



ADULT LIFEGROUP

# LEADER GUIDE

PRESTONWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH



# ADULT LIFEGROUP LEADER GUIDE



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## OUR MISSION

### AT PRESTONWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

is to glorify God by introducing Jesus Christ as Lord to as many people as possible and to develop them in Christian living using the most effective means to impact the world, making an eternal difference in this generation.

## OUR LIFEGROUP VALUES



### REACH.

REACHING PEOPLE FOR CHRIST



### LEARN.

LEARNING TO LIVE LIKE CHRIST



### LOVE.

LOVING PEOPLE WITH CHRIST

# INTRODUCTION

## “A PLACE WHERE NO ONE STANDS ALONE ...”

That's a pretty good description of our LifeGroups Ministry. We are all wired with certain needs that can be met only through relationships with other people. And that is why connecting people—both Christ-followers and the unconvinced—in your group is one of the ultimate purposes of our LifeGroups Ministry.

In addition, our groups provide great settings for spiritual growth and development. Spiritual transformation has been described as “a long obedience in the same direction.” The Bible study, accountability and encouragement that our groups provide become tools to help our people stay in step with Christ for the long haul, or allow them to cross over the line of faith for the first time.

This guide is both an administrative guide and an “idea starter” for ways to involve people in ministry ... **to reach, learn and love.** And while these descriptions and tasks are important, they are not primary. As a volunteer in this ministry, what is most needed from you is your personal holiness. As you walk closely with Jesus, your creativity, your witness, your investment of time and impact on people will make all the difference.

What if Prestonwood really were a place where no one stands alone?

That's my prayer. Thank you for your willingness to serve Christ through this powerful ministry.

His and yours,



Dr. Jason Snyder  
Minister of Spiritual Development  
Prestonwood Baptist Church





# WHO WE ARE



# DEFINING SUCCESS

In order for any organization to be successful, it must possess a clear and compelling definition of success. With that in mind, we have attempted to define success for our LifeGroup members and leaders.

## **1. FOR THE MEMBER**

The member of a LifeGroup is successful if he or she is personally experiencing authentic community and spiritual growth.

Specifically, the member should ask:

- Am I growing in my intimacy with God?
- Am I growing in authentic community with members/other believers?
- Am I growing in my influence and eternal impact with unbelievers?
- Am I growing in my understanding and utilization of my spiritual gift(s)?

## **2. FOR THE LEADER**

The leader of a LifeGroup is successful if he or she is facilitating authentic community and spiritual growth in their group.

Specifically, the leader should ask:

- Am I becoming more and more like Jesus? In other words, am I applying what I am encouraging others to apply?
- Am I multiplying myself into other leaders?
- Are members prioritizing our LifeGroups in their schedules?
- Are members experiencing accountability, a sense of belonging and love?
- Are members' priorities becoming more aligned with Scripture?
- Are the members sharing Christ and pointing others to Christ more and more?
- Are members finding ways to use their spiritual gifts?



# QUALIFICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP

- Is a born-again believer and has been baptized via immersion after salvation
- Has a growing relationship with God
- Actively demonstrates a lifestyle of Christlike love for others
- Shows evidence of a servant's heart
- Sets aside a daily time of prayer and Bible reading, desiring to become more and more like Jesus
- Attends Prestonwood worship services faithfully
- Embodies our LifeGroups values of "Reach. Learn. Love."
- Is a fully functioning member (faithful financial support, prayer warrior and servant of Christ and this church)
- Multiplies and develops new believers

## **LIFEGROUPS WINS**

What does a win look like? We win when our values are fulfilled:

- LifeGroups reach people for Christ (Reach)
- LifeGroups disciple people to live like Christ (Learn)
- LifeGroups love people like Christ (Love)
- Leaders duplicate themselves (Learn) so that they can start new groups (Reach)

# KEY THINGS TO EXPECT FROM THE ADULT MINISTRY TEAM

- To be supported by the prayers of the Adult Ministry Team and the intercessory prayer ministry
- To maintain open lines of communication, support and ministry with the staff
- To be provided meaningful and interesting training on a regular basis
- To be provided a list of contact information for all guests to your LifeGroups
- To be supplied with doctrinally sound material via curriculum, small-group resources, men's and women's Bible studies, and Shepherd Groups
- To be provided ample space that is clean, orderly and properly maintained
- To be provided supplies as needed to lead and teach
- To be supported during times of pastoral care to the members and guests of the group, including hospital visitation and counseling

# LIFEGROUPS ROLE IN MISSION FULFILLMENT



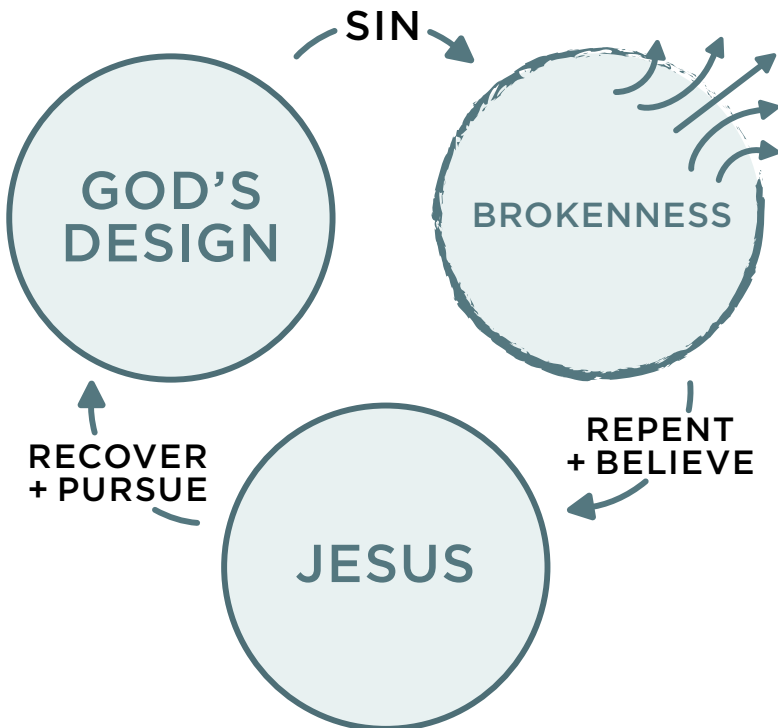
REACH.



LEARN.



