



# **LIFE IS BETTER TOGETHER**

## **HANDBOOK FOR LIFE GROUPS**

**WINTER 2018**  
**January 7 – March 23**

**Chapel in the Pines**  
**Community Covenant Church**



# LIFE GROUPS – WINTER 2018

---

## **Introduction**

*Everything is about relationship, everything! Sunday Service is just the first step to living a life of connection and purpose. God desires that each of us be intimately connected to Him and to one another. God's plan for His people is to share life together in His love and truth.*

*Chapel Life Groups are set up for you to experience a connected life. Our small groups provide safe places to seek faith in the Lord, grow hope through God's Word, and live a life of love with God and others.*

*Only two things in this life are eternal: God's Word and God's People! Set your priorities and your calendar to invest in what is eternal.*

---

## **What is a Life Group?**

In Life Groups, we commit ourselves to invest in making friendships and lasting relationships with God at the center. A Life Group is a home fellowship made up of 6-15 people who meet regularly to share, study, and support one another in their journey of faith. A trained leader/host leads each group. An average meeting lasts for 2 hours, followed by light refreshments.

## **How important are Life Groups at Chapel?**

Life Groups are central to being the church God has called us to be. They're the place where we study God's Word while supporting and sharing our lives with one another. Life Groups are where we move from being a crowd to a community.

## **How do I choose a Life Group?**

We strongly recommend you choose a group based on your desire to get to know that particular leader, host, or members, rather than its location. Relationships are key to our spiritual growth and maturity. When you are connected to people you enjoy developing friendships with, you will find it is worth your time, and even a longer drive.

## **How do I sign up for a Life Group?**

There are two ways to sign up for a group: through sign-ups on our designated Sundays or by calling the church office during the week. Information about each Life Group is included in a later section of this booklet. Call the church office at 209-795-1064 to speak to staff members who can assist you in finding and signing up for a group.

### **When and where do the groups meet?**

Life Groups meet at various times and on different days of the week in various locations in Arnold and our neighboring areas. Most evening groups meet during a weeknight. The daytime and weekend groups' meeting times will vary.

### **How long do group sessions last?**

We have Fall, Winter, and Spring sessions. At the end of each session, you will have the choice of staying in the same group, trying a new group, or even taking a break. Most groups stay together throughout the entire ministry year (Sept.-May). Life Groups do not meet mid-June through August, and they take breaks during the holidays.

### **What is the required commitment?**

Joining a Life Group requires a commitment to attend scheduled meetings and do the homework ahead of time. This commitment is the key to a strong Life Group; you will be encouraged to attend a quarterly group social and to participate in a once-a-quarter service project. You have the first two weeks to attend the group to make sure it's a good fit for you.

### **What will we study?**

We offer various Life Groups that study different types of material. Some groups cover topical studies, some study Books of the Bible, and others are sermon based. In the sermon based groups, questions within the sermon note sheet will be provided for study prior to the group's meeting. Each week there will be a few ice-breaker type questions to help your group to connect and get to know each other better. It will usually take 20-30 minutes per week to complete the homework.

### **What does it cost?**

Few things in Life are free. Life Groups are no exception! The cost of Life Groups is the cost of commitment. During the first meeting, each group will complete a "Covenant" together. This simple form helps each group discuss their priorities and commitment. Part of that commitment is the promise to attend each meeting and to complete the homework, attend the quarterly social, and do one service project per quarter as a group.

### **What about child care?**

Life Groups are for adults only. (Exceptions can be made for nursing newborns, up to six months old.) Some Life Groups arrange group child care while they meet. We generally leave it up to each family to work out their own child care. We believe Life Groups are worth the cost of childcare and protecting the time together from distractions.

# GROUP LEADERS & HOSTS

---

## MONDAYS

*Name: Loring Life Group*

*Leader: Brett Loring*

*(No openings at this time.)*

Jimalene and Brett have been married for 27 years. With their daughter, Lexie, pursuing her Masters Degree in Colorado and their son, Drew, at Cabrillo College, they are practicing spurts of empty-nesting. They enjoy visiting their kids, doing house projects, being involved in our local community, taking walks and being an integral part of the ministry here at Chapel. Jimalene loves participating on the Worship Team, and Brett is drilling away at Speech Language Pathology Assistant between work and leisure time. Both look forward to diving deeper into the Sunday sermon/teaching during Life Group this next year.

