



## Leading a Small Group

### Steps for Starting a Group:

1. **Begin to pray** for your group and for God to prepare the hearts of those that will be in your group.
2. **Decide** on the day, time, frequency and location for your group meeting and email [groups@acfellowship.org](mailto:groups@acfellowship.org) with those details. As people reach out to us looking for a group, this helps us connect them with you.
3. **Invite** family and friends to join you! Who is in your sphere of influence that is not in a group? Consider inviting your neighbors, adults you meet from your kids' sports teams, co-workers, parents from school, work-out friends at the gym, those you've met through your hobbies, etc. Note: A personal invitation always get better results than an email!
4. **Contact** all of your group participants a few weeks before you start to provide details on your group meetings. Let them know what to expect for the first meeting, if they need to bring anything, and where you're meeting or how to login if meeting online. Sending an email or text reminder a day or two before each meeting is always helpful too!

### If you're leading a group for the first time, remember:

- Sweaty palms are a healthy sign.
- Seek support. We are here to help you! Email us at [groups@acfellowship.org](mailto:groups@acfellowship.org).
- Be yourself! Embrace who you are and how God wants you to uniquely lead the study.
- Prepare for the group time. Go through the lesson or material to discuss before the meeting to familiarize yourself with the material. Pray for your group time and ask the Holy Spirit to guide the discussion.
- Share leadership. Ask other members of the group to facilitate discussion or share in other responsibilities for the group. Groups are healthiest when every member is engaged and invested.

### Typical flow for a group meeting – adjust schedule based on length of your meeting:

- 15 minutes: Social/check-in time
- 60 minutes: Discussion
- 15 minutes: Prayer

### Tips for leading an engaging group discussion:

- Create open and meaningful conversation (not a class!) where everyone brings thoughts and questions to the table.
- Encourage others to share, listen attentively when they speak and be affirming whenever you can.
- Ask questions that:
  - are open-ended (not yes or no)
  - evoke feelings, thoughts, insights
  - do not have just one right answer
  - require personal examples
  - stimulate people to apply what they are learning
- People are messy! Don't try to control what you can't control.
- Remember, God causes the growth. Your job is to care, listen, pray, and model searching scripture for truth.