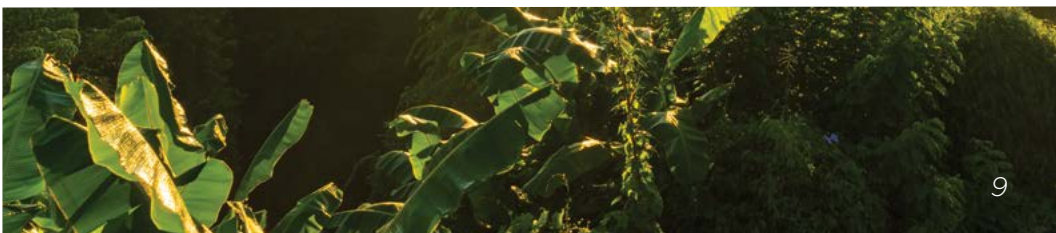
LOVE.



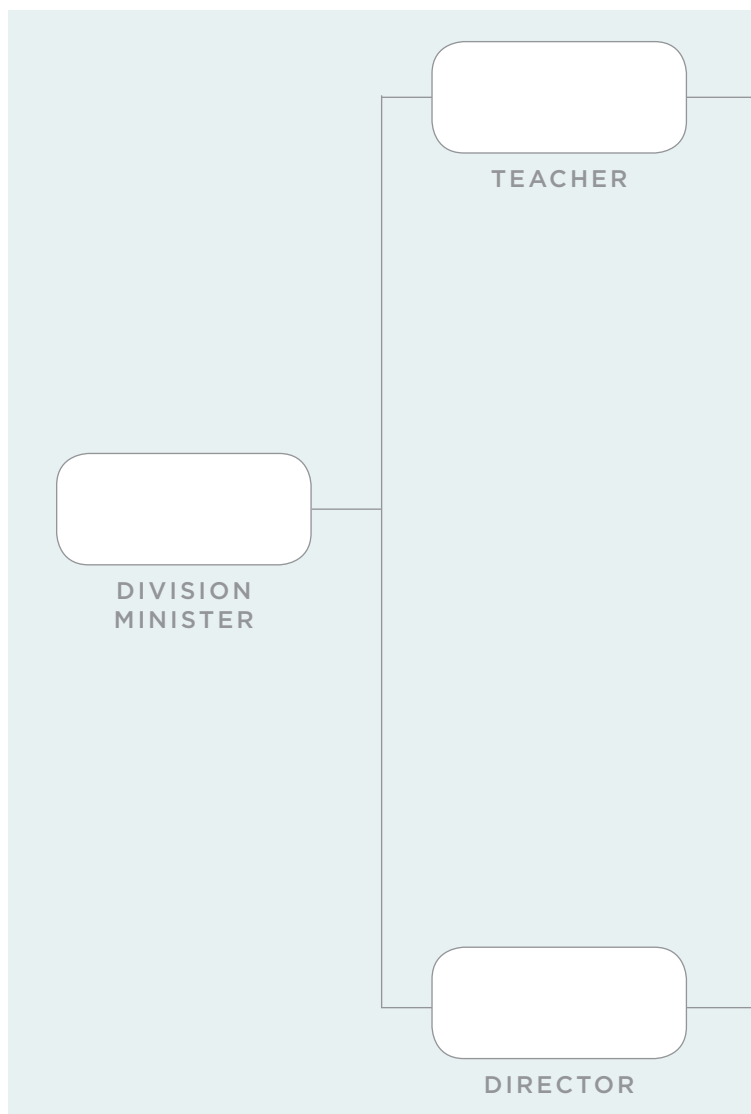




# WHAT WE DO



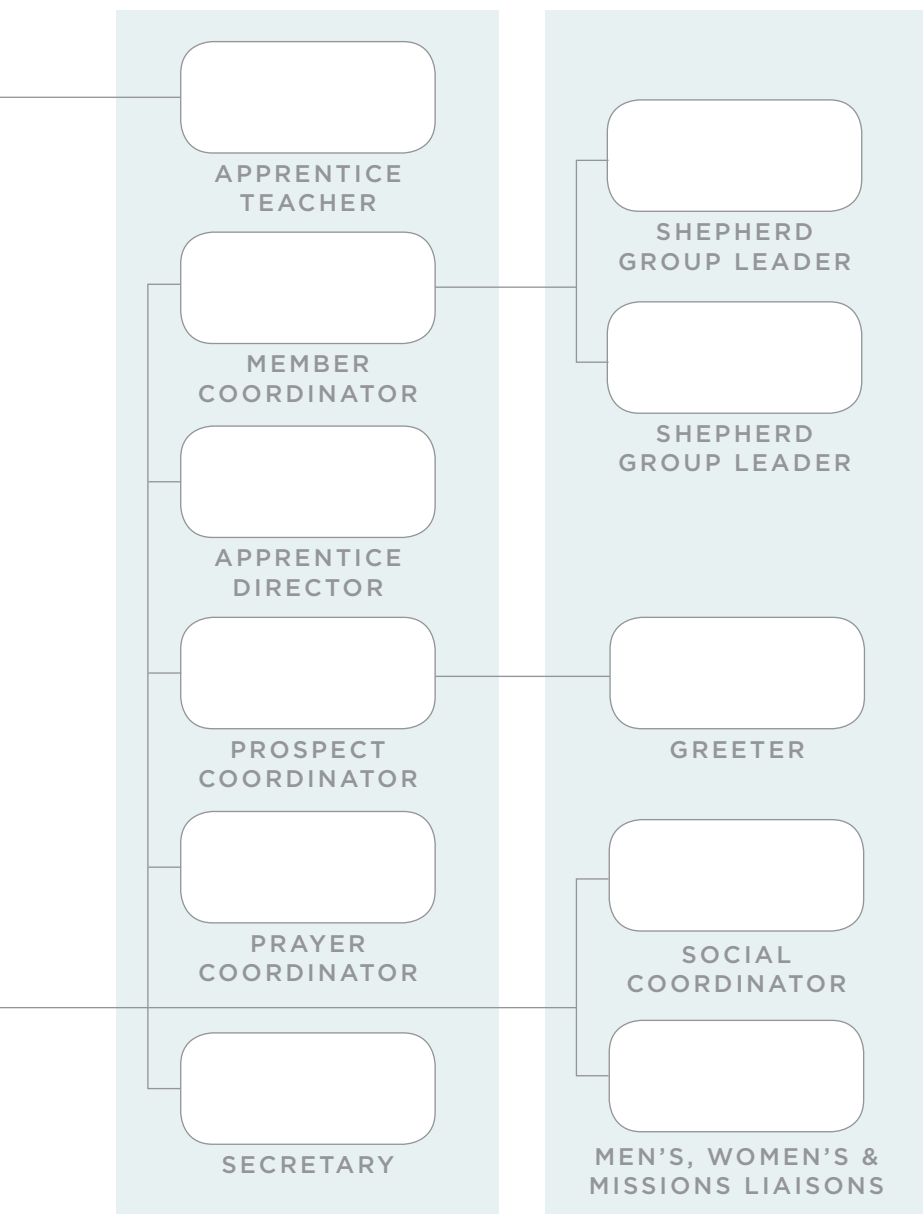
## STAGE 1



The chart above serves as a guide to help structure your LifeGroups, as well as a multistage development process that helps you know where to begin. Please use this tool to organize and recruit other men and women into leadership; the Director will not be able to perform every area of ministry.

## STAGE 2

## STAGE 3



\*Men's Ministry, Women's Ministry and Missions Ministry Liaison positions help facilitate communication between their respective ministries in the church and LifeGroups.





## STAGE

# 1

# DIRECTOR

### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE DIRECTOR?

To be an active participating member of the group and relieve the Teacher of administrative responsibilities. A Director identifies spiritual gifts and recruits people for various leadership positions in the group. As the primary administrator of the group, the Director oversees the week-by-week mechanics of the group and leads the leadership team to carry out their individual responsibilities. The Director works closely with both the Teacher and team leaders to ensure that all key areas of ministry (Reach, Learn, Love) are addressed appropriately and the group is properly organized and mobilized for its mission of leading people to faith in Jesus Christ and to establish them in Christian living.



### REACH

Incorporate social events into your calendar that encourage LifeGroup members to engage, invite, and converse with the unchurched.

Share a testimony of how God used you in the process of evangelism.



### LEARN

Work with your Teacher to coordinate activities (inside and outside of the classroom) that allow members to experience what is being taught during LifeGroup sessions.



### LOVE

Establish a crisis communication system so members will know whom to contact in case of a crisis. This could be in the form of a phone or text tree organized by a Shepherd Group.

### WHAT DOES THE DIRECTOR DO?

- Plans and administers the total work of the LifeGroup by recruiting leaders, and encourages and oversees them as they fulfill their responsibilities
- Directs the LifeGroup session (welcome, announcements, prayer, etc.), starting and finishing on time to allow for an adequate Bible teaching period (organize the announcements prior to group meetings)
- Arrives at least 10 minutes prior to LifeGroup start to set up the room and greet guests and members
- Leads group leadership meetings to plan, develop, evaluate, and implement ideas or strategies to reach group goals and objectives regarding the Reach. Learn. Love. core values

- Identifies and develops new leaders (including an Apprentice Director) to help the group fulfill the Church's mission
- Works closely with the Prospect Coordinator to ensure all worship prospects and LifeGroup guests are contacted each week
- Oversees and promotes Shepherd Groups, recognizing they are an effective tool to develop Christ-centered community that includes every member, member-in-service, and group prospect
- Enlists and trains an Apprentice Director for the purpose of becoming a new Director
- Ensures a REACH lifestyle is promoted and implemented among group members
- Encourages and equips leaders to launch new LifeGroups

