

# GROUPS

## Why Small Groups Exist

Small Groups have one, simple purpose—to bring people together. We believe God created us to live in community with others and only then can we experience the full life He intends for us.

We believe life change happens in the context of Relationships.

Meaningful relationships can be hard to find, and Small Groups exist to make life-changing relationships relevant and accessible to you.

*Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. ECCLESIASTES 4:9-12*

## Church of the Crossroads Small Groups Model

At Church of the Crossroads, we believe our church must grow Larger and Smaller at the same time.

We grow larger to reach as many people as possible with the life-giving message of Jesus. We gather in Small Groups to build community and care for people. Church of the Crossroads is a church of Small Groups, not just a church **with** Small Groups.

We base our Small Group model on the early church as described in the Bible in the book of Acts. In Acts, you can read about the tremendous growth of the first church in Jerusalem, where small group meetings in homes helped lay the foundation.

*Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah. ACTS 5:42*

### Small Groups offer people:

#### 1. A Place to Connect

*Yes, whatever a person is like, I try to find common ground with him so that he will let me tell him about Christ and let Christ save him. 1 CORINTHIANS 9:22 TLB*

We were not made to do life alone. God created us for community, and Small Groups provide a place to connect with others, share life, and grow in faith together.

#### 2. A Place to Protect

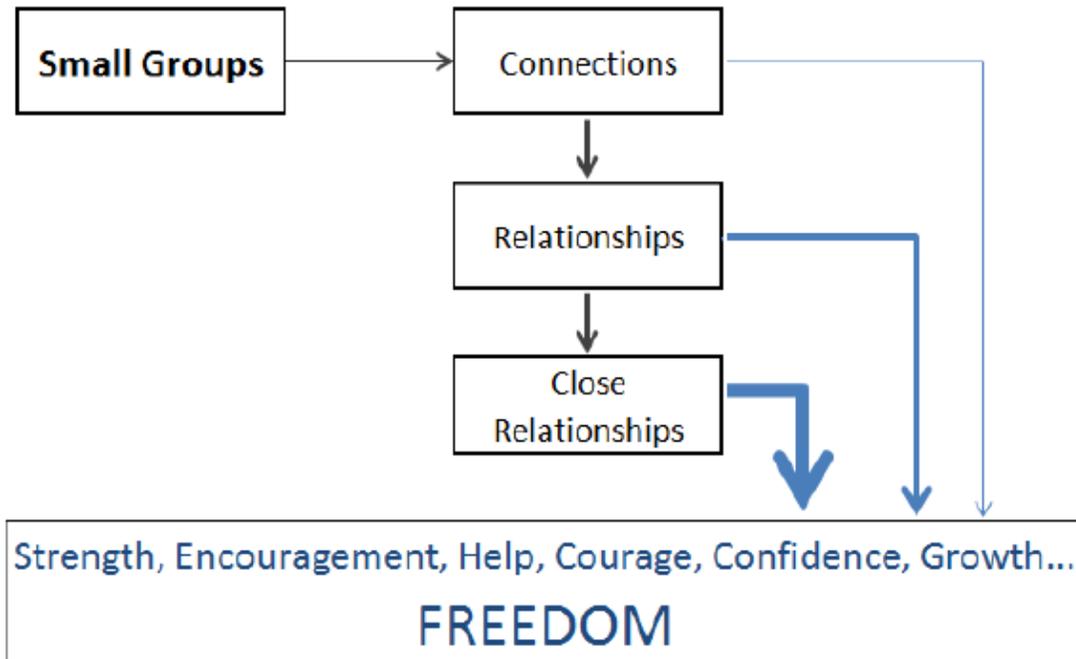
*We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. 1 JOHN 3:16 NLT*

It is through life together that our problems become smaller, and God uses others to bring support and encouragement to our lives. Small Groups become a place where others don't just know your name, but care about what is happening in your life and want to support you in your spiritual journey.

#### 3. A Place to Grow

*As iron sharpens Iron, so one person sharpens another. PROVERBS 27:17*

We believe every person is created with God-given potential to make a difference in the world. Small Groups are a place you can grow with others to become more like Jesus and reach the potential God has put inside you.



***The path to personal freedom starts with CONNECTION.***

### ***What a Small Group looks like***

Groups meet weekly during each semester.

Groups meet in a variety of places like homes, parks, restaurants, coffee shops and office buildings. New groups start every semester making it easy to build community and enjoy different types of groups.

No matter what your group meets about, each meeting should be made up of four things:

1. Casual Fellowship  
Laid back time for group members to talk and get to know each other.
2. Activity or Discussion  
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 the Sunday message.
3. Prayer  
Ask for prayer requests from group members and pray at the beginning and/or the end of each group meeting.
4. Spiritual Component  
This is what differentiates your Small Group from your neighborhood supper club. Whether it's through activities or discussion, always find a way to include the Word of God. This can be as simple as sharing something God is teaching you with the group or talking about a verse you read that week.

### ***Your Role as a Small Group Leader***

God has a part for all of us to play in the church, and Small Group Leaders come alongside the pastors and staff of Crossroads to help care for people.

*Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.*

*EPHESIANS 4:11-13 NLT*

The primary role of a Small Group Leader is to help group members move One Step in their walk with God.

*Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds; PROVERBS 27:23*

People in your group will be at different places in their spiritual lives and each person will have different next steps to take. Here are some examples of 'next steps' you can help people take:

- Start attending Sunday services
- Start reading the Bible regularly
- Start praying regularly
- Be water baptized
- Complete Discover Crossroads
- Join the Dream Team
- Start tithing
- Start attending First Wednesday services
- Attend a COTC conference
- Invite a friend or neighbor to church or a Small Group
- Attend a Small Group Leadership Training to become a Small Group Leader

### **How to be a successful Small 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 outside of 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 First Wednesday services, conferences, 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 Small 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.

## Confidence as a Small 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 Small Group, He will equip you and give you the strength and wisdom to lead well.*

*For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. [PHILIPPIANS 4:13](#)*

*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*

## Leadership Support

*As a Small Group Leader, you are never alone in creating community. We have pastors, staff, and the Small Groups Team who are all working alongside you to invest in great Small Groups at Crossroads. Reach out to us if you have a need, prayer request, or concern.*

### 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 controversial 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 reach out to our Pastors 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.

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

## How to Get Started

1. Ask God for direction about what group to lead and who to invite.
2. Once you decide on a topic or activity for your group
3. Choose a place and time to meet.
4. Complete the Small Group Application form.
5. Invite people you know or meet to come check out your group.
6. Pray for God to do great things through your Small Group.