

# GROUPS Start Well

: •

#### MY GROUP INFORMATION

LEADER(S) NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE:\_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL:

### WELCOME

Life is better connected. Whether you're new to this small group thing or you've been part of a group before–welcome. From the very beginning of time, God designed us to be in community with him and others, so know that God has a purpose for this group and for everyone in it.

What is a small group? Think of it as a group of people who regularly get together with the purpose of growing closer to God and to one another. Sessions include praying, studying a book of the Bible, serving on campus or through a local ministry, talking about the weekend's message, or simply hanging out in someone's living room.

Whether your group has formed around life stage, a topic or activity, or common interests, we hope this study launches you well and serves as a guide to discovering the personality and make-up of your group. All you need to do is show up, join in on the conversation, and be open to experiencing your relationship with God in a whole new way. By the end of these six sessions, you'll experience first-hand that life really is better connected. Let's get started!

# HOW TO USE THIS CURRICULUM

#### BEFORE YOUR GROUP MEETING

Read the session's introduction and weekly reading sections.

Answer the discussion questions.

#### DURING YOUR GROUP MEETING

Read the session's weekly reading out loud. (Be sure to rotate between all members throughout the six meetings.)

Have a conversation around the answers you gave for the discussion questions.

Discuss how you'll apply what you learned.

Read the moving forward section aloud to introduce next session's topic.

#### AFTER YOUR GROUP MEETING

Meditate on what Jesus is teaching you and apply what you learned.

### WHAT A TYPICAL GROUP MEETING LOOKS LIKE

#### HANG TIME (ABOUT 30 MINUTES)

This involves connecting relationally with one another. It can include playing ice-breaker games, eating food, casual conversation, and catching up on each other's weeks. It's unstructured, relaxed, and gives a chance for everyone to share more about themselves.

#### STUDY TIME (ABOUT 45 MINUTES-1 HOUR)

This is an intentionally structured time to set you up for the best opportunity to grow in your faith. Your group could go through a study, book, video series, or passages from the Bible.

#### PRAYER (ABOUT 15-30 MINUTES)

This is the time to connect with God as a community. Although this may look different from session to session, make it a priority to share prayer requests each week. You can pray for the person to your left, split up into prayer partners, or post requests to your group, but the benefit of praying with and for your group members is incomparable.

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

Session One: Community	01
Session Two: Spiritual Foundation	07
Session Three & Four: Get to Know the Group	013
Session Five: Serving	021
Session Six: What's Next	029

0



SESSION ONE: COMMUNITY

### SESSION ONE: COMMUNITY

### Have you ever wondered why a fight with your spouse, a broken relationship with a parent, or a lonely Friday night can tear you up inside?

Our deep craving to be connected drives our emotions, reactions, and plans. Regardless of whether we're introverted or extroverted, relationships are messy—but they're not optional.

In the beginning, God looked at everything and said it was good. But when He saw Adam, He paused: "It's not good for man to be alone." As people made in God's very own image, we see in Scripture a built-in need to connect with others—not just casually, but authentically, deeply, and consistently. Just as God lives in perfect community with Jesus and the Holy Spirit, our hearts beat wildly for this same harmony in our everyday relationships.

Over the next six sessions, we'll explore the connection between **relationship with God** and **community with other people**. It's a struggle to have one without the other because they're meant to go hand-in-hand, but transformation only happens within both sets of relationships.

The main purpose of this book is for you to get to know one another as a group by growing closer to God. By reading His Word, sharing your stories, and meeting together, you're laying down a firm foundation for a great small group.

As you get started in your group, here are a few things to consider:

#### Join in.

The more you put into the group, the more you will get out of it. For instance, if you take the time to connect with people outside of group time, you'll develop deeper relationships. Same with the study. If you come prepared and ready to talk about it, you'll contribute and gain more from the conversation.

#### Commit to meeting as a group for six sessions.

First impressions aren't always what they seem to be! You never know who you are going to click with, and at the same time, you lose momentum in growing these relationships if you come sporadically. You may be tempted to opt out after session one if you don't connect with someone right away, but give this group a fair shot and see it through all six sessions.

#### Be open.

You don't have to share your deepest, darkest secrets, and you don't have to be instant best friends with the people in your group. But if you want to experience the transformation that only happens in relationships, have an open mind and be part of the community this group is trying to form.