## **LIFEGROUPS TIMELINE**

LifeGroups are designed to be ONE HOUR in length. Here is a suggested breakdown of the hour:

<b>:00</b>	Background Music (upbeat, high energy)
<b>:01</b>	Meet/Greet/Connect with Visitors and Guests
<b>:10</b>	Welcome (Three Announcements)
<b>:15</b>	Prayer Requests
<b>:20</b>	Lesson (25–30 minutes)
<b>:50</b>	Two Quick Announcements
<b>:55</b>	Personal Invitations from Members to Guests - Lunch and Other Events
<b>:60</b>	Dismissal



STAGE

1

# TEACHER

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE TEACHER?

To develop his or her LifeGroup members and guests in Christlikeness through biblical teaching.

The Teacher works closely with the Director and group leadership to promote and fulfill our values of Reach. Learn. Love.



### REACH

Help your LifeGroup grow by using illustrations of members meeting people, serving these new friends, inviting them to church, and sharing the Gospel with them.

### LEARN

Read “Tools in Every Teacher’s Toolbox” on page 42. Watch Leader’s Edge Videos.

### LOVE

Assist leadership team in meeting pastoral care needs of group members and recent guests.

## WHAT DOES THE TEACHER DO?

- Leads LifeGroup members and guests in meaningful Bible study by:
  - Using approved churchwide curriculum (with the Bible as the chief guide)  
*(To view curriculum, visit [prestonwood.org/leaders](http://prestonwood.org/leaders).)*
- Prepares the lesson with the needs of the group members in mind
- Participates in on-going Teacher training throughout the year
  - Teacher Huddles
  - Leader’s Edge Videos
  - Curriculum specifics
- Arrives at least 10 minutes early to greet guests and members
- Identifies and develops an Apprentice Teacher
- Consistently utilizes the Apprentice Teacher as a substitute in preparation for a new LifeGroup launch
- For help in recruiting an Apprentice Teacher, see page 17.

# SECRETARY

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE SECRETARY?

To maintain accurate membership and attendance records so that effective ministry and outreach may occur

## WHAT DOES THE SECRETARY DO?

- Retrieves and returns the group folder each week from the LifeGroups cart
- Ensures that the Director receives the announcement sheet from the folder before the beginning of group time
- Processes attendance and guest/new member records accurately
  - Record attendance, both individual and group head count
  - Only individuals present in your group (not those serving in other ministry areas should be counted)
  - Ask guests to complete Guest Form
  - Invite guests to join the LifeGroup, and if they decline, register them as guests
  - Original form is returned to folder; copies are given to Director and Prospect Coordinator
  - Give 3-week missed report to Director/Member Coordinator
- Process member information changes (such as new address, phone, etc.) by checking “information change” on guest form.

## STAGE

# 2

### REACH

Keep your own prospect list (such as a spreadsheet or index card file) that includes information and date of last attendance. Share this information with the Prospect Coordinator for follow-up.

### LOVE

When contacting through a “call blitz” or “text tree” for social events or special meetings, divide a list of prospects and group members among group leadership. Ask those who make contacts to return their notes for review by the Director and Division Minister.



