

Common Ground Friends Manual

“If you want to go fast, go alone, if you want to go far, go together.” - an African Proverb

Common Ground Friends is...

- A movement of Christ’s Spirit working within the Church and throughout the world
- Walking daily with Jesus Christ, deepening your friendship with him
- Walking with others, because we are called to join together as a community, as a family in Christ.
- Not a program or a formula, but a way of discipleship.
- A Small, Intimate, and highly Flexible group

John 15:15 - *“I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.”*

Mt. 18:20 - *“Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I will be in their midst.”*

Basic Principles:

- **Christ-Centered Groups:** We recognize that Jesus Christ is among us. He is the leader of each group.
- **Biblical:** We pray God’s word. We pray about three to four verses a day. These groups are not generally to pray for our needs, to counsel, or to teach.
- **Gender specific:** Men with men and women with women, unless forming a group as a family.
- **Small:** A group starts with 2 or 3 friends or family members. Maximum number recommended is 4. Three is ideal, like Jesus’ triads: “Peter, John and James” or the three Marys’. Groups multiply once they have 4 or 5 consistent members.
- **Daily:** Choose a consistent time to meet for 30 minutes, everyday Mon-Fri.
- **Flexible:** They meet anytime and can meet with people anywhere.
- Groups meet via phone (3 way calling), zoom, video chat, or in person.
- **Commitment and accountability:** High level of commitment and mutual accountability. All members are active participants.
- **Simple** - Groups are easy to start, easy to participate, easy to multiply.
- **Heart transformation:** Because we are meeting with Jesus in daily spiritual community to hear His word and obey it, these groups allow the Holy Spirit to produce spiritual growth from the inside out. This includes a heart of gratitude towards God and obedience to His word.
- **Friendship** - Promote intimate friendship with Jesus and among participants.

Friends in Prayer

Daily Group Pattern: 30 minutes

The group chooses a reader for the day. We recommend regularly rotating the individual who organizes the call and is the reader, so that everyone can learn to facilitate. The reader assigns who will open with prayer and the order we will follow. We choose a small portion of Scripture, for example: Ephesians 5:1-4. In addition, each member chooses two names of friends or relatives that he/she wants to invite to the groups. Each member will pray for them in the last prayer round.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Love: to Jesus Christ

- A friend starts a one-minute conversation with Jesus Christ,
 - Thanking Jesus for the new day and for each member by name.
 - Recognizing **the presence of Jesus Christ** in our midst as He promised:
“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”
Mt.18:20
- Tell him that **we love Him** and are committed to follow him.

Biblical Prayers: to the Father

1. The reader reads aloud the first verse, (for example - Ephesians 5:1) and talks to the Father for a minute inspired in that particular verse. The rest remain quiet.
2. One by one, the rest of the members of the group follow, praying a one-minute prayer inspired by the verse just read.
 - a. You do not need to read the verse again.
3. This process repeats itself one verse at a time.
4. Five minutes before the 30 minutes end, the reader signals the group it is time to close with the last prayer round.

Prayer for Obedience: to the Holy Spirit

1. Each member prays a one-minute prayer to the Holy Spirit:
 - a. Asking to Spirit to **fill us** and help us **put into practice** the verses we prayed today
 - b. For the friends we are planning to invite to our groups by name and
 - c. For our daily groups of friends that they may grow and multiply.

How to Start

- These groups are by invitation only and completely voluntary.
- Invite a friend or family to try it for a week.
- After experiencing that week, invite your friend to make a daily commitment at a convenient time for him or her.
- Keep your prayers short so that all the participants may learn to pray.
- Suggest to all participants to have their Bibles open while they pray. We recommend every member to download the YouVersion Bible App on his or her phone. The New Living Translation (NLT) is a good version to use.
- If someone is driving during the prayer time, please do not assign the driver to be the reader for safety reasons. Have the reader read the verse twice for the sake of the drivers.
- If it is not your turn to pray, out of courtesy, please mute your microphone.
- If someone is new and does not wish to pray, have them just listen or read the verse again when their turn comes.
- Please be punctual. Start on time and finish on time.
- If the group grows to four or more, multiply the group after 3 to 4 weeks.
- If someone misses the prayer time, don't judge them. Invite them again.

Begin with the following passages from the Gospel according to John. They will allow each person to become more familiar with the person of Jesus, our Lord and Savior:

John 1:1-18	John 3:16-21	John 4:13-26
John 6:35-40	John 7:37-39	John 10:7-14
John 11:24-27	John 13:12-17	John 13:33-35
John 14:1-9	John 14:15-19	John 15:1-27
John 17:1-26	John 19:16-27	John 20:1-31

After John, we recommend reading through some of Paul's letters in the New Testament, such as Ephesians or Philippians.