### WEEKLY READING The Believers Form a Community

All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer. A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosityall the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved. Acts 2:42-47 As you can see, the concept of a small group has been around a while. In the first few hundred years of the church, these kind of groups were pretty much the only way to experience church. So are you ready to sell your houses, have dinner together daily, and pay off your small group leader's mortgage? You can breathe because that's not exactly what this passage is saying!

These verses in Acts aren't laying out rules every Christian should live by, but rather, they show the importance and priorities of God-centered communities. These small groups were faithful in reading God's Word, building relationships with other believers, praying, and opening up their lives to the many ways God wanted to use them. This is what we hope for you and your group too! So no need to share your car, wallet, or groceries quite yet, but skim through the priorities stated in Acts once more, and underline the intrinsic values that make up a small group.

You read it before, but we'll say it again: God designed us to be in community with him and others, so know that God has a purpose for this group and for everyone in it. Let's get to know one another!

## GET TO KNOW YOUR GROUP

#### Introduce yourself

05

How long have you been attending EBC? Share a bit about your family. Where do you work?

### What hobbies do you enjoy?

#### **Discussion Questions**

- 1. What motivated you to join a small group?
- 2. What do you think makes up a great group—from Scripture or from your own idea? How do you relate this ideal picture to this small group?
- 3. What do you hope to get out of this time together?
- 4. Share about a relationship in your life where you can truly be yourself. How does this relationship make you feel that way?
- 5. What about being in a small group may be easy or hard for you?

### AT HOME THIS WEEK

#### Log in to MyEBC and check out your group online!

You can post messages to the group, create events (such as service projects and social events), and print off a group roster with each member's contact information. Log-in at eaglebrookchurch.com/myebc to get started.

**Pray that God will use this group** to grow your relationship with him and the other group members.



# SESSION TWO: SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION

NE ME LEON

### SESSION TWO: SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION

Religion is a list of dos and don'ts. It says if you follow x, y, and z, prosperity and eternal life is yours. If you lie, forget to read the Bible, or say you'll pray for someone but never do, judgment is ahead. But are relationships always that cut and dry? Does your spouse say "I love you" at 5 o'clock every Tuesday? Maybe when you were newlyweds, but circumstances are a bit different now. Or do your kids always put away their toys before bedtime? With walkers and toddlers in the house, you're thinking, "That would be nice!" But for those of you with kids in middle school and high school, you answer with a strong, "Yes!" Cleaning up their belongings is expected and part of your kids' daily chores.

Relationships ebb and flow based on the season you're in, and every season is unlike any other. A relationship with Jesus isn't any different, and here's the kicker: he doesn't expect otherwise. Who you are with your spouse, friend, or co-worker is who you can be with Him. He did create you, you know. God loves you exactly how you're wired, and more than anyone else, he wouldn't want you to be someone you aren't.

So instead of talking to Him in calculated formulas, be honest and real. Just as you wouldn't want your kids to view your relationship as a duty, God doesn't want that either.

> Just as you'd want a candid conversation with your best friend instead of a rehearsed dialogue, that's what God wants too. In each day, moment of bliss, or challenge. God wants to be invited into your life.

### WEEKLY READING

Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a despised tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer: "I thank you, God, that I am not a sinner like everyone else. For I don't cheat. I don't sin. and I don't commit adultery. I'm certainly not like that tax collector! I fast twice a week, and I give you a tenth of my income." But the tax collector stood at a distance and dared not even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he beat his chest in sorrow, saying, "O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner." Luke 18:10-13

Which man in this story portrays the hero of faith? Is it the Pharisee who was sure to obey every commandment or the tax collector who laid out his honest feelings on the table? The religious figure who was thankful for his own perfection or the sinner who openly admitted he fell short of God's glory? The one who prayed for show or the one who beat himself in humility? We don't have to wonder; the answer lies in the very next verse:

"I tell you, this sinner, not the Pharisee, returned home justified before God. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." Luke 18:14

It's clear the call is to be like the tax collector. Jesus' teachings were never intended to be a list of rules that you can cross off a checklist or fit into a mathematical equation, and this man didn't pretend any such thing. Jesus otherwise stated in Matthew 22:36-40 that the entire law can be summed up in two key actions: 1) Love the Lord your God, with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind, and 2) Love your neighbor as yourself. He doesn't say specifically what that looks like, and that's intentional. It doesn't matter how exactly you do that; it just matters that you do-with honesty and humbleness toward God and others

Today, know that it doesn't matter who you are, how much you give to charities, or if you feel comfortable praying in front of others. We all are equal at the foot of the cross, and we all can have a real relationship with God.

