

Why Small Groups?

- » **CONNECT:** Small groups make a large church feel small
- » **DISCIPLESHIP:** Small groups reinforce biblical application
- » **PRAYER:** Small groups broaden the span of care
- » **MINISTRY:** Small groups provide accountability
- » **SERVE:** Small groups provide community



GUIDING PEOPLE TO LIVES OF
GOSPEL TRANSFORMATION



Your Role as a Host

- » **CONNECT:** Build relationships
- » **DISCIPLESHIP:** Get into God's Word together
- » **PRAYER:** Pray for one another
- » **MINISTRY:** Provide a welcoming and caring environment for your group
- » **SERVE:** Serve together as a group once a semester

Goals of the First Meeting

Here are some goals to help you with your first group meeting.

- » Meet new members or rekindle relationships
- » Clarify your groups direction and expectations
- » Briefly discuss the study topic
- » Pray for the building of relationships and spiritual growth of the group

Items needed for the first meeting:

- » Snacks and dessert plans (use the snack ideas card)
- » Name tags
- » Contact your group in advance
 - » When contacting...
 - » Welcome them to the group
 - » Let them know you are looking forward to meeting them
 - » Inform them of the location and time of your meeting

Goals of the First Meeting (cont.)

THREE ESSENTIAL PARTS OF YOUR EVENING

#1

Welcome, mingle and talk while you eat.

Leadership tip – Studies show that the first 7 seconds a person spends in a room can make or break their experience.

SAMPLE SCHEDULE

- » 10 minutes in fellowship
- » 10 minutes in announcements and prayer requests
- » spend 30 minutes in Biblical discussion (use an icebreaker idea)
- » 10 minutes in prayer
- » Use the remainder of your time for fellowship and discussion

#2

Think through the timing of your discussion group.

Leadership tip – Respect your group's time. Give a 5 minute warning when your group will start and end. Make sure to end on time.

#3

Know that your “dessert” conversations are just as important as your meeting discussions.

Leadership tip – Never underestimate the significance of the time after the social gathering time. It is key to connect and find out more about your people.

Ice Breaker Ideas

M&Ms Game

Pass a bag of M&Ms around and tell everyone to take a few. Then, before they eat them, ask them to share something for every M&M. You have a copy of this game in your new host small group box!

Two Truths and a Lie

Have each person make three statements about themselves: two true statements and one lie. For example, “I’ve never broken a bone. I have 5 sisters. I was born in Yugoslavia.” The group tries to guess which statement is the lie.

Best/Worst

Have each person share their best and worst moments from the previous week. This icebreaker is an easy one to use at first and gives you good feedback concerning their life at the moment. Some veteran groups do this several times a year...the answers become more honest as you go.

Deserted Island

Ask, “You’ve been exiled to a deserted island for a year. You are told you may take three things you want, apart from the essentials. What would you take and why?”



Snack Ideas

Popcorn Bar - Everyone brings a different premade/gourmet flavored popcorn. You can add M&Ms, nuts, gummies, marshmallows, or anything else that might be great with popcorn including a cold soda!

Ice Cream Sundae Bar - The host or another group member can provide ice cream and everyone else bring a topping.

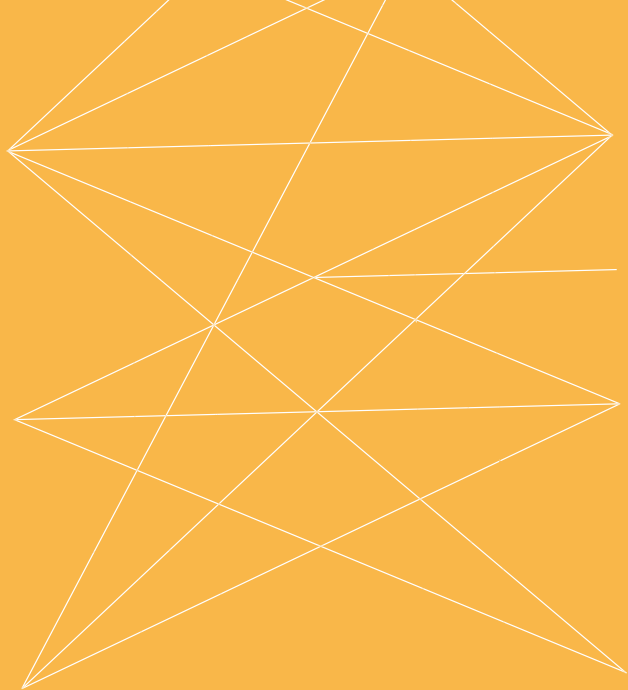
Appetizer Night - This is an easy one! Everyone brings their favorite appetizer (enough to feed the group).

