



LIFE GROUP LEADER MANUAL



A Message from Pastor Bryon White, Lead Pastor

Dear Life Group Leader,

Welcome to Life Group Leader Training. You are here to learn about a basic building block of how we minister to people at Kingsway Church. As a life group leader, you will join the ranks of those who have been entrusted with the precious gift of caring for the Body of Christ.

The relaxed, relational dynamic of our life groups make them fun and life giving. That's because the concept of life groups is biblical and deeply spiritual. Our model is based on the early Church, when the disciples of Christ devoted themselves to fellowship and teaching. Lindsay and I have benefited greatly over the years from our participation in life groups and our church has multiple testimonies of lives changed in the context of relationships.

We have carefully and deliberately created a system where you, as a leader, are cared for also. As a new leader, you will be paired with a coach. Never underestimate the importance of these people. Being the parents of three children, Lindsay and I have watched our kids participate in numerous group activities, including sports. As their dad, I always appreciated the coach or instructor who came alongside of them to encourage, support, develop and train them.

The same is true at Kingsway. As a pastor over hundreds of people who are gathering in life groups, it makes my job of shepherding them much easier when I know our leaders have a coaching system in place. The life group structure provides a necessary spiritual covering, a friendly accountability, and strong, healthy support.

So, enjoy your leadership training. Dream your dreams. Live your passion. Get creative, and let God use you to help people find and follow Jesus. The adventure of a lifetime awaits!

Let's help people find freedom,

Pastor Bryon
Lead Pastor

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SECTION 1. WHAT WE WANT YOU TO KNOW

1.1 Our Mission

At Kingsway, our mission is to help people find and follow Jesus. How do we do that? We believe God has outlined a great plan in His Word.

Therefore, say to the Israelites: "I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians."

Exodus 6:6-7 (NIV)

1.2 Our Vision

By stepping into leadership, you are making room for people to get into a group and grow in ways that they never have before. Our prayer is that you see yourself as an integral part of fulfilling the vision God has given to us as a church.

"I will bring you out"

Know God – Weekend Services

"I will free you from being slaves"

Find freedom – Life Groups

"I will redeem you"

Discover your purpose – Growth Track

"I will take you as my own people"

Make a difference - Teams

SECTION 2. THE HEART OF LIFE GROUPS

Galatians 5:1 (NIV)

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

LIFE GROUP MISSION

To promote healthy relationships where people find freedom and follow Jesus Christ, while connecting with one another.



CONVICTION #3 = LONE RANGERS BEWARE

Going it alone is dangerous. We are unashamed in our commitment to cultivate community in our life groups. We want everyone to "Get in a Group!"

2.1 The Purpose of Life Groups

1. Life change happens in the context of **RELATIONSHIPS**.

God designed us to live in biblical community where we find meaningful friendships and help each other grow. Life groups allow people of all ages, in every stage of life, to come together and experience real relationships. Relationships define us, grow us, challenge us, strengthen us and bless us.

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.” 1 John 1:7 (NIV)

Our culture **DEVALUES** personal relationships, but the Scripture requires relationships.

“Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.” Hebrews 10:24-25 (NLT)

2. At Kingsway we believe our church must grow **LARGER** and **SMALLER** at the same time.

Life groups provide a setting to build dynamic relationships and facilitate spiritual growth. Life groups are where celebration and mourning happen: new babies, hospital visits, meals in times of need, funerals, being there in the good, the bad and ugly of life.

3. Therefore, Kingsway is a church **OF** life groups rather than a church **WITH** life groups.

Our model for life group ministry is the early Church. The book of Acts records the tremendous growth of the first church in Jerusalem. How did they handle discipleship when 3,000 people came to Christ in one day? They met together in small groups.

“(They met) day after day, in the Temple courts and from house to house.” Acts 5:4 (NLT)

2.2 Life Groups Provide Three Things

1. A place to **CONNECT**.

"...Yes, whatever a person is like, I try to find common ground with him so he will let me tell him about Christ and let Christ save him." 1 Corinthians 9:22 (TLB)

It is easy to feel alone in a crowd. Life groups are an open door into the life of our church family. When you are in a life group, you experience the love and strength of biblical community.

2. A place to **PROTECT**.

"We know what real love is because Christ gave up His life for us. And so we also ought to give up our lives for our Christian brothers and sisters." 1 John 3:16 (NLT)

Imagine someone you can call when you are discouraged, someone to pray with when you doubt, and someone who can teach you more about what God is like. Imagine a loving community of people who notice when you are away; gently sharpen you when you need it, and who help you share your faith with others. Life groups are a place where you are protected and supported.

3. A place to **GROW**.

"As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." Proverbs 27:17 (NIV)

Life groups are a place where you can be equipped to become more like Jesus and to live a faith-filled life. We believe that every person is created with God-given potential to make a difference in the world. Life groups are a place where there are like-minded people, who believe in you. This is how leaders are developed. We want to see you grow, flourish, and become all that God has called you to be.

2.3 Our Flow of Leadership (Chain of Communication)

Our flow of leadership is based on the "Jethro Principle" found in Exodus 18. This flow of relationships enables people to grow in ministry.