Their group meets Mondays from 7:00 to 8:30 PM in the church foyer. After the all-church study, they will discuss and seek to apply Sunday morning's teaching. It is a diverse group...single, married, working, retired. Some have children at home and others are empty- nesters.

*Name: Seasoned Group*

*Leaders: George & Georgia Farley*

*(No openings at this time.)*

George & Georgia have been married for 47 years. Over the years, they have invested heavily in their friendship and married Life. One of their favorite pastimes is going for walks, hand in hand. They also enjoy being involved in the lives of their grandchildren. Georgia is an avid quilter and George enjoys studying God's Holy Word and sharing it in men's groups and Life Groups.

The Farleys have loved leading small groups for the past 40 years. They currently lead a Life Group for married couples on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday nights in their home from 6:30 to 8:30 PM. After the all-church study, their focus will be on encouraging marriages, grand-parenting and leaving a spiritual legacy. Their group is called the "Seasoned Group" because, *"We all like to spice it up!"*

## TUESDAYS

*Name: B.a.S.I.C. Group*

*Leaders: Denver Stoner, Dan Varty*

*(No openings at this time.)*

BaSiC is a welcoming group of Christ-followers of various age ranges and spiritual maturity. This group is co-led by Dan Varty and Denver Stoner. Denver works as a local Law Officer and Suzanna works as a nurse in the Emergency Room at San Andreas Hospital. Dan is a retired Professor. Both couples enjoy making new friends and spending time with family and friends. Both Dan and Suzanna serve on Chapel's Leadership team.

In addition to participating in the all church studies, the group also likes to cover a variety of topical studies. They meet from 7:00-8:30 PM on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> of each month at the Bistro in Arnold.

*Name: Date Night Life Group*

*Leaders: Glenn and Jan Sewell*

*Hosts: Clayton and Becky Smith*

Jan and Glenn have been married going on 37 years. They have three daughters and six grandchildren. They have participated in various couples' groups and trainings throughout their marriage. They look forward to meeting new friends through this Life Group. This Couples' Life Group invites all couples – young, engaged, recently married, or “veterans” in marriage. The goal is to study what the Bible teaches us about improving our relationships with one another, learn from each other and have “serious fun.” The curriculum used in engaging and enlightening with videos, thought-provoking questions for discussion, and prayer time. Their study includes these four core habits: Have Serious Fun, Put GOD First, Respect & Love, and Practice Your Promise. Each meeting they have dessert along with study time and they plan at least one "serious fun" social outing for the group each quarter. The group meets from 7:00-8:30 PM each Tuesday at the Smith family home in Hathaway Pines.

## **TUESDAYS (CONTINUED)**

*Name: Wagner Bible Study Group*

*Leader: Jim Wagner*

Jim and Deanna retired to the foothills from San Ramon in 2001. They feel fortunate to have their four adult children and their families in the Bay Area, and they visit them often. Four of their twelve grandchildren are now married and live in other parts of California while others are also now away attending college. And, oh yes, they have one great grandchild!

The Wagner group is currently made up of retired couples, several singles and a few who are still working. They consider it a special blessing when they come together, sharing life stories, engaging in Bible Study, participating in prayer, and enjoying fellowship. Sometimes they also enjoy dinner or a movie together. They normally meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday evenings of each month from 6:30 to 9:00 PM in different homes. After the all-church study, their main focus this upcoming quarter will be *The Truth Project*, a DVD-based, in-depth Christian worldview experience from *Focus on the Family*.

## **WEDNESDAYS**

*Name: D.G.W. Life Group (Doing God's Work)*

*Leaders: Miles & Kay Gibbons, Warren Camp*

Kay and Miles like to kayak, hike and travel. They have been married for 12+ years and have 3 adult children and 7 grandchildren. Their Life Group is hoping to add a few new members this coming year. They meet from 7:30 to 8:00 PM on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of the month at the church, downstairs in Promiseland. Their Life Group rotates the facilitation between Miles, Warren and Kay. After the All-Church Study, they will be studying Books of the Bible, topical studies and spiritual books by various Christian authors. They encourage all age groups; "A good blend of believers makes for the best Life Group!"