Trail Mix Bar - Everyone brings a trail mix ingredient, the host provides the bowls or Ziploc baggies, and everyone makes their own trail mix.

Chip & Dip Bar - Simple, right? A few members bring chips, some bring dips, and some bring soda-done!

Connect Ideas

- » Offer everyone a sense of belonging
- » Greet members as they walk in the door
- » Make eye contact with your members
- » Before group begin conversations and make small talk
- » Offer refreshment or drink
- » Make them feel accepted and respected
- » Begin group with prayer
- » Welcome everyone's participation
- » Start and end on time





Discipleship Ideas

- » Get into God's word together
- » Encourage and demonstrate transparency
 - » Build relationships
 - » Share your story
 - » Listen to other's stories
 - » Ask questions
- » Pray together and pray for one another



Prayer Ideas

One Sentence Prayer - Everyone goes around and shares a prayer that's only one or two sentences.

Spouses Prayer - In a couples group, have spouses pray for each other, or wives pray together and husbands pray together.

Praise Prayer - Each group member says something about what God has done for them that day/week.

Topical Prayer - Pray for the church, a country, a family in need, specific events or any area for which your group has a passion.

Index Prayer - To cut down on the time your group spends talking about prayer requests, give everyone or each couple a 3 X 5 index card to write down prayer requests for the week & have them exchange cards with another member of the group.

Prayers by Email - Requests are written down during the groups meeting and one person is designated to email them out to the group.

Ministry Ideas

Choose one idea a week.

- » A Phone Call
- » An Email
- » A Text Message
- » A Card

Here are a few ideas to help you care for your small group members! The best way to care, is a simple phone call. When you choose to send a card, keep in mind the church has cards & will cover postage, just drop the cards off in the main office to be mailed.

In all the options above, you can discuss prayer requests, congratulate them on a birthday, anniversary, or simply to say hi and strengthen your connection.

It's also suggested to have a simple plan to provide care for members during their time of crisis. Have a way to communicate with all group members, this could be as easy as a group text, so that meals, childcare, and/or support can be organized quickly.



Service Ideas

We encourage every small group at New Vision to build community with one another by serving local mission opportunities as a group.

How can your small group become mobilized to serve?

- » Connect to our website: **NewVisionLife.com/Missions**.
Local, national, and international opportunities are available with contacts for your group.
- » Listen for Service Saturday opportunities. During the year we have focused times where the church comes together to make an impact in our community. There are many service opportunities provided on this day that your group can participate in.
- » Build community. We are never more like Christ than when we seek to be His hands and feet. We also grow the closest together in community when we serve with a united heart. As you lead your small group to be on mission for Christ, let it be a time when relationships grow as well.





Leader Curriculum Resources

- 1. Right Now Media Access** -To request access to the online video curriculum, please send an email request to curriculum@newvisionlife.com. You will receive an email invitation with a link allowing you to set up your user login. Please be sure to check your spam folder for the email if you haven't received it within 24-48 hrs.
- 2. Sermon Series Leader Guides** - Here's how to print your leader guide. Go to Newvisionlife.com/leaders > scroll to your sermon date > click on it to print. Leader guides are usually on the website and available to print after 6pm on Thursdays.
- 3. Email Curriculum@NewVisionLife.com** - For available DVD studies.

Small Group Host FAQ's

1. **Who should I invite to my group?** Anyone is welcome: family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers.
2. **What do I do when I need help?** Email SmallGroups@NewVisionLife.com.
3. **How often should my small group meet?** Weekly.
4. **How long should the group meeting last?** A typical group meeting is 1 ½ to 2 hours. Remember it is important that the group end at the agreed time, and that enough time is left in the group meeting for sharing and prayer.
5. **How do I turn in attendance for my group?** You will receive an email each week, asking you to report attendance for your group. This is very important; attendance numbers are used to verify member care. If you do not receive the weekly email please email Attendance@NewVisionLife.com.
6. **What about childcare for our group?** Arrange for a sitter to watch the kids in one part of the house while the group meets or have someone watch the kids in another home while the group meets. Members may also hire a sitter. Remember the church offers child care reimbursement. Simply fill out our online form at NewVisionLife.com/Forms.