



# LIFE GROUPS

JOURNEYING TOGETHER

*"let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together.., but encouraging one another.." Heb.10:24-25*

### **Life Group – Journeying Together**

*Life Groups are Christ-centered communities that follow Jesus together, care for each other, and guide others to Jesus through words and actions.*

*God designed us for community. In the current moment in history, life is a bit crazy and shows the need we have for God and others. Life Groups help us connect deeper, grow in faith together, and share the Gospel broadly. This guide is to help your group begin the journey on the right footing.*

**Take time to watch [Willingdon Church Ministry Philosophy](#).**  
*What stands out to you from what Pst. Ray shared? What stirred and challenged you?*

#### **Why We Exist**

*"To know Jesus Christ personally and to carry on His ministry"*

#### **What We Do Every Day**

*"Make disciples of Jesus that make disciples"*

#### **Who We Are**

*"An intercultural, intergenerational church family in a global city with kingdom impact"*

#### **Vision**

*"A family where everyone is on mission with Jesus"*

### **Follow Jesus together**

*Willingdon Church believes these four core values help foster transformation in Christ follower's lives and will spread the advancement of the Gospel message to a hurting world that needs Jesus.*

#### **The Core Values**

- a) *Jesus-centred: We keep Jesus at the center of our story*
- b) *Bible-based: We teach God's Word for life transformation*
- c) *Prayer-saturated: We pray because it changes everything*
- d) *Kingdom-oriented: We live for God's glory, not our own*

**Reflection Question.** *Read Acts 2:42-47 and watch the WC Ministry Philosophy video with your Life Group*

### **Care for each other**

*We know that in this world, we will have difficulties. All of us will need help facing the challenges of life. Some needs can be handled with the support of friends + family, and some needs need professional guidance (Care Ministry). We encourage Life Groups to care by listening, praying, presences, and offering practical support.*

*The Willingdon Care Ministry designed a training series to teach us how to best care for ourselves and others. Please email [Pastor Brad](#) to receive the ministry grid invite.*

*“God has not called you to be moral police who set people straight. He has called you to help restore life unto himself in the way it was create to be” Cloud & Townsend*

*Life Groups can help guide people to know Jesus Christ personally and carry on his reconciliation ministry (1 Cor. 5:17-21).*

### **Guide others to Jesus through words and actions**

*When we said ‘yes’ to following Jesus, we committed to joining Jesus in his mission (Luke 19:10). What’s his mission? Jesus, our example, does what’s on the Father’s heart, which focuses on seeking and saving the lost (1 Tim. 2:3-4; John3:16). We get to join in with spreading the Gospel (Good news) broadly!*

*The outside world will know we are Christians by our love for each other (John 13:35). In Paul’s epistle to the Romans, he gives a list of ways to Christians to show their love in action*

*towards each other and to those who don’t know Jesus yet. Together learn from Romans 12:9-18 in your journey as a community, take time to read this passage.*

*We are all works in progress, yet new creations. Jesus tells his disciples to ‘Go’ everywhere and make disciples by teaching everyone to obey the ways of God (Matt28:19). We, as Jesus’ followers, are all sent to participate in God’s mission.*

*Take a few minutes to fill out the [discipleship pathway assessment](#) to find out where you are in your faith journey with Jesus. Reflect on the finding together.*

**Ministry Grid** is a video training platform we use to equip people for ministry. The Life Group leader series is intended to encourage personal growth, enhance church unity, and help them shepherd, facilitate, and care for a group. The presenters are family members of Willingdon. Topics like: [History of Willingdon Groups](#) (Paul Thiessen), [Leading from the Sideline](#) (John Dyck), [Groups of Worship](#) (CJ Limvalencia), and many more. We recommend all leaders spend an hour and a half to watch the training. Please email [Pastor Brad](#) to receive the ministry grid link.

**Reflection Question.** *What has been your experience of change through spiritual relationships in small group communities?*

## **Beginning the Journey together**

Here are monthly rhythms to help begin a new season of Life Groups at Willingdon Church.

**Life Group Rhythms.** “A good trees produce good fruit” (Matt 7) was the theme when Home Bible Studies were introduced to Willingdon Church, many years ago. The following rhythms can help with producing positive fruit in the lives of the members and the group leader. Get your calendar ready:

- **Learning.** Use the Sermon Resource 2-3 times a month. Enjoy diving deeper into the study of God’s Word together.
- **Serving.** Spend time every other month to serve others in need as a group.
- **Fellowship.** Spend time enjoying getting to know each other and sharing life together each month. Spend more time praying for each other and take [communion together](#). \*Due to COVID, no sharing food if meeting in-person\*
- **Breaks.** Life Groups are encouraged to meet year-round while the leaders are empowered to discern for seasonal breaks (e.g. Christmas) if needed. Create a plan to take a break.