## **WEDNESDAYS (CONTINUED)**

*Name: The Followers*

*Leader: Dave Cornman*

Dave and Linda Cornman retired to Arnold in 2006. Originally from northern Ohio, they raised their two children in the Bay Area and often came to Arnold for winter recreation. Currently they are blessed with three beautiful grandchildren, Cookie (a Maltipoo puppy), and Elmo (an African grey parrot). Dave is an active golfer, back-packer and bird-watcher. Linda loves her quilting. They have been active in small groups since coming to Arnold, with Dave facilitating for the last couple years. Both Dave and Linda attribute their strong walks with Jesus to their small group participation and relationships developed at Chapel. Dave will be leading the Followers Life Group on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of each month, 6:30 to 8:30 PM. After the All-Church Study, they will be studying from the Life Guide Bible Study series, *Faith*. Dave and Linda are excited about how God plans to lead the Followers Life Group!

## **THURSDAYS**

*Name: Women's Life Group*

*Leader: Mandy Mantei*

*(No openings at this time.)*

Mandy Mantei is an ex white-river-rafting guide! She and Charlie continue to enjoy the great outdoors with their family. They have been married for 16+ years and Mandy home schools their kids. Together as a family, they enjoy home improvement projects and making fun memories!

Mandy facilitates a Life Group particularly for women on Thursday afternoons from 3:00 to 5:00 PM in her mountain home. Mandy looks forward to the wisdom that is shared in the Life Group setting. After the All-Church Study, they will be studying various biblical topics, and praying for one another. They often use a DVD/workbook study format and they love celebrating God's work in their hearts and lives.

## **THURSDAYS (CONTINUED)**

*Name: Vahle Life Group*

*Leader: Lee Vahle*

*(No openings at this time.)*

Lee and "B" Vahle have been married for 22 years. Prior to their marriage, they knew each other as friends for 40 years. They enjoyed watching their kids grow up and they continue to enjoy their family and friends together. Their Life Group is composed of seniors who meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month from 4:30 to 6:30 PM. They enjoy sharing snacks and rotating homes to meet at during their time together. After the All-Church Study, they will continue going through their study on Elijah, using Bible Study booklets as their format. They enjoy Old Testament studies and they decide together what they will study.

*Name: Dorrington Life Group*

*Leaders: Tom & Pat Mantei, Christopher & Ruthe Sanborn*

*(No openings at this time.)*

Tom and Pat Mantei are co-leaders/facilitators with Christopher and Ruthe Sanborn. The Manteis have been permanent residents of Big Trees Village for 39 years, after traveling with the Navy for 20 years. They stay busy with gardening, home improvements, reading, studying, praying, and watching TV. They have been married for 53 years and have seven children, 16 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren.

They enjoy "partial" family get-togethers frequently.

Christopher and Ruthe Sanborn have spent many years in the area part time and have been permanent residents for three years. They have one son and two grandchildren. Ruthe and Christopher were very active in ministry in the Aptos area before moving here. They have been a valuable addition to this group for the past three years.

As a team, they look forward to spiritual growth in the hearts of their Life Group. After the all-church study, they will study the book *The God I Never Knew* by Robert Morris, to start this Life Group year. They meet weekly every Thursday from 7:00 to 9:00 PM.

**WINTER 2018 LIFE GROUPS  
(JANUARY - MARCH)  
WEEK-AT-A-GLANCE**

---

**MONDAYS**

Loring @ Chapel (Arnold) – weekly – 7:00 to 8:30 PM  
Farley home (Arnold) – 1st & 3rd – 6:30 to 8:30 PM

**TUESDAYS**

Wagner @ various homes (Arnold - Douglas Flat) – 1st & 3rd – 6:30 to 9:00 PM - **OPEN**  
Stoner @ Bistro (Arnold) – 2nd & 4th – 7:00 to 8:30 PM  
Date Night @ Smith Home (Hathaway Pines) – weekly – 7:00 to 8:30 PM - **OPEN**

**WEDNESDAYS**

Cornman home (Arnold) – 2nd & 4th – 6:30 to 8:30 PM - **OPEN**  
Gibbons @ Chapel (Arnold) – 2nd & 4th – 6:30 to 8:00 PM - **OPEN**

**THURSDAYS**

Mantei home (Hathaway Pines) – weekly – 3:00 to 5:00 PM  
Vahle @ various homes (Arnold) – 2nd & 4th – 4:30 TO 6:30 PM  
Mantei/Sanborn homes (Dorrington) – weekly – 7:00 to 9:00 PM