## STAGE 2

# APPRENTICE DIRECTOR

### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE APPRENTICE DIRECTOR?

- To help fulfill the responsibilities of Director as an apprentice
- To become a Director of a new LifeGroup (a mentor-apprentice relationship should exist)

### WHAT DOES THE APPRENTICE DIRECTOR DO?

- Serves as a substitute Director in the Director's absence
- Assists Director in planning and coordinating the work of the group
- Prepares to become the Director of a new group

**Note:** A new LifeGroup may be formed from existing members, or from Shepherd Groups. Please contact your Division Minister for assistance in creating a new LifeGroup. Also see "Starting a LifeGroup" on page 36.



#### REACH

Begin to think about starting a new LifeGroup, and discuss with the Director who could be in the Core Group when launched. New LifeGroups reach new people!



#### LEARN

Set up a meeting with the Director to discuss ways you can lead and what may be delegated to you to prepare you to launch a new LifeGroup.



#### LOVE

Write a note at least once a month to encourage future leaders in your LifeGroup.

# APPRENTICE TEACHER

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE APPRENTICE TEACHER?

- To help fulfill the responsibilities of the Teacher as an apprentice (i.e., to teach as requested by the Teacher)
- Actively prepare to become a Teacher of a new LifeGroup

## WHAT DOES THE APPRENTICE TEACHER DO?

- Serves as a substitute Teacher, using same curriculum as Teacher
- Reviews the curriculum weekly (To view curriculum, visit [prestonwood.org/leaders](http://prestonwood.org/leaders).)
- Assists Teacher in preparation and co-teaching on a consistent basis
- Prepares to become the Teacher of a new group

## STAGE

# 2

### REACH

Connect with guests and develop trust with members. New groups often grow this way.

### LEARN

Foster a mentor-apprentice relationship between yourself and the Teacher. This might include a weekly meeting of lesson critiquing and comparing ideas.

### LOVE

Coordinate with your group's Teacher to support him or her and communicate a willingness to teach as needed.



## STAGE 2

# PRAYER COORDINATOR

### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PRAYER COORDINATOR?

To lead the group in effective intercessory prayer and express thankfulness to God for answered prayers and praises

### WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRAYER COORDINATOR?

- Prays daily for the needs of members, guests and the church family
- Provides prayer updates to the Director
- Develops an efficient method of collecting and distributing group prayer requests each week
- Is sensitive to the Spirit
- Ensures that prayer is a key element of each group period, and in general, aims to limit the group prayer time to five to 10 minutes
- Ensures that prayer is a key element of each group period
- Contacts and encourages those who have requested prayer
- Enlists members for prayer during the Worship Service when your LifeGroup is assigned by the Prayer Ministry
- Informs the Divisional Minister with urgent prayer needs that involve hospitalization of group members and submit the prayer requests via [prestonwood.org/prayer](http://prestonwood.org/prayer)



#### REACH

Encourage Shepherd Group Leaders to invite their new members to dinner as a way to assimilate them into group life.



#### LEARN

Experiment with different methods of gathering prayer requests as listed on page 19.

#### LOVE

Send notes of encouragement for life events (e.g., death of family member, wedding, birth of a child, etc.).



## **IDEAS TO MAKE PRAYER AN EFFICIENT AND MEANINGFUL TIME DURING YOUR GROUP MEETING:**

- Pass around a clipboard at the beginning of the group and encourage your members and guests to share their requests and praises.
- Use technology to gather prayer requests (e.g., group e-mail address, Facebook page or prayer blog) and distribute these requests in group.
- Use “family rules” to respect the time of your group. For example, ask the group to share requests only for people they have lived with, people who have lived with them, or people currently living with them.
- Hand everyone a blank note card as they enter the room and have them write down a prayer request. Redistribute the cards at the close of your group time so that everyone has one person to pray for that week.
- Allow everyone to write their requests down on the board as they enter; then during prayer time, break into small groups to pray for the requests listed.



STAGE

# 2

# PROSPECT COORDINATOR

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PROSPECT COORDINATOR?

- To follow up with visitors and assist prospects
- To give leadership and vision of having a REACH mindset to the group

### REACH



When you hear a great story about REACH from your follow-up phone call, share the story with the group the following week to model friends inviting friends.

### LOVE

Invite guests to dinner to hear their story.

## WHAT DOES THE PROSPECT COORDINATOR DO?

- Champions the REACH value in the group both at Prestonwood and in the community
- Coordinates the follow-up of group guests
- Follows up of prospects who visit the group
- Follows up of prospects from Minister assigned to group
- Builds team of group members who will commit to fellowship with guests
- Sets an example by being personally involved in sharing Christ with others and enlisting prospects for group and church membership

# LIFEGROUPS PROSPECT CONTACT PROCESS

## FIRST VISIT TO GROUP

- Give each visitor a LifeGroup registration record to fill out.
- Give the white copy to the Director. Keep the yellow copy and call, text, or e-mail each visitor during the week.
- Record notes, name, phone number and e-mail on a spreadsheet or other organization system.

## RECURRING VISIT TO GROUP

- Invite the prospect to join the group.
- Fill out the LifeGroup registration record again.
- Make a note of recurring visit on the LifeGroup contact sheet/index card.

## LIFEGROUP SOCIALS

- Call all group prospects and invite to attend group socials.

## SIX-WEEK REPORT

- Call everyone on the group roster who is not a group member.
- Make notes concerning contacts (prayer requests, comments, concerns, etc.)
- If unable to speak to individual, try to contact that person a minimum of three times (use phone calls, text messages, postcards, etc.)



## STAGE 2

# MEMBER COORDINATOR

### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE MEMBER COORDINATOR?

- To actively coordinate ministry for all LifeGroup members
- To recruit and equip Shepherd Group Leaders
- To ensure that members and Shepherd Groups have a REACH mindset

### REACH

Consider having a new member reception where you introduce new members to the group leadership and explain what a typical Shepherd Group meeting will entail.

### LOVE

Contact any group member who has been absent for three consecutive weeks. Ask Director for a copy of the three-week absentee report.