### GET TO KNOW YOUR GROUP

#### What identity do you tend to carry?

For example, stay-at-home mom, athlete, project manager, single, or married. This reveals more of how God has wired you, what passions you have, and what occupies your day. Share this with the group, but remember to share it with God too. He desires to hear about your world, talk with you about what's on your mind, and above all else, he wants you to know that your identity can be found in Him.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. How have relationships looked different in your life based on the season you're in?
- 2. If the call is to be like the tax collector, what does that look like today in our own lives?
- 3. Where do you tend to compare yourself to others?
- 4. On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being "I'm not sure I believe in God" and 10 being "I have a close relationship with God and spend time with him everyday," how would you describe your current relationship with God?
- 5. Where does growing in your faith tend to become a routine or practice you follow? What hindrances stand in the way or having a real relationship with Jesus?
- 6. How can you grow your identity in Christ?
- 7. What is one thing you can do this week to start or build a real relationship with God? What can this group do to support you?

### AT HOME

**Pray and talk to God about whatever is on your mind this week.** Have a real conversation with Him, and begin or deepen your relationship with Him.

**Over the next two sessions**, each of you will have a chance to share your story, so spend time this week thinking about your life from one end to the other.

**Don't stress**. No one's expecting a perfect speech or a dramatic performance. Just think of the significant moments in your life, whether they made the scrapbooks or not, and share them with your group. You don't need props, and you don't have to memorize it either. Your group members just want to get to know you, so challenge yourself to be open. The most important thing is that your story expresses who you are.

**Decide** which half of the group will share their stories next session, so they can plan and prepare.

**To get started**, use the framework given in sessions three and four with the biblical character pathways. This should give you a basic starting point, and you can take off from there!



### SESSIONS THREE & FOUR: GET TO KNOW THE GROUP

### SESSIONS THREE & FOUR: GET TO KNOW THE GROUP

God is already involved in your life. He's used people, places, and things to lead you up to this very point, and through conversations, experiences, and events, you've become the person you are today.

God loves you—your temperament, gifts, the core of who you are—and just as a creative author would, He has shaped you in a completely different way with a totally different narrative than your other group members. Whether you realize it yet or not, you have a unique perspective to share.

As you tell your story, you add a piece to the overall puzzle and highlight a part of God's character that's yet to be told. For instance, your neighbor invited you to church last year, and through this story, you reveal how our God works through his people to reach others for him. Or a group member had been diagnosed with cancer and confidently states today that she is in remission; her story showcases how our God is a healer.

Regardless of what brought you here, you have something to bring to the table. By sharing your journey with others today, you 1) offer transparency that's necessary in building a strong community, and 2) reveal a part of God's character that should be told.

0 015 0

### WEEKLY READING

#### Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. Romans 15:7

Use the cast of characters below to identify places where God has been in your life, and with a certain character and path in mind, you've got yourself a basic outline of your story.

#### Nicodemus (John 3:1-21)

Church was a familiar place to you—you may have even attended every Sunday. You recognized traditions and went through the motions of religion, but a personal relationship with Christ was missing. A specific circumstance helped you discover there's more to faith though, and ever since, your entire perspective has changed. You now know what it means to have Jesus as your friend.

#### The Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32)

You were raised in a Christian family, but you packed up your bags and moved away from that philosophy. It wasn't for you, and you chose a different path. But something happened, and you came back; you were unsure how it was going to look or if you could even do it, but here you are. You realize God's been waiting for this moment, he's welcomed you back with open arms, and he's so glad you've returned.

#### Timothy (2 Timothy 1:5)

Prayer, Bible stories, and having a personal relationship with Jesus were taught to you since day one. As soon as you were old enough to make the decision for yourself, you followed Christ, made him Lord over your life, and have devotedly continued in your faith.