**Commitment.** Being answerable to one another, accountable, grows unity, trust, and creates a safe environment. The

members of the Life Group are willing to journey together (Life on Life) in the coming season. Together, discuss the following items.

- We commit to follow Jesus together, care for each other, and guide others to Jesus through words and actions.
- We will come for the fall/ winter/ spring/ summer (on/off ramps are at the end of each semester).
- We commit to connecting with God through personal Bible Study, prayer, participating in weekend services, serving on Sunday, and other spiritual disciplines.
- We commit to praying daily for each other and the church in personal quiet times (Eph. 1:17-18, Phil.4:8-9, Rom 12:10-21)

**Sharing Responsibilities.** Leaders shouldn’t be expected to do everything for the group. Together spend time dividing up weekly responsibilities.

- Give everyone equal opportunity to lead activities like: icebreaker questions, timekeeper, sharing testimonies, leading prayer, local missions coordinator, etc.

From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. Ephesians 4:16

**Developing Authentic Relationship.** Life Groups bring people together on a personal and heart level. For the duration (a few hours) of your time together, people can enjoy connection and feeling loved with like-minded people. Connecting at a heart-based level keeps people engaged and coming back.

Take time to discuss the rules of the Life Group. Rules may include: limiting sharing (3 mins), so everyone gets an opportunity to share, confidentiality in sharing, come prepared and on time, avoid gossip (not talking about others), respect the others (listen), off-topic random questions can be saved till the end, cultivate a culture of honor (Rom. 12:10-21).

- **Testimony.** Share a little of your faith journey with the group. Together, land on a few questions, determine time (4-6 mins), and schedule when people will share.
- **Deeper Smaller.** [Discipleship Groups](#) aim to facilitate deeper growth in a smaller group. Invite members to create D Groups within your Life Group or outside it.

**Sermon Resources.** We are “people of the Book” and called to obey the commands found in scripture. Most of our Willingdon Church groups focus on the [sermon-based resources](#) questions. We provide weekly resources (podcasts, research, and questions) to help you lead your group well. Growing in our understanding of the Bible helps foster deeper love of God, others, and personal identity as Christ-followers.

*but whose delight is in the law of the LORD,  
and who meditates on his law day and night.  
That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,  
which yields its fruit in season  
and whose leaf does not wither—  
whatever they do prospers. (Ps. 1:2-3)*

For a season, a group may determine to engage in:

[Freedom Sessions](#)

[Discovery](#)

[Alpha](#)

[Zume](#)

Abide (ask for resources)

or a topical series before returning to the Willingdon sermon series. Please let the staff know how we can help in finding the appropriate series for your group.

**Reflection Question:** What is God calling you into this week? Where have you seen God’s presence in your neighborhood or workplace this month?

**Power in Prayer.** Spend time interceding for each other, the Church family, the city, country, and world. Avoid limiting prayer to personal lists each week. A simple prayer structure like Upward (focus on God); Inward (allows God to focus on us); Outward (intercession for the world) can be helpful.

We see the importance and power of prayer in Jesus' life. Jesus' constant need for communication with God should inspire us to grow a healthy robust prayer life.

[Developing a culture of Prayer.](#) Please set aside time to pray and fast, asking the Holy Spirit to help guide the Life Group. Before gathering as a Life Group, spend time with both leader(s) and apprentice(s) in prayer. During the gathering, give a topic for group prayer and give time for small groups to pray into more personal points. Invite the group to update the group (via email, whatsapp, and planning center) on prayer request and answers to prayer.

**Joining on Mission.** As followers of Jesus, we are called to be ambassadors of His love in our family, neighborhood, city, and beyond. Jesus' heart broke for the hurting, the poor, the outcast, and the vulnerable. In carrying on his ministry in Burnaby and beyond, serving together will give the group opportunities to show Jesus' love practically.

Willingdon Church has established partners locally and globally to serve alongside.

- Spend time as a Group asking, "What impact will our Life Group have on the surrounding community?"
- Together, discern a local need to serve with your Life Group. Consider doing it together monthly. Maybe God has already placed a service opportunity on someone's heart; otherwise, visit [Local Outreach](#)
- Consider selecting a global partner (missionary) together. Adopt them as a group and choose to pray and support them. Contact Pastor [John Best](#) for importance on Global partners.

Be doers of the word, and not hearers only. Otherwise, you are deceiving yourselves. James 1:22

**Reminder.** We will have several different groups and different ways to meet in the current season. Groups are to continue to abide by the Provincial protocol for COVID-19. If you meet in person, socially distance. We continue to recommend using zoom.

**WE ARE HERE TO HELP.**

**Pastor Brad [bbates@willingdon.org](mailto:bbates@willingdon.org)**

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. Matthew 28:18-20

*Thank you to Sanctus Church and Discipleship.org for the guidance.*