### WHAT DOES THE MEMBER COORDINATOR DO?

- Determines how many Shepherd Groups are needed for the group
- Recruits Shepherd Group Leaders
  - Shepherd Group Leaders should be active members of the group who have no other responsibilities in the group
- Equips Shepherd Group Leaders by providing a job description and an up-to-date roster of active and inactive members (see pages 26-27 for more information on structuring and organizing a Shepherd Group in order to maximize the utilization of the groups.)
- Holds Shepherd Group Leaders accountable by:
  - Having ongoing communication with each leader
  - Ensuring they are following up with group members
- Assigns new members to a Shepherd Group and makes sure they are assimilated into the group
- Prays weekly for Shepherd Group Leaders by name

# MEMBER COORDINATOR CHECK-LIST

## [ ] WEEKLY

Ask the Director weekly for the three-week absentee report and follow up with your missing members

## [ ] BIWEEKLY

Touch base with your Shepherd Group Leaders to pray for them and offer any assistance they might need

## [ ] MONTHLY

Make sure new group members are assigned and connected to a Shepherd Group

## [ ] MONTHLY

Highlight anniversaries, birthdays and significant milestones of members

## [ ] MONTHLY

Ask your Division Minister to provide a six-week attendance report and use this report to connect with chronic absentees



STAGE

# 3

# SHEPHERD GROUP LEADER



## REACH

Consider starting a new LifeGroup from a Shepherd Group.

Multiplying new groups is the most effective way to REACH people.

## LOVE

Contact group members often so that connections stay fresh.

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A SHEPHERD GROUP LEADER?

The Shepherd Group Leader is responsible for ministering to 4-8 people (2-4 couples).

## WHAT DOES THE SHEPHERD GROUP LEADER DO?

- Serves as the relational connector between the Shepherd Group members and the LifeGroup
- Contacts Shepherd Group members at least once a month to see if there are any prayer requests or ministry needs that the LifeGroup can meet
- Invites Shepherd Group members from the Occasional and Engaged groups to group socials

**Note:** *your greatest potential for future ministry expansion is with your Engaged group. You should spend the greatest amount of time with this group as they will be the next generation of LifeGroup leaders.*

## HOW DOES A MEMBER COORDINATOR FORM SHEPHERD GROUPS?

There are two ways for a member coordinator to form Shepherd Groups.

### ATTENDANCE PATTERNS

- Divide the roster into three groups using these attendance pattern breakdowns:
  - **Committed:** Those who attend 26+ times per year
  - **Engaged:** Those who attend 7-25 times per year
  - **Occasional:** Those who attend less than 7 times per year
- Determine the number of Shepherd Groups by assigning each group
  - Two Committed members/couples
  - Two Engaged members/couples
  - One Occasional member/couple

**Note:** Each group should be organized so that it has people from each of the three groups. For an example of how this process works, see the chart on pages 26-27.

### GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

- Determine the number of Shepherd Groups by assigning groups by location
- Incorporate the attendance patterns from option 1 as much as possible to connect group members who attend less often



## OCCASIONAL

Divide the group into manageable groups. A group should contain 7-10 active members, 4-6 inactive members, one or more members-in-service (e.g., Children's Ministry or Student Ministry volunteers) and any active prospects. *Active* is defined as attending at least two times in the last six months.

### ATTENDS 0-6 TIMES/YR

Chris

Mike

Alan

Carol

Jeff

Shelley

## GROUP 1

Chris

Mike

David

Roger

Alberta

Katrina

# ENGAGED

**ATTENDS  
7-25 TIMES/YR**

David

Roger

Wanda

Emily

Mark

Allison

# COMMITTED

**ATTENDS  
26+ TIMES/YR**

Alberta

Katrina

Jack

Todd

Helena

Jason

# GROUP 2

Alan

Carol

Wanda

Emily

Jack

Todd

# GROUP 3

Jeff

Shelley

Mark

Allison

Helena

Jason



STAGE

# 3

# SOCIAL COORDINATOR

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE SOCIAL COORDINATOR?

- To provide opportunities for group members and guests to build relationships with each other, and more importantly, to help assimilate new members and guests into the group
  - To create an entry point to reach prospects and unsaved or unchurched friends
  - To reclaim inactive members
  - To build fellowship with believers who are serving
  - To build fellowship with the members of your LifeGroup



### REACH

Plan a regular social for group prospects hosted by two or three group member couples (or individuals). Focus on really getting to know the prospects and answering questions about the group and church.



### LOVE

Play an icebreaker game that allows attendees to learn about each other and fosters interaction.

## WHAT DOES THE SOCIAL COORDINATOR DO?

- Plans meaningful activities and socials for members and prospects
  - Enlists a team for each function
  - Sets the date, time, place and activities involved
  - Invites all members and prospects
  - Shows sensitivity to costs involved
  - Arranges for childcare, if appropriate
- Encourages members to bring unsaved/ unchurched friends

## HOW OFTEN SHOULD SOCIALS BE PLANNED?

- Ideally, each group will have 3–5 events each year

## GROUP SIZES

- Work with Director to plan socials
  - Smaller groups may desire monthly socials
  - Larger groups, with Shepherd Groups that meet regularly, may only have quarterly or twice-a-year group fellowships

**Note:** *Group socials should normally be in homes or public places rather than at the church building.*



STAGE

# 3

## GREETER

### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE GREETER?

- To create an environment where group guests have a positive first impression and returning members are welcomed



### REACH

Try these ideas for enlisting members to pair up with guests:

- 1) Sit next to them in group
- 2) Go to Worship Service together
- 3) Invite them to group lunches or dinner.



### LOVE

Play an icebreaker game that allows attendees to learn about each other and fosters interaction.

### WHAT DOES THE GREETER DO?

- Arrives 10 minutes early to greet guests
- Recruits group members to remain at the door to greet all guests
- Welcomes everyone into the classroom
- Hands out name tags to members and guests
- Introduces guests to group members
- Enlists group members to pair up with guests
- Works the room, serving as a host for the group

# MISSIONS LIAISON

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE MISSIONS LIAISON?

To challenge group members to participate in four to six approved mission opportunities each year (local, national or international)

## WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MISSIONS LIAISON?

- To be **INFORMED**: communicates to the LifeGroup the mission opportunities available
  - Local: community ministries
  - National: church planting/establishing
  - International: by age division; Prestonwood-sponsored
  - Regularly visits [prestonwoodmissions.org](http://prestonwoodmissions.org)
- To be **INTENTIONAL**: leads the group to become directly involved in mission opportunities
  - Leads the group to participate in at least four church-associated mission opportunities
  - Leads the group to be regularly prayerful of all ongoing missional needs
  - Leads the group to be aware of mission opportunities that are division specific
- To be **INVOLVED**: leads the group in missions by personal involvement
  - Brings people into what you are already doing
  - Prays about participating in something outside of Missions Liaison's comfort zone

## STAGE 3

### REACH

Challenge group members to participate in approved mission opportunities to REACH our neighbors, community, nation and world for Christ.