#### Paul (Acts 9:1-31)

You weren't interested in religion, and you definitely weren't interested in turning from some of your ways to follow Jesus. You may have made fun of those who did, or you didn't fully trust Jesus himself, but in a single moment, God stopped you in your path. He became a real part of your life, and you've been changed ever since.

#### The Rich Ruler (Luke 18:18-23)

You've heard of Jesus and Christianity, but you're not completely sold. You do want to live a good life categorized by helping others and contributing to the welfare of this world. But even yet, you haven't made Jesus Lord over all areas of your life, and you're still trying to figure out if you want to fully follow Him.



### WEEKLY READING

Which character best illustrates the background of your story? Use that path as the skeleton of your story, and now fill in the missing blanks. What have been your greatest successes and hardest obstacles? Think of what you've pursued—career, family, adventures, spiritual experiences—and think of the things you've overcome. We're not talking about your entire family history or a detailed account of your past, but think of your highlight reel. What is most important to note? Write those things down.

It doesn't matter where you go from here. Create a timeline if you're a historian. Doodle if you're artistic. Make diagrams if you think in black and white. Write endlessly if you're a storyteller. Regardless of how your story comes together or the way in which you tell it, just share what feels most comfortable to you and expresses you best.

### GET TO KNOW YOUR GROUP

For session three, choose half of the group to share their stories. For session four, the other half will have their turn. After each story, be sure one other person follows-up with a question or comment: "After living in a different culture for years, what is most challenging about now residing in the US?" or "Thanks for sharing! God is definitely still working in your life." Each individual just took the challenge to be open and transparent, so dispel uncomfortable silence and affirm their story!

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Which character pathway was most common in your group?
- 2. How may your similarities and differences play into building a solid community? Use specific examples based on the gifting and passion of each group member.
- 3. What characteristics of God did you hear from each group member's story? (Savior, Shepherd, Healer, Father, Creator, King of Kings, the True Vine, etc.)
- 4. Was it easy or difficult to share your story? How might God be using your past to bring about events of the present? How would you like to see Him use it in the future?
- 5. Regarding each person's story, what can we pray for today? (e.g., guidance, healing, contentment, growth).

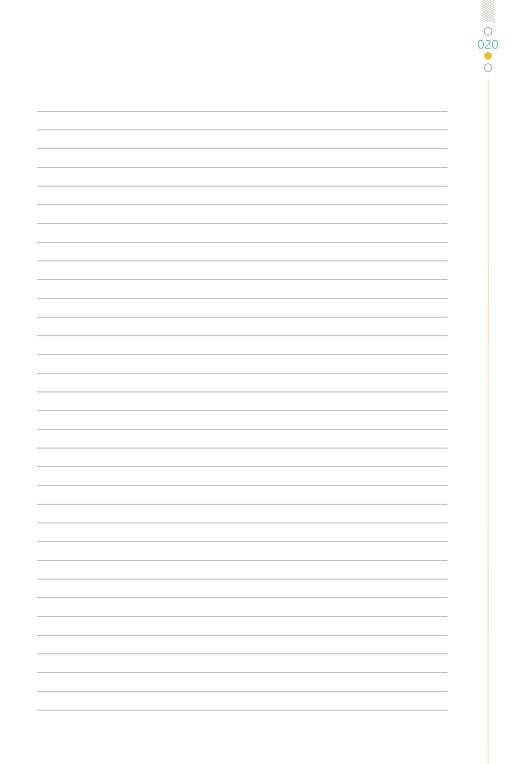
# AT HOME

**Pray for one another's stories**. If someone is still struggling, ask for healing. If a group member is looking for a certain next step, ask God to light the way. We are made to care for one another, and we can love each other well just by praying for specific needs, praises, and direction.

**Head to eaglebrookchurch.com/serve.** Learn more about how God has gifted you by taking the taking the GPS online class. You'll watch a five-minute teaching on spiritual gifts by Jason Strand, and if you are a believer, you can take the next step and discover your specific gifts through the Spiritual Gifts Profile.

**Come back** with a list of your passions and, if applicable, your spiritual gifts to explore the next step for your group as a whole.

