



LIFE GROUP

LEADERS MANUAL



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WELCOME TO YOUR LIFE GROUP

You said Yes!

Yes to building community.

Yes to making a big church feel small.

Yes to directly impacting people around you.

Yes to helping people grow in their
relationship with Christ.

Every Life Group will look different, but each group has the same mission: to facilitate intentional community in everyday life. That's what Life Groups are all about – bringing Jesus to those around us .

To be a Life Group leader, you don't have to be perfect. All we ask, is that you are committed.

- » Committed to building relationships with each person that wants to be in your Life Group .
- » Committed to helping people get closer to God.
- » Committed to being a welcoming host whether it is in your home, an outside venue, or online.
- » Committed to being a friend and confidant for those in your group that are struggling.
- » Committed to praying for the members of your group.

Your Life Group team believes in you and your capability to have a successful Life Group. God has given you unique talents and passions to grow your group to its fullest potential.

We are here for you. We want to make sure you have the best materials and equipment to lead at the best of your ability. We want you to know that we are here to inspire you, empower you, and set you up for success!

REDEMPTION CHURCH VISION

“Redemption Church aims to reach out in redeeming love and liberating power to bring the word of God to people of all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds. Through the word of God, Redemption aims to break poverty mindsets, remove religious barriers and destroy the walls of racism that divide us.”

REDEMPTION LIFE GROUPS MISSION

Life Groups exist to fulfill the vision of Redemption by facilitating intentional community in everyday life. Because God created us with a need for community, we believe in doing life together in a small group setting. Life Groups meet weekly in a variety of locations such as coffee shops, online & homes.

WHY LIFE GROUPS?

We want people in the church to:

Grow in **Faith**
Discover **Purpose**
Get **Connected**

We want our big church to feel **small**.

We are a Life Groups church,
not a church with Life Groups.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

Redemption Church functions at its best when there are flourishing Life Groups. We thrive in community and we know that we can do bigger and better things TOGETHER.

Life Groups are not just a ministry but a lifestyle. We live to connect people to one another and to the Lord. Life Groups are meant to help people thrive and challenge one another to do greater and go deeper.

YOUR ROLE AS A LEADER

As a Life Group leader, it is our expectation that you are thinking of the next generation of Life Group leaders.

HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL

Pray daily for your members

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

Consider having a **co-leader** to help share responsibility of caring and leading your group.

Connect with group members outside of weekly meetings through phone, text, email, social media or face-to-face.

Have **fun** through sharing, laughter and creating an enjoyable environment.

Respect people's **time** by beginning and ending your groups on time.

Invite group members to attend church services and events with you.

Rally the group around a member going through a crisis.

CONFIDENCE AS A LEADER

When you feel like you don't have the time, remember **God has created you for this** and his timing is perfect.

When you feel unqualified, remember **God has equipped you**.

When you feel like your past disqualifies you, remember **God uses imperfect people**.

SHARE WITH CAMPUS LEADERSHIP

- Share testimonies of how Jesus is moving in your life and in the lives of your Life Group.
- Tell us how God has changed your life and the lives of the people in your group. Share your stories with your Life Group Coordinator for your campus.

ATMOSPHERE (IN PERSON GROUPS)

- First impressions are important in the Life Group setting. Consider doing the following to set the right atmosphere:
 - Adjust the thermostat and establish the right lighting to make the room feel comfortable.
 - Make sure that you have comfortable chairs that are in a circle. It is important for your Life Group members to see each other when talking to each other.
 - Make sure the meeting area is clean and free of clutter.
 - Have some snacks or light food available for your guests. This is always a great way to start off a Life Group meeting.
 - Play some soft music in the background as people arrive, such as worship music to set the right energy and tone for the night.
 - If providing childcare for the Life Group, make arrangements for it to be as distraction-free for the adults as possible.

ICEBREAKERS

- Before your Life Group can really dive into meaningful discussion, you have to break the ice and get people to participate with each other.
- Icebreaker questions will be provided on the Discussion Guide. You can also come up with a fun game for your group!