### LOVE

Connect regularly with Missions Ministry to learn about upcoming opportunities.



STAGE

3

# MEN'S MINISTRY LIAISON



## REACH

Encourage men to invite their coworkers and friends to Bible studies and conferences.

## LEARN

Read about more opportunities at [prestonwood.org/men](http://prestonwood.org/men).

## LOVE

Be intentional about inviting all the men of your group to upcoming men's events.

### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE MEN'S MINISTRY LIAISON?

- To inform and involve male group members in Prestonwood Men's Ministry

### WHAT DOES THE MEN'S MINISTRY LIAISON DO?

- Is involved in Men's Ministry
- Serves as a liaison between the Men's Ministry and men in the group
- Involves men in approved Men's Discipleship Classes, Friday Morning Men's Bible Study, and the Men's Conference
- Creates awareness of opportunities for men to minister to others
- Encourages volunteerism within the church
- Develops specific men's social events for the LifeGroup

# WOMEN'S MINISTRY LIAISON

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE WOMEN'S MINISTRY LIAISON?

To inform and involve female group members in  
Prestonwood Women's Ministry

## WHAT DOES THE WOMEN'S MINISTRY LIAISON DO?

- Is involved in Women's Ministry
- Serves as a liaison between the Women's Ministry and women in the group
- Connects women to approved Women's Bible Studies, the Women's Conference, and other women's events hosted by Prestonwood
- Creates awareness of opportunities for women to minister to others
- Encourages volunteerism within the church
- Develops specific women's social events for the LifeGroup

STAGE

3

### REACH

Encourage women to invite their coworkers and friends to Bible studies and enrichment opportunities.

### LEARN

Read about more service and enrichment opportunities at [prestonwood.org/women](http://prestonwood.org/women).

### LOVE

Help women connect to ministry activities that promote personal spiritual development.







# HOW WE DO IT





# STARTING A LIFEGROUP

## **STEP 1 - GATHER A LEADERSHIP TEAM**

- Begin every new group with Stage 1 Leaders (Teacher and Director).
- Read through the Adult LifeGroup Leader Guide.
- Pray through the leadership expectations and ask God to provide you with a Core Group.
- Request a Teacher/Director Covenant from your Division Minister.
- Schedule a time to meet with your Division Minister.

## **STEP 2 - GATHER A CORE GROUP**

- Provide your Division Minister with a list of potential group visitors.
- Ask your Division Minister to provide a list of current church guests.
- Begin the contact process and reach out to all prospects, inviting them to join your Core Group.
- Seek four to six individuals to commit to the Core Group meeting and new group launch.

## **STEP 3 - START MEETING WITH A CORE GROUP**

- Host a Core Group meeting on or off campus.
  - Core Group meetings serve as a time for prayer, outreach and community-building.
  - Core Group meetings should continue for three to four weeks to ensure viability of the potential group.
- Begin identifying potential Stage 2 leaders as you meet, but do not rush to fill these positions.
- Choose a name, launch date and room for your group with the guidance of your Division Minister.

#### **STEP 4 - LAUNCH GROUP (WEEK OF GROUP LAUNCH)**

- Make sure to communicate to your Core Group and group prospects the date, time and room number of the new group.
- Make plans to have food in your classroom the first week (your Division Minister will most likely help with this).
- Be present on launch day, greet all guests, encourage guests to fill out visitor forms, and celebrate what God has done.

#### **STEP 5 - CONTINUING GROUP LEADERSHIP**

- Meet regularly with your Division Minister as your group grows.
- Follow up with guests and members on a weekly basis.
- Pray for God's continued blessing and growth of your group.

**Note:** *At times a Division Minister may ask leaders to start a "paper group." A "paper group" is derived from regular guests/prospects who have not yet joined a LifeGroup and from those who have stopped attending and may be open to a new group.*



# REACH STRATEGY

## REACH CARDS

Each group will be given REACH cards, and group members will be asked to write down the names of three to five people they know who are not yet believers, and then work toward sharing the story of Christ with them.

## WHAT IS SUCCESS IN THE STRATEGY?

Success is defined as actively working to move people through the process of evangelism .

## WHAT IS THE PROCESS OF EVANGELISM?

We have defined the process of evangelism as three steps to help move someone toward hearing the story of Christ and having his or her life changed by the Gospel. This process serves as a guide to help you understand how you can move someone from being a name on a REACH card to allowing God to use you to share the story of Christ with that person. Remember, it is always God's desire that we actively share our faith (2 Timothy 4:5), and this helps us work toward fulfilling that mission.

1. MEET

2. SERVE

3. SHARE



MEET   SERVE   SHARE   INVITE

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 1 → 2 → 3 → 4

2 \_\_\_\_\_ 1 → 2 → 3 → 4

3 \_\_\_\_\_ 1 → 2 → 3 → 4

## **PERSONAL LEVEL**

- Keep your REACH card in your Bible and pray every day for the names on it.
- Show your card to your Division Minister or accountability partner and discuss ways you plan to help someone move through the process.
- Do a personal study of the Gospel story (read the Gospels) so that you can have a greater appreciation for the story of Jesus and how He has transformed your life.
- Pray daily for opportunities to share the story of Christ with anyone you meet (Colossians 4:4).

## **GROUP LEVEL**

- Incorporate time in group meetings to share general prayer requests and devote another time specifically to the REACH cards each week (Prayer Coordinator).
- Use the REACH cards as a point of application at least once a month in your teaching time (Teacher).
- Have individuals share their testimony at least every other week. This could include how they were introduced to Christ (Member Coordinator).
- Plan specific group socials at least every other month, providing a venue for people to invite everyone on their REACH card (Social Coordinator).
- Plan service projects or coordinate ways the group can serve neighborhoods, communities or those on their REACH cards (Missions Liaison).
- Identify ways and highlight examples of group members who are actively moving people through the process, and share testimonies of success at least once each month (Director).
- Create a schedule of testimonies from group members and share stories of people moving through the REACH process.



# 3 CIRCLES EVANGELISM

## **GOD'S DESIGN**

We see beauty, purpose and evidence of **God's design** all around us (Genesis 1:31; Psalm 19:1).