0 019 0





### SESSION FIVE: SERVING



### SESSION FIVE: SERVING

You've told your stories, and you're getting to know each other beyond occupation, city of residence, and favorite color. Now what?

You joined this group to get to know people and invest in the lives of others—it shouldn't stop with this group!

Think of all the people who would've missed hearing Jesus' message if all those years ago, he'd stayed in John's living room only exchanging prayer requests and talking about Scripture. Jesus went out, healed the sick, and taught the masses. Your group should also use your time to serve at church and in your local community.

Poverty, sickness, and broken relationships can sometimes seem too large for us to make a dent in, can't they? When we think of the grand spectrum of things, doubt can creep in, and we ask, "What can I do? How could I actually make a difference?" But again, remember Jesus. He was only one person, yet He did many miracles and wonders Himself. And even so, before Jesus left this earth, he stated, "I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father" (John 14:12). You can trust God that he will take your willingness to serve to do unexplainable, extraordinary things!

Now take it a step further and think of what happens through a combined group effort. Beyond His personal ministry, Jesus also enlisted a group of 12 friends to, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone" (Mark 16:15), and a couple thousand years later, here we are. Thanks to the dedication, strong will, and deep conviction of Jesus and his disciples, the message of Jesus is still being taught. And now it's our turn. God will empower your group far beyond what you could ever ask for or imagine, but you have to take that first step.

As followers of Jesus, the baton's been passed, and we've got to run with it!

#### 0 024 0

### WEEKLY READING Spiritual Gifts

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us. A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other. To one person the Spirit gives the ability to give wise advice; to another the same Spirit gives a message of special knowledge. The same Spirit gives great faith to another, and to someone else the one Spirit gives the gift of healing.

The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ. God has put each part just where he wants it. How strange a body would be if it had only one part! The eye can never say to the hand, "I don't need you." The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you." If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad. 1 Corinthians 12:4, 6-9, 12, 19, 21, 26

Why are you given a spiritual gift? To supernaturally further your career goals or raise a holy family? Not quite. Pretty clearly, we're told that a spiritual gift is given to help each other. But have you ever thought, "There are so many people already serving. If I don't, it's not like anyone's going to notice."? That's not true at all. According to these verses, if the ear is not hearing, the whole body suffers. If you have the gift of teaching but aren't teaching God's truth, the Church takes a hit.

God's work is to shape, carve, and refine this church and world into what he designed it to be—using you and your spiritual gifts. We are empowered by God through our unique gifting, so in order to fulfill the mission to reach others for Christ, you are needed to do what only you can do!

"You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father." Matthew 5:14-16

The Gospel was never meant to be a private affair. We were never made to keep to ourselves. Through faith in Christ, we carry the light that needs to shine in the darkness of our neighbor's home, our classmate's depression, and our friend's soul. By doing good deeds and serving others, this group can change attitudes and affect lives. Challenge yourselves as a group to look outside your packed schedule and look to the interest of others. If you haven't underlined it yet, now's your chance: You were made to serve!

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

025

1. Share what you learned from the GPS online class.

a. What did Jason teach that particularly stuck out to you?b. What spiritual gifts, passions, or skills do you have that can build up the Church?

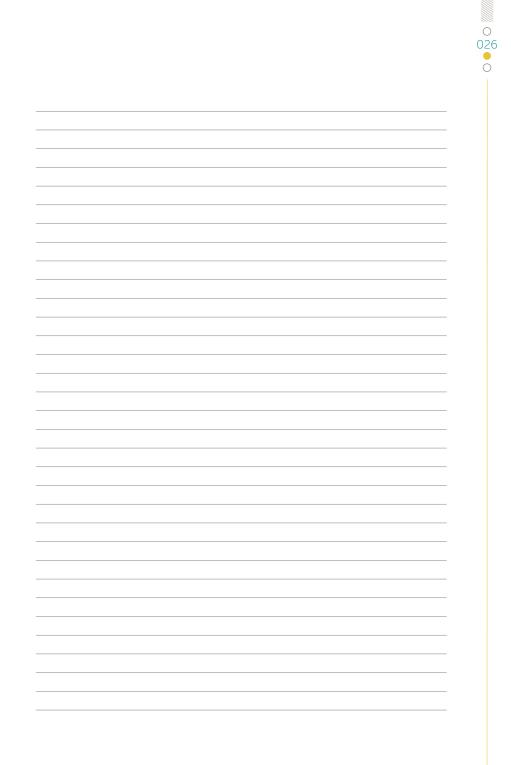
c. How can you use your gifts to serve at Eagle Brook and to serve our small group?

