



## **Community Groups FAQ**

### **Who can host a community group?**

You can! Anyone can host a Sojourn Community Group. All you have to have is a place to meet, some people to gather, and the ability to stream a video from the internet.

### **What do we do during our group meetings?**

Most groups eat together, watch the video Bible study, discuss the study, and hang out. We recommend that you eat together as a group, but it is not required. Whether you eat a meal, snacks, or dessert, food seems to help people connect. Jesus often ate meals with people as a way of doing life with people and building friendships. The host can provide food each meeting, a group can assign a different person to bring food each time, or each person can bring a little something to each meeting. Please be aware that not each person has the same financial ability to provide food for a group.

### **What's the ideal rhythm/schedule for my community group?**

We as a church like for groups to kickoff and wind down together. In 2018, we will do a March and an August Community Groups Kickoff. Groups last for 3-4 months. Meeting for 3-4 four months at a time and then taking a few months off before kicking off new groups gives hosts a break, allows people to start new groups, and helps new people get involved. Many people will commit to a 3-4 month group, but may be more hesitant to commit to a group that has no end date.

Groups can meet every week or every other week. If you meet every week, you will only want to watch a Bible study episode every other week, because the curriculums tend to have 6-8 episodes. If you decide to meet every week and watch an episode every other meeting, your group could simply hang out or do a service project on the weeks you do not watch the study. After the study is over, you may want to have one last meeting to be together as a group. Of course we encourage people to continue to invest in friendships formed and strengthened during the group after the group is completed.

### **How do I find people to be in a group I'm hosting?**

Once you fill out a Community Group Host Form at the Next Steps Table on a Sunday or at the bottom of [www.SojournChurch.net/communitygroups](http://www.SojournChurch.net/communitygroups), your next step is to gather people for the group. Invite friends, co-workers, neighbors, family members, and anyone else you want. A good number for community groups is 5-10 people, but if you have a few less or a few more that is perfectly fine.



If you would like to send an email or text to invite friends, here is an example that you can edit:

*Hey,*

*I just wanted to let you know that I am hosting a community group starting on March 4. We are going to meet at 7:30 PM and it is going to be a men's group. We will meet at my place, eat some dessert, and go through a video Bible study called Work As Worship. I am hoping that God teaches us how to see all of life, including our work, as opportunity to serve and worship Him. The study is six episodes, and I plan for the group to meet every other Sunday night for those six studies.*

*I just want you to know you are invited. If you are already participating in another group or planning to host a group, awesome! If you would like to be in the group I am hosting, please let me know so that I can know how many to expect. Also, I am going to start a text message group for those coming to be able to communicate as a group. Let me know. Thanks.*

### **If I am not hosting, how do I find a group? Is there a list of groups somewhere?**

We do not provide a list of our groups. Our strategy is to invite anyone to host and to gather their friends, neighbors, and co-workers to do a group. If you are not involved with a group, ask a friend or two if they are involved with one. If they are, maybe you can join in with theirs. If they are not, one of you can host. If you are brand new to Sojourn and you do not know anyone you can ask about a group, please email [info@SojournChurch.net](mailto:info@SojournChurch.net) or fill out the form at the bottom [www.SojournChurch.net/communitygroups](http://www.SojournChurch.net/communitygroups) and let us know. We will happily do our best to connect you to a group.

### **What makes a great host?**

First, let's talk about what a great host is not. You do not have to be a Bible teacher to be a great host. That is why we have selected Bible studies from RightNow Media for you to watch together as a group. Actually, we ask hosts not to see themselves as the group's teacher. You are not expected to be a therapist either. You are opening your space up for people to gather, do life together, and learn about the Bible. You are not expected to be the expert.

**A good host is hospitable.** They seek to do whatever they can to help people feel welcomed, connected, and valued.

**A good host communicates well.** Make sure to communicate...

- the start date
- how many weeks or months the group will meet.
- the time and day of the week the group will meet and whether it meets every week or every other week.



- what kind of food will be provided (a full meal, dessert, finger food).
- whether people are asked to bring food.
- which study the group will watch.
- where people should park if parking is tricky.

It is hard to over-communicate. It is a good idea to create a way for the group to communicate to each other and for announcements to be shared. We recommend a text message group over a Facebook group, because many people are not on Facebook. Although Facebook is a great way to communicate for some, others have very good and sometimes personal reasons not to be active on Facebook.

***A good host is prepared.*** Of course technological difficulties happen from time to time, but don't let it be due to not being prepared. Make sure you know which episode your group is on and test the video streaming before the group begins. Know what you are going to do after the video study ends. Are you going to have questions from the study guide that is available for purchase through RightNow Media? Are you going to ask people to share their thoughts on what has been seen and heard? If you seem prepared, the people in the group will likely feel cared for and more comfortable during the meeting.

### **What do we do with children at group?**

This is dependent on each group. The age ranges of children and finances of members are a factor. Sitters that are paid for by the group can work well for some groups. If the individuals have easy access to personal sitters, then an advanced schedule for individual families may work best. Some groups may choose to have a rotation schedule where a few trusted adults are with the kids during the group time. Other groups may have parents all pool together \$5 or so per child and hire two sitters that will come during the group time. It is recommended for safety purposes to have more than one trusted people watching the kids.

Many families choose to have mom go to a women's group and dad to a men's group. When dad comes to group, mom is home with the kids. When mom comes to group, dad can be home with the kids. If you are in a men's or women's group, consider how the group may help a single mom or single dad that is a part of the group.

### **What makes a group a Sojourn community group?**

You can meet with friends and study the Bible without being a Sojourn Community Group. ***Sojourn community groups kick off together*** and follow a similar schedule, which cultivates a sense of excitement and unity in the church. ***They choose a Bible study from the options selected by the pastors***, which means several groups in the church will be studying the same thing. This can create a



sense of togetherness even among people involved in different groups. It also allows the pastors to ensure that all the groups are watching a study that is theologically trustworthy. ***The hosts of the Sojourn community groups sign up*** by filling out a Community Group Host Form. This allows the church as a whole and our pastors to pray for the groups and encourage the hosts. Of course we hope people are getting together throughout the year to study the Bible and encourage each other, but we hope that having a system for Sojourn community groups will bring a helpful sense of unity and structure.

### **How do I access and stream the video curriculum?**

The curriculum can be found on RightNow Media. If you do not have an account, go to <https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Account/Invite/sojournchurch> to create an account. This is our church's gift to you. Once you are logged in to RightNow Media, look under "Libraries" and select "Sojourn Church." This will take you to the potential community group curriculums you can select for the group you are hosting.

RightNow Media is compatible with ROKU, Apple TV, and Chromecast for streaming on your TV. If you do not have ROKU or Apple TV, Chromecast is a great option. You can purchase Google Chromecast at many major stores (Walmart, Target, Best Buy) for \$35 and potentially cheaper if you purchase it online. You need a TV with HDMI, wifi internet, and a smartphone or tablet with the RightNow Media app downloaded.