FINDING A CO-LEADER

As a Life Group leader, it is our expectation that you are thinking of the next generation of Life Group leaders.

WHAT IS A CO-LEADER?

A 'co-leader' is someone who is learning to lead a Life Group by observing and helping with a current group.

- They learn by doing, under the supervision of a seasoned (mature and skilled) leader. Co-leading is closely related to mentoring – a developmental relationship in which a more experienced person helps a less experienced person.
- They grow in maturity along with the rest of the Life Group, but he or she receives special attention and more pointed direction from the mentoring leader.

SELECTING A CO-LEADER

A Life Group Co-Leader is an emerging leader. This person is someone who has been identified by you, the Life Group leader, as a good candidate for leading a future Life Group, based on a variety of observations. They include, but are not limited to the following:

- A growing and vibrant relationship with Christ and passion for the vision of Redemption and our Life Groups.
- An understanding of the role and the ability to live out the role of a Life Group leader.
- The person that you would least like to lose from your Life Group. It is true that the person you would least like to lose is probably the person that you need to raise up and send out the most.

DEVELOPING YOUR CO-LEADER

As important as it is to select the right co-Leader, it is equally as important to mentor the Life Group co-Leader. Follow these four steps:

1. I do. You watch. We talk.
2. I do. You help. We talk.
3. You do. I help. We talk.
4. You do. I watch. We talk

MANAGING PERSONALITIES

We know that it would be impossible for you to take on this role and not encounter difficult people, personalities, questions and conflict along the way. Knowing how to respond in these circumstances will be the defining moments of success for your Life Group!

BE UPFRONT & SET THE TONE

- Be the most prepared person in the room and be prayed up and ready to release a great positive attitude in the group meeting.

OFFER DISTINCT GOALS AND CLEAR COMMUNICATION

- Open up your first Life Group with setting the ground rules. Express that the purpose of the Life Group is for biblical discussion, group encouragement, Inspiration, and Relationship Building.
- If the discussion begins to move into political opinions, personal business solicitation, gossip or slander of another person, the conversation must be stopped immediately and redirected back to the Sermon Discussion Guide.

OVERCOMING DEFEAT

Self Doubt

- We all doubt our abilities sometimes, so coming to terms with the myth that you will someday have perfect confidence helps. Our reliance is never on ourselves but rather on the Holy Spirit.
- You are not meant to be the person that knows it all. Sometimes giving an honest “I don’t really know” can show more integrity than trying to come up with an answer on the spot.

- Encourage everyone to search for the answer together in the Word of God.
- Commit to praying for the right discernment for a question answered.
- Ask your Life Group Director how you should respond.

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

As your Life Group continues to meet, you will get used to seeing familiar faces, but you should always be prepared to welcome and incorporate anyone that decides to join your Life Group. Remember, Redemption Life Groups are always open during open seasons!

PEOPLE WILL COME AND GO

- No matter how strong you are as a leader, people will leave your Life Group. It is not always going to be a reflection of your leadership. Things happen—works schedules change, children have games and so on.
- Your responsibility is to remain faithful to the people that God has entrusted to your care. Lead your Life Group with the same passion and energy whether you have one member or fifteen!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- Remember that your new Life Group member is walking into a brand new setting for the very first time. It may even be their first experience with a small group of any kind. Make every effort to bridge the gap and make them feel comfortable in their new surroundings.
- Have the entire Life Group participate in some sort of icebreaker. Engage the new members in the discussion. If there is prior lesson material that needs to be reviewed for them to gain understanding of the current lesson material, do so quickly and politely. Do not leave them feeling awkward—the less time the group is staring silently at the new member, the better.

GIVE THEM A REASON TO RETURN

- If this is someone's first experience with a Life Group, your goal should be to have him or her come back for a second time.
- Do not just invite them back. Genuine connections will go a long way towards the retention of your Life Group members.

KEEPING THE MOMENTUM

HOW TO KEEP THEM COMING BACK

- Talk about the next meeting. Plan a special activity or potluck if you feel led to do so.
- Reach out to each person the next week
- Keep to a “Set time frame” of around 90 minutes for your meeting
- Keep your location consistent (as much as possible)
- Always remember that people will come and go.