The Bible tells us that God originally planned a world that worked perfectly – where everything and everyone fit together in harmony. This was a place of peace, love, security and life. There was no war, persecution, famine, hate or death in this place.

God made humans with a purpose – to worship Him and walk with Him in this perfect place.

## **BROKENNESS**

**Sin** leads to death and brokenness (Romans 3:23; 6:23). When we selfishly insist on our own way and rebel against a Holy God, the Bible calls this **sin**, and **sin** radically distorts God's original design. The consequence of **sin** is separation from God – in this life and for all eternity. We see the destructive power of **sin** all around us and in our own lives as well.

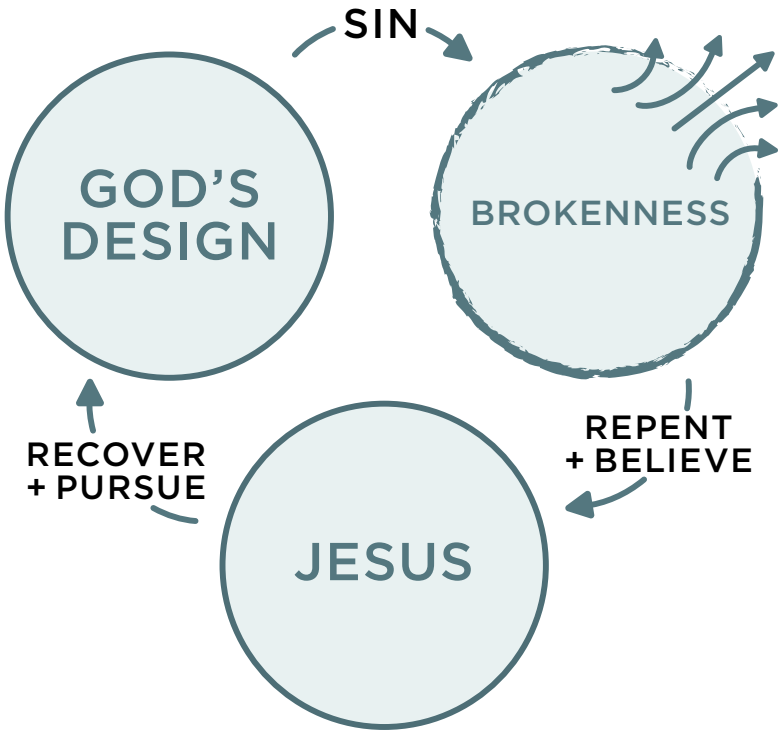
When we realize our life is broken, we begin to look for a way out (arrows leading from brokenness). We tend to go in many directions trying different things to figure it out on our own (Proverbs 14:12). Brokenness leads to a place of realizing a need for something greater because we can't fix it on our own.

## **JESUS**

Therefore, God provided a way out of our brokenness (John 3:16; Romans 5:8). Jesus, God in human flesh, came to us and lived perfectly according to God's design.

Jesus came to rescue us – to do for us that which we could not do for ourselves. He took our sin and shame to the Cross, paying the penalty of our sin by His death (Colossians 2:14). Jesus was then raised from the dead – to provide the only way for us to be rescued and restored to a relationship with God.

So if we **REPENT** from our way and **BELIEVE** in Jesus Christ, we are saved from our sin (Mark 1:15b; Ephesians 2:8-9). When God restores our relationship to Him, we begin to discover meaning and purpose in a broken world. We are set free to pursue God’s design in our lives (Philippians 2:13; Ephesians 2:10). Even when we fail, God’s Spirit empowers us to pursue His design and the Spirit’s presence assures us our of relationship with the Father (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:14).



**Note:** Consider downloading the “Life on Mission” app for your mobile device.





# TOOLS IN EVERY TEACHER'S TOOLBOX

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.”  
— Colossians 3:23

Every Teacher has God-given tools that can make his or her LifeGroup the place to be! While your personality may cause you to naturally gravitate toward some of these tools more than others, each of them can help you connect with your people more significantly. As Teachers, we get to share the most important message ever given: Because of God's love and Christ's sacrifice for us, we can have new life, complete forgiveness and real hope for every day ahead! Teachers, we get to share this life-impacting message and we need to do it to the best of our ability. These tools help make that a reality.

## **TOOL #1: PASSION**

Your passion should be directed toward a clear outcome or “big idea.” In other words, as you begin to prepare your lesson, get clarity about several things:

- a. What is the big idea (what do you want the group to learn)?
- b. What difference is it going to make (why do I want them to learn it)?
- c. What is the value added to their life (what do I want them to do with it)?
- d. How can I point them to Jesus with this lesson (every week I want to point them to their Savior)?

## **TOOL #2: AUTHENTICITY**

This tool is a must! One of the chief reasons Teachers are encouraged to begin preparing early in the week is so that the lesson can impact them; the Scripture can impact them; so that God can bring the truths of His Word alive to them. Why? Because, the Teacher is the lesson.

### **TOOL #3: FLEXIBILITY**

There is a direct correlation between one's predictability and one's impact. In other words, the higher the predictability, the lower the impact.

Frequently a Teacher will ask, "Are there any bad teaching methods? I just like to lecture. Is that wrong?" No, not necessarily, but lecture is an effective teaching method ... as long as it is not the only method you utilize. The only "bad" teaching method is the one you use every single week.

In any group, you will find people with a variety of learning styles. If you only use one method of teaching, you are choosing not to make an impact on those in your group who prefer other learning styles.

### **TOOL #4: LAUGHTER**

Humor frequently is the perfect tool when we find ourselves in a tense or stressful situation. Proverbs 17:22 says that "a joyful heart is good medicine...." Most people love to laugh and the funny things that occur in our home and with our family typically get the best response.

### **TOOL #5: INSPIRATION**

The people we teach are fire-hosed with pessimism and bad news on every turn. People need to believe things can get better; that with God's strength and guidance, they can make a positive difference. The tool of inspiration is vital to keep hope, belief and dreams alive. Your people are begging to be inspired!

### **TOOL #6: CONVICTION**

The conviction tool speaks solely to your understanding and application of God's Word. For instance, if your subject is mercy and compassion, share this lesson using a personal story about someone who displayed compassion to you so that your group can feel your conviction about this subject.



