praying for them, and encourage them to pray for each other.
2. _____ an apprentice. Help someone find their purpose and empower them to lead others. The apprentice/co-leader HIGHLY recommended.
3. _____ within the group. Encourage fellowship outside of the meeting time. Connect with each other on Sundays. Text, Facebook or call members regularly.
4. _____ Honor people's time by starting on time and finishing on time.

5. GUIDE THE CONVERSATION:

When group members start in on topics that have nothing to do with the group lesson and threaten the harmony in the group, the leader can simply **stop the conversation**. Remind the group that its purpose is to apply God's Word, the Bible, to their lives in a practical way, and that the controversial topic is not part of the discussion.

CITY GROUP BENEFITS:

THE ABCs OF GROUPS:

_____ - Accountability involves inviting others into your life to challenge your relationships/priorities. It involves knowledge, grace, willingness to ask tough questions, and genuine care for others.

_____ - A person who has a sense of belonging is someone who feels accepted, connected, and comfortable with a group of people.

_____ - Care flows naturally from belonging and accountability. If the first two are done well, the third will happen naturally.

How to be a successful City Group Leader:

1. Pray daily for the members of your group.
2. Consider partnering with a co-leader to help share the responsibility of caring for and leading your group.
3. Connect with group members between weekly meetings through phone, email, text, social media, or face-to-face. Encourage group members to connect with each other throughout the week as well.
4. Have fun through laughter and by creating an enjoyable environment.
5. Respect people's time by beginning and ending your group on time.
6. Invite group members to attend church services and events with you like GroupLink, 21 Days Of Prayer, Good Friday Service, Chili Cook-off, or outreach opportunities.
7. Rally the group around a member going through a crisis. Use wisdom and be sensitive.

The Importance of Prayer

Prayer is a **foundation** of our church, and it is important for your City Group.

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

2 CHRONICLES 7:14

How to pray for your group:

- Pray for any requests group members share.
- Ask for the presence of the Holy Spirit in your group.
- Pray that God will open people's hearts to hear His truth.
- Pray for authentic community to develop.
- Pray for wisdom and strength to lead your group well.

Support as a City Group Leader

If you only do what you feel comfortable doing, you don't need God. God's best is often found **outside** your comfort zone.

When you serve God and people by leading a City Group, He will equip you and give you the **strength and wisdom** to lead well.

*I can do **all** things **through him** who strengthens me.*

PHILIPPIANS 4:13

*for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of **power** and **love** and **self-control**.*

2 TIMOTHY 1:7

When you feel like you don't know how to help someone in your group, remember ESPN:

E: Encourage

S: Share Scripture

P: Pray

N: Next Steps

Your Coach

As a City Group Leader, you have a Coach paired with you to help as you need support throughout the semester.

Your Coach's number one priority is to pray for you. They are a great resource for you to better lead your group!

Reach out to your Coach if you have a need, prayer request, or concern.

Brian Gosset is your City Groups Coach. His email address is: rpbriang@gmail.com

GroupLink

This is the easiest place to recruit/welcome new members to your group! You will have the chance to tell church attendees what your group is all about (age range, phase of life, meeting frequency, is it for singles, married, or a mixture of both, is it good for kids?, bible study or activity, etc). **The next GroupLink is August 27** between the 9:15 and 11 AM worship times.

Make a sign advertising for your group's target, location, meeting time, name (if you have one), and any other easy to read info (no fine print) you'd want people to know.

You'll get some table space to have a sign up/contact info sheet and some food related item to bribe people into coming to check out your group. The L-rd has used donuts and beef jerky in powerful ways.

Rightnow Media

Every City Group leader AND member has access to a Rightnow Media subscription. Peak City Church covers this cost. You can access 20,000+ online Bible studies. Most contain video teaching, study guides, and discussion questions. It's the Netflix of Bible Studies.

Email office@peakcity.church to gain access for you and your group attendees.

How to create good group dynamics:

- Set expectations.