- 2. How do you think doing things together outside of this group could change the relationships in the group?
- 3. What kinds of things keep us from investing in or serving others? As a group, how can we overcome these obstacles and hold each other accountable?
- 4. How could serving others change people's perceptions of Christians and the Church?
- 5. There are so many opportunities in our own backyard—from the local food shelf to bordering school districts to ministries at EBC—and we encourage small groups to get involved and serve in between studies. Go back to your master list from the "Get to know the group" section, and discuss which people groups, types of organizations, or passions overlapped. Then, as a group, talk about these opportunities, take a look at the list of serving opportunities at Eagle Brook and through local ministries, and decide on your first serving event to pursue after this study.

### AT HOME THIS WEEK

**Consider someone in your life** who is far from God—a spouse, coworker, hair stylist, barista, or mailperson—and invite them to church. Remember the ministry that one Man had, and have the confidence that He is with you in every conversation.

Bring a copy of the Small Group Agreement (ebcgroupleaders.com/ resources) to the next session.



### WHERE CAN WE SERVE?

**There's a place for you.** With a regular commitment in one of EBC's ministries or through a one-time service opportunity at a local partner, consider what God has uniquely designed you to do and make a difference that only you can make!

#### **EBC MINISTRIES**

027

EBC serving opportunities are grouped into teams that support our main ministries:

#### EBC Kids

Prepares kids to be lifelong followers of Jesus by serving children in our nursery, preschool and elementary environments–supporting either large or small groups or welcoming families and helping kids get checked in.

#### **Student Ministries**

Prepares students to be lifelong followers of Jesus. Choose from opportunities to serve students in middle and/or high school on Wednesday nights as a small group leader, tech support, or part of the service team.

#### **Guest Services**

Create welcoming environments for attenders on the weekend by directing drivers to and from parking spaces, by greeting as people pass through the doors, by helping guests find information and a seat in the auditorium and by working behind the scenes to serve our dedicated volunteers.

#### **Retail Services**

Teams offer refreshments to guests in the cafe or assist them with resources at the bookstore.

#### Production

Teams create an engaging and empowering service every weekend through tech support, video and lighting, and broadcasting to the other campuses.

#### Facilities

Teams work behind the scenes to create clean and excellent environments at the campuses. At mobile site campuses, they also create an amazing environment for guests through our setup and take-down teams.

#### Care

Individuals helps people move from hurting to healthy with opportunities to provide group or one-on-one support around certain life events and care needs including DivorceCare, Hopelink and recovery groups.

#### **Special Events**

Teams support unique events that take place throughout the year, such as baptism, encounter services, Impact drives, and holidays.

#### LOCAL IMPACT

Local Impact offers opportunities to serve and make an impact outside the walls of our church through partnerships with organizations in the Twin Cities. Check your campus calendar online for specific opportunities.

)28

Blaine	Spring Lake Park
Centennial Community Food Shelf	Weekend Pack Program (Spring Lake Park Schools)
Weekend Pack Program	Bridging
(Centennial Schools)	CEAP
Coon Rapids	White Bear Lake
СЕАР	White Bear Lake Food Shelf
Bridging	Weekend Pack Program
Weekend Pack Program	(White Bear Lake Schools)
(Anoka-Hennepin School	Woodbury
District)	Food In The Hood
Lino Lakes	Weekend Pack Program (So.
Hugo Good Neighbor	
Food Shelf	
Weekend Pack Program	
(Centennial Schools)	

#### **CAMPUS COMMUNITY PARTNERS:**

Contact your pastor of Groups for further details on these serving opportunities!



# SESSION SIX: WHAT'S NEXT



### SESSION SIX: WHAT'S NEXT

Over the past five sessions, your group has explored the foundational truths of following Jesus: what it looks like to have a personal relationship with him, what it means to be in a group with other believers, how to share the story God has given you, and who God calls us to serve.

Every person contributed a unique perspective and played a different role in the group, and together, you learned, discussed, and—what we hope most—grew in your faith.