# TOOLS IN EVERY TEACHER'S TOOLBOX (CONTINUED)

## **TOOL #6: CONVICTION (CONTINUED)**

People remember stories and authentic emotion. It moves them. It sets the table for change to occur. Someone once said that the most fatal comment about preaching is “he taught as though nothing were at stake.” The minute you feel your convictions slipping or indifference about the lesson, it’s time to get alone with God in prayer. **The Teacher is the lesson.** How you have applied God’s Word to your life and allowed it to change you? Your actions and attitudes will, in many respects, be replicated by your group.

## **TOOL #7: CREATIVITY**

As was stated above, our Teachers are encouraged to prepare their lessons with the specific needs of their members in mind. Every quality group is built on two foundational stones: the Bible and people’s needs. Our goal as Teachers is to let the Bible speak to people’s needs. This is where creativity enters the picture. It’s much easier to talk about the Bible, sharing facts, events, parallels, etc. rather than applying it to people’s real issues and specific needs. And yet that is where change occurs! Don’t stop with just knowledge and comprehension levels of learning. As professor of Christian education LeRoy Ford said, “We must take our students from the state of ‘so what?’ to the state of ‘aha!’”

Remember ... lives are at stake, so how you teach what you teach really does matter!



# HOW TO ENLIST AN APPRENTICE

An apprentice leader is someone who is being trained and equipped to step into a new leadership position or start a new LifeGroup.

## **STEPS TO ENLIST**

1. Identify people in your group who meet the qualifications of LifeGroup leadership (see page 5).
2. Approach the person(s) with a specific need you believe they're qualified for and extend an invitation to group leadership using the leadership descriptions contained in this guide.
3. Work with your divisional minister to train and develop your new apprentice leaders.



# SCRIPTURE PASSAGES FOR MINISTRY OCCASIONS

Everyone needs care all the time from God and others (1 Corinthians 12:25-26). In a special time for care, you can:

- A. Offer your “presence” and empathize with the person’s feelings (Romans 12:15); much of the time, when we don’t know what to say, we don’t need to say anything
- B. Become a very good listener (James 1:19)
- C. Pray with your friend (Philippians 4:6-7)

The following Scriptures may provide additional guidance and comfort:

<b>Sick</b>	Psalm 6; 41; 67
<b>Grieved</b>	Psalm 23; Isaiah 40:28-31; John 14:1-3, 18; 1 Thessalonians 4:13; Matthew 5:4; Romans 5:1-6
<b>Caring for Aging Parents</b>	Proverbs 23:22; Psalm 71:9; 1 Timothy 5:4
<b>Needy/Homeless</b>	Psalm 121
<b>Coping with Death</b>	Psalm 23; 1 Corinthians 15:55, 57; John 14:19
<b>Guilty</b>	1 Corinthians 13:4-7
<b>Aging</b>	Psalm 92:14-15; Proverbs 16:31
<b>Joyful</b>	Psalm 33:18-22; James 1:17
<b>Bereaved</b>	1 Corinthians 15; Revelation 21:1-7; Romans 8:35-39
<b>In Crisis</b>	Job 28:12-28; Proverbs 8; Isaiah 55:6
<b>Terminally Ill</b>	Philippians 4:6-7; Psalm 90:12; Psalm 23; 27; 121; Revelation 21:4; Romans 5:1-5



# ITEMS TO DISCUSS AT YOUR LIFEGROUP LEADERSHIP MEETING

We recommend that each LifeGroup Leadership Team meet at least every other month for prayer, sharing updates on prospects, various ministry situations, evaluation and planning.

## **SAMPLE AGENDA**

### **PRAYER**

### **EVALUATION DISCUSSION**

- What was most successful in our LifeGroup in the last month?
- What needs immediate improvement?
- Are we reaching our goals for spiritual growth, involving more people in service, salvations and growth?

### **TEACHING UPDATE**

### **PROSPECT/GUEST FOLLOW-UP**

- Briefly share information about each prospect since the last meeting.
- Who joined since our last meeting?
- Lead a time of prayer specifically for your prospects: for salvation, clarity in their decision regarding a church, etc.
- Share any outreach or evangelism plans.



# ITEMS TO DISCUSS AT YOUR LIFEGROUP LEADERSHIP MEETING (CONTINUED)

## **MEMBERSHIP/SHEPHERD GROUPS UPDATE**

- How are we following up with each new member since our last meeting to ensure they stay connected?
- Do we have enough Shepherd Groups? Enough leaders/homes?
- Discuss prayer needs, care needs and ministry follow-up plans.
- Discuss socials & party plans.
- Discuss how these events can be leveraged to reach and connect with new people.
- How can we improve our REACH, improve our LEARN, and improve our LOVE?

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

Be sure to pray for each other as leaders, for the intentionality of our entire LifeGroups Ministry, and for our church, Pastor and staff.




# KEY DOCTRINES OF THE FAITH

- We believe the Bible is God's Holy Word, without error, and is the sole authority for faith and life.
- We believe there is one God: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. They subsist in unity, and also as three separate, distinct Persons all equally God. God has always existed, and He is the creator of the universe.
- We believe Jesus Christ is God's Son, He was born of a virgin as both fully God and fully man, lived a sinless life, died to atone for the sins of human beings, was buried, arose from the grave, ascended into heaven and will literally return to earth. He is the only way to God the Father.
- We believe the Holy Spirit is the divine helper, counselor, comforter and instructor. His work is to reveal Christ, convict of sin, lead to repentance, guide believers, comfort, strengthen, and sanctify the soul. He is a "seal" and "deposit" given to all believers at the point of conversion guaranteeing their inheritance.
- We believe human beings are special creations of God, made in His image. All human beings are born sinners and are in need of salvation having fallen through the sin of the first man, Adam. We believe that life begins at conception and is sacred to God.
- We believe sin is disobedience to God. Sin entered into the world through Adam, and all human beings are born into sin and choose to sin. Sin separates all human beings from God until they receive forgiveness through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. God desires for all Christians to forsake sin and become like Him—holy.
- We believe salvation is a gift through repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ, and every person who truly is saved is eternally secure in the Lord Jesus Christ and will spend eternity in heaven, while those who die in their sins will spend eternity in hell, separated from God.
- We believe the church is a local body of baptized (by immersion) believers with the Lord Jesus Christ as the head. The mission of the Church is to carry out God's command to preach the Gospel and make disciples of all nations. The universal church is made up of all believers everywhere.
- We believe God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness.






# STAY CONNECTED


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