GROWING YOUR GROUP

- Respond to the email leads from those who sign up for your Life Group
- Invite those you already know in the church to join your Life Group
- Encourage your Life Group members to invite others

YOUR LIFE GROUP MEETING CHECKLIST (In-Person)

You registered your group
You went through training
You read the leaders manual
You invited people

Now its time to lead your Life Group!

BEFORE PEOPLE ARRIVE:

- Reach out to new members and share the address where your Life Group is meeting.
- Put a balloon on the mailbox or something to help people find your meeting place.
- Prepare a few snacks/light refreshments.
- Clean up your meeting space to make it inviting.
- Arrange seating where people will be able to see and hear each other.
- Play some soft music in the background. For men's groups, try turning to sports on television and keeping the volume low enough for people to talk over it.
- Pray that God would work through you to help the people in your Life Group.

FLOW OF THE NIGHT:

HANG OUT (15-25 MINUTES)

- Welcome people as they arrive to your Life Group location.
- Spend a few minutes making small talk. Get to know your Life Group members.

ICEBREAKER (5 MINUTES)

- Use the icebreaker provided on the discussion guide or use your own.

DISCUSSION (35-50 MINUTES)

- Open in a quick prayer
- Read the message summary out loud to the group
- Use the discussion guide/approved curriculum to facilitate a discussion with your Life Group

CLOSING PRAYER (5-10 MINUTES).

- Allow your conversation to reach a good landing point.
- Use the conclusion at the end of the discussion guide to wrap up your discussion time.
- Finish by taking prayer requests from your Life Group members at the end.

COMMUNICATION

KEEP LEADERSHIP INFORMED

Consistent communication with Leadership about what is happening in your Life Group **IS REQUIRED** as a Life Group leader.

- 1. Complete Weekly Leader Report (IMMEDIATELY AFTER MEETING):**
 - Did you meet?
 - Attendance?
 - Any other relevant information
- 2. Stopping Life Group**
 - If your Life Group is no longer meeting, LET US KNOW
- 3. Renewing for the Next Season**
 - In order to maintain accurate group listings, Life Group leaders must renew their group prior to each season to be listed on the Life Groups page.

RESPONDING TO NEW MEMBERS

- As the Life Group leader, it is your responsibility to respond to those who express interest in your Life Group. We want to ensure that that no one falls through the cracks and misses out on finding the right Life Group!

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR LIFE GROUP

- Create a text message or social media group to develop group unity outside of the Life Group meeting.

FACILITATING CHILDREN

EMBRACE THE CHAOS

- Those with children already understand the normal chaos that comes with having children.
- Involve the older children in your group and embrace more of a family dynamic.
- You may decide to have fewer numbers in your group since you will be facilitating children.

ADDITIONAL IDEAS ROTATING SCHEDULE

- For groups with older children, you may have a movie night in a nearby room for kids that they can look forward to meeting. Grab popcorn and snacks to make it fun!

THE IMPORTANCE OF SERVING

Serving is a major part of Redemption culture. We never want to be inward-focused!

ATTEND GROWTH TRACK AND DISCOVER SPIRITUAL GIFTS

- Encourage group members to attend Growth Track. Encourage them to learn about them to learn about their spiritual gifts and how they can use them to pour back into the church through serving
- They grow in maturity along with the rest of the Life Group, but he or she receives special attention and more pointed direction from the mentoring leader.

MEETING A NEED

- If you would like creative ideas on how your group can meet a need, check in with your campus coordinator.

SPECIAL EVENTS SERVING OPPORTUNITIES

- There are a number of opportunities to serve at Special Events during the season. Be sure to keep your group members informed about upcoming events and Serving Opportunities!

LIFE GROUP FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are Life Groups?

A Life Group is a group of people who gather together weekly that discuss the previous Sunday teaching guide. A Life Group is an environment to build healthy Godly friendships. A Life Group is NOT a small church gathering. It is NOT a platform for your own personal ministry agenda and it is NOT celebrate recovery. And for singles, it is NOT a speed dating matchmaking service.