A key to helping people feel comfortable in your group is to let them know what to expect. Take time to share how the group will flow from week to week. This can include things like explaining the times you will begin and end the group, how discussion or group activities will happen, and how group members can share prayer requests or best engage in the group.

- Follow the 70-30 rule.

Give the members of your group room to speak up instead of doing all the talking yourself. About 70% of talking should come from members and 30% from the leader.

- Keep discussion positive.

If conversation takes a negative or destructive turn, guide it back to a healthy place. If someone needs to talk about a sensitive or complex issue, you can follow up with them after the group or call your coach to help you respond well.

- Keep the conversation relevant to everyone.

Remember people in your group will be at different places in their spiritual journey. Be thoughtful when you talk about spiritual concepts or church terms that might be unfamiliar to new Christians or new church-goers.

- Respect boundaries.

Married men should minister to men and married women should minister to women. A married couple may minister to a single person. We want to maintain integrity and purity in our City Groups. These boundaries will help protect the leaders and group members from entering into an uncomfortable or inappropriate situation.

Stay Connected

Throughout the semester, respond to your Coach about group attendance, potential new City Group Leaders, and how members are moving one step.

Preparing for your group meetings:

- Send a message to group members reminding them about the first meeting.
- Arrive early to set up a welcoming environment.
- Consider having nametags available to help everyone learn names for the first few weeks.

Conversation

Here are a couple conversation starters to help get people talking as your group gets to know each other:

How did you learn about our group?

What are your hobbies?

What are you looking forward to this year?

What brought you here?

What are you hoping to get out of this City Group?

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How can I recruit people to come to my group?

GroupLink! While this a great way to recruit people to your group, it is not the *only* way.

People who are already in your sphere of influence (co-workers, friends, and neighbors).

People new to the church, new believers, or have shown interest in getting involved.

Look for people you think you can help to realize their potential.

Ask God to send the right people to your group.

Where can I hold my City Group?

We encourage City Groups to meet outside the church in places where you like to spend your time. Some of the most common meeting places are homes, restaurants, parks, coffee shops, and office buildings.

Does someone need to attend Peak City to join our group?

NO. Anyone can attend. Attending Peak City is only a requirement for the group leaders.

Does my group have to meet weekly?

We encourage meeting weekly each semester in order to build genuine relationships, but groups are welcome to meet every other week. 2x per month is the minimum for regularly scheduled meetings.

Does Peak City Church offer childcare during City Group meetings?

No. This is up to your group to facilitate/provide.

How do I measure if group members are moving one step?

Ask! Make it part of your discussion whether in a group setting or individually.

Here are some great questions to guide your conversation:

- How did you get connected to this City Group?
- What are you most looking forward to in the group?
- Do you attend Peak City?
- What brought you to Peak City Church?

- Which service do you attend?
- Have you ever been part of a City (small) Group before?
- What do you feel like God has been doing in your life lately?
- Are you familiar with 21 Days of Prayer?
- What areas of your faith are you hoping to grow in the coming months?
- What are you focused on in your life right now?
- Have you been through Next Steps? Do you remember what your spiritual gifts are?
- Have you ever served on the Peak City Dream Team?
- How can I pray for you?

Everyone in your group will be at different places spiritually. The vision of helping them “move one step” is not to get them to do everything at once, it’s to help identify where they currently are spiritually and offer a practical next step to help them grow.

Here are some examples of **NEXT STEPS** you can share depending where a group member is spiritually:

- Invite them to attend a Sunday service with you.
- Share your personal story and what God has been teaching you.
- Share how Next Steps can help them discover their purpose and invite them to attend.
- Invite them to consider being water baptized. Invite your City Group to be there to celebrate anyone getting baptized.
- Share how you find time regularly to pray, worship, and read God’s Word, and encourage them to make their own plan for time with God.
- Tell them about the Peak City Church app and YouVersions One Year Bible reading plans.
- If they are ready to receive Christ, offer to pray with them.
- Encourage them to learn more about areas like the Fruit of the Spirit, prayer, the Trinity, the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts, and generosity by watching past messages at www.peakcity.church/messages

Thank you for helping to create community through City Groups at Peak City Church!