Now's the time to commit to continuing as a group.

If this group was the right fit for you, awesome. If you decide not to move forward with your group, that's OK too. Contact your leader by phone or email before the next meeting to let him or her know—but don't give up on the idea of community. Every group is different because the people who meet are different. Try this again, because we can confidently say there is a group out there for you.

### WEEKLY READING

Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble. Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

All throughout Scripture, we see the value of being part of a team. King Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived in exception to Jesus, had more than enough jewels, accomplishments, servants, and power for himself and even generations upon generations to come. But these few sentences he wrote in Ecclesiastes shed light on something that, above all else, he missed.

Solomon had people surrounding him all the time, but having a group of people in your vicinity is different than the unity and synergy that comes from being part of a team. When people are living with the same common purpose, there is encouragement, support, and advice. And having that in your life, King Solomon proclaims, is more precious than rubies. 032

God's desire for you is to join his team and link arms with other believers. We weren't made to follow Jesus on our own isolated island; rather, we were made to live with deep, meaningful, substantial relationships. In a small group, there will be someone there to help you back on your feet when you stumble. There will be a person just a phone call away to give you advice when you need a second opinion. There will be an individual to pray for you and remind you of God's promises when you feel worried, faithless, or defeated. There will be a sense of team.

God may use these group members to grow you, and he might just use you to grow others. All in all, this group surrounding you could open up a wonderful opportunity where God is just waiting to do something great.

### GET TO KNOW YOUR GROUP

### Leaders-please hand out copies of the small group agreement to your group (you can download it at ebcgroups.com>resources).

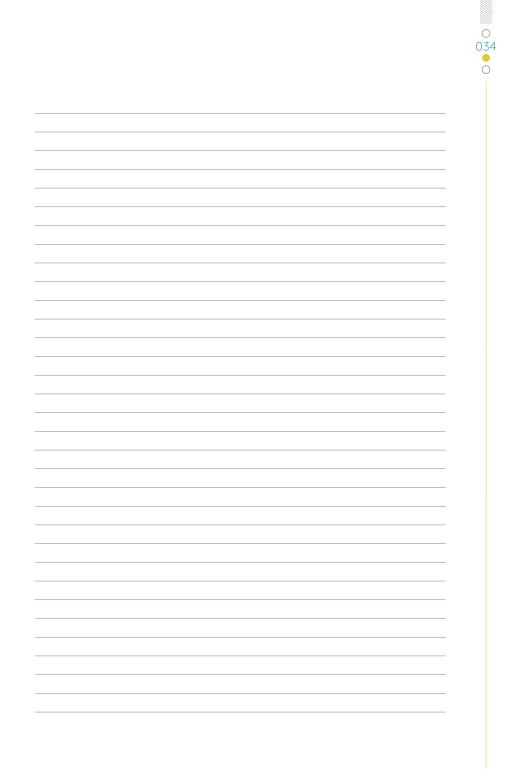
Now walk through the eleven points listed under Group Values and Guidelines, confirm what day of the week you will meet, how much time will be dedicated for study and discussion, and any other values that are important to group members. Each member will then take this agreement home, pray about their commitment level, and along with those returning, come to the next session ready to sign together.



- 1. Share an instance in your life when two was obviously better than one. Why was this the case?
- 2. Think of the friends, family, neighbors, and co-workers who surround you each day. Do you have a sense of team with any of these groups that unite you toward one common purpose?
- 3. Now think of your spiritual life. Do you have a sense of team with any of these groups that unite towards reaching people for Christ and growing in faith?
- 4. As for the small group values, which one may come easiest for you to uphold? Which one might be harder?
- 5. Make your next group meeting a social! Take time to hang out, celebrate what you've experienced together, and get to know each other even more. You can also use this time to decide what you'll study next as a group, as well as confirm where your group wants to serve together. Where would you like to meet next and what would you like to do?

### AT HOME THIS WEEK

**Healthy relationships and spiritual growth** happen when there is a combined effort by everyone in the group. After this time, if you decide this isn't the right group for you, contact your group leader by phone or email this week to let him or her know. If this group is for you, come ready to sign the small group agreement next session.





EAGLE BROOK CHURCH eaglebrookchurch.com