Where do Life Groups meet?

We meet in a variety of locations such as homes, cafes, online and restaurants.

What do Life Groups talk about and do?

Life Group members discuss questions based on the previous Sunday's message, in addition to other approved books and Bible study curriculum.

What types of Groups are there?

Groups are broken into a variety of discipleship focuses:

- New Believers
- Evangelism
- Financial
- Leadership/Entrepreneurship
- Overcomers
- Marriage/Parenting
- The Word Works (Sermon Based)

How many people can I have in my group?

We ask that groups are no larger than 7-10 people. The group should be small enough for everyone to contribute but large enough that no one feels forced to contribute. Think about this: where would you be more likely to be open and honest, a living room with 10 people or a classroom with 25 people?

What are the requirements for a Life Group leader?

- Need to be “all in” with Redemption Church by graduating from Growth Track
- Need to register group
- Attend Leader Rally
- Complete acknowledgement form (to acknowledge personal and group conduct – will be available when you register your group)
- Spread the word about your group (you are you're own best representative)

What is the commitment once I sign up?

We ask all leaders to commit to at least two seasons per year. We have four seasons approximately 8 weeks long per year.

You can stop anytime, or take a season off. It requires a couple of hours per week to reach out to others and to have your group meetings. We expect you to create personal relationships that lead others to a greater relationship with Christ. We ask that you communicate any changes to your group and your Life Group Coordinator.

Can people who do not attend Redemption come to my Life Group?

Absolutely! Life Groups are open to everyone! Most times, people feel more comfortable connecting in a Life Group setting. Inviting friends who do not attend Redemption is a great entry point to invite them to church!

How long should my Life Group last?

Groups should meet for 90 mins (1.5 hours). Try to stick to that time frame unless you are doing an outside social activity.

What if I cannot answer a church-related or spiritual question?

If you are not sure of an answer to a question bring your concern or question to your Life Group Coordinator.

What if I have a major personal situation or prior commitment that conflicts with my Life Group?

Consistency is key with Life Groups. Having a Co-leader in place will allow the group to continue meeting in your absence. Be sure to communicate any meeting changes with the group and consider asking another group member to help the Co-Leader facilitate the discussion.

How do I join a Life Group?

Once Life Groups open for registration, you can join anytime during the season. Find your group in person in the foyer on Sundays or online at myredemption.cc/lifegroups.

What if there are no Life Groups in my area?

Most Life Groups meet in areas surrounding each Redemption Campus. If you do not live near by a campus, try one of our online Life Groups offered at your campus.

Are there opportunities to serve and spread the word about my Life Group?

Absolutely. We want Life Group leaders to be visible at Redemption during Services and Special Events! See your Life Group Director or Life Group Coordinator about additional serve opportunities.

Redemption Online Life Groups

Redemption offers online Life Groups through Redemption Online. Online leaders must meet the same standards as those at physical campuses, with some unique differences:

- Online Life Group leaders are typically people who cannot attend a physical campus but want to connect with the Redemption online community.
- New leaders must meet with the Online Life Group coordinator for vetting.
- Online Life Groups are conducted via Zoom. Leaders receive training on accessing Zoom and meeting etiquette.
- Reliable internet is essential. We recommend using a laptop or desktop computer; avoid using a cell phone or tablet unless necessary.
- Leaders should facilitate their group in a quiet, distraction-free space.
- Leaders are expected to communicate frequently and promptly with participants via email, phone, or text.
- All Zoom sessions are recorded for safety, stored on a secure network, and deleted regularly.

Life Group Leader Code of Conduct

I agree to represent the Kingdom and Redemption Church with integrity. If my conduct is questioned, I will inform campus leadership and seek counsel, understanding it aims to restore me to Christ and my role as a Life Group Leader. I will uphold the vision of Redemption Life Groups and maintain regular communication with Life Group leadership, responding to emails, calls, and texts. I understand that personal solicitation, sales, or political promotion are not allowed in groups.



 **LIFE GROUPS**

Grow In Faith » Discover Purpose » Get Connected

myredemption.cc/lifegroups