LIFE GROUP PASTOR

Pastor Arlena Corzine

CAMPUS LIFE GROUP DIRECTORS**COACH****LIFE GROUP LEADER**

2.4 Our Life Group Model

Upon completing Growth Track, our life group system allows leaders to function in their gifting, while sharing their passions and interests in a disciple-making life group.

God has blessed each leader with a certain set of passions, gifts and abilities. As a Life Group Leader, you are using what God has given you to help people find and follow Jesus.

- Life group leaders are an **EXTENSION** of the staff at Kingsway Church.
- Life groups are important for handling the **PASTORAL CARE** functions of the church. They provide the personal touch that people need, especially in crises.

“Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God’s Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.” Ephesians 4:11-13 (NLT)

We’ve built into our life group system a flexibility that allows the leader and the participants to choose what kind of group they would like to join.

You can choose to lead/join one (1) of two (2) types of groups across six (6) categories.

2.5 Types of Groups

Semester Group

- The vision for a semester group is to introduce people to the group experience.
- Semester groups will meet every week during the semester.
- They will be open to as many people as the environment can hold and will be organized around a specific study (e.g. sermon series, book, topic).
- Semester groups can happen in homes or even in the community (e.g. the library, restaurant, etc.).
- At the end of the semester, semester groups can stay together, multiply or become self-directed groups.

Self-Directed Group

- The vision for self-directed groups is to allow people to go deeper into community.
- Self-directed groups will meet a minimum of (8) times over a (12)-week period. They can meet weekly, if they choose, but are allowed to schedule those times within the group.
- They will be as open as the group would like them to be. Our experience has shown that 13-15 people in a group allows for friendships to form and dynamic discussion to occur.
- Both leaders and participants can recruit people to their group. Self-directed groups don't have to open up to the church at large, although they are welcome to do so.
- The leader and the participants, together, determine the study focus (e.g. sermon series, book, topic, etc.).
- At the end of the semester, self-directed groups can stay together and/or multiply.

2.6 Categories of Groups

Alpha

Alpha is an opportunity to explore life and the Christian faith in a friendly, open and informal environment. Typically, Alpha has around ten sessions and includes food, a short talk, and then a discussion where participants are encouraged to share their thoughts.

Freedom

The vision for Freedom groups is to be the ultimate expression of biblical deliverance that people might find freedom from their past, develop a passionate relationship with Jesus, and discover an expression of their purpose that they might strengthen the local church.

Men

The purpose of men's groups is to define authentic Biblical manhood. Study topics will focus on the Biblical call to be men who reject passivity, accept responsibility, lead courageously and invest in eternity through their intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. These groups will help men build strong godly character through accountability with one another and help men assume their spiritual role of leadership.

Women

The purpose of women's groups is to empower, strengthen, and encourage women in their full potential by helping them gain knowledge and understanding of God. Study topics will focus on a variety of issues and areas of need for women by establishing a place of peace for women to retreat to from their busy lives. These groups will help women engage in fellowship with other women believers while helping one another identify their unique, God given gifts for the purpose of harvesting other women for God's kingdom.

Family

Family groups come alongside participants in every phase of life and provide resources to effectively develop godly families. Study topics include marriage, parenting, sermon series, and other topics where families are seeking relationships with one another. These groups will help transform marriage and family with resources that outline God's blueprint for the family.

Affinity

The purpose of affinity groups is to gather together around a common interest or activity while incorporating Scripture and connecting with God. Examples of these groups include running, golf, sermon series topics, service projects, or community prayer/outreach.

SECTION 3. LIFE GROUP LEADERSHIP

3.1 Campus Life Group Director

This role supports the leadership structure in a specific campus.

Directors serve Coaches and Leaders by:

- Being responsible for the overall administration, coordination, and day-to-day activity of life groups at the assigned campus.
- Recruiting, leading, and equipping leaders to lead successful teams and groups.
- Praying daily for Coaches and Life Group Leaders
- Encouraging them to move one step further in his/her walk with Christ

- Mentoring through prayer, encouragement and healthy relationships
- Maintaining open communication with the Life Group Pastor and Central Life Group Director
- Assisting with Life Group leadership training throughout the year
- Committing to personal spiritual and relational development
- Attending all Life Group events (training, kick-off, gatherings, etc.)

3.2 Life Group Coach

Life Group Leaders will be paired with a coach. Coaches will provide prayer, support, and a direct line of communication.

Coaches serve leaders by:

- Praying for Life Group Leaders daily
- Equipping and encouraging Life Group Leaders to grow in their personal relationship with Christ
- Supporting leaders entrusted with shepherding group members
- Providing care for life group leaders and their groups through prayer, social interaction, and attention to special needs
- Helping to identify and raise up new leaders

3.3 Life Group Leader

A Life Group Leader is:

- Passionate about God and people
- A person of character and integrity
- Committed to personal spiritual growth
- Supportive of the vision and mission of Kingsway Church. This includes attending a weekend service and supporting the church financially through tithes and offerings
- Able to lead, motivate and teach other people
- Able to create positive group dynamics, and deal with conflict resolution within the group

Responsibilities:

- Pray for and coordinate weekly life group meetings to include the following: Welcome, Worship, Prayer and Word
- Pray daily for everyone in life group and for your coach

- Be an example to life group members, modeling a deep passion for the things of God and His Church
- Provide a supportive atmosphere in which life group members are able to grow in their relationship with Christ
- Encourage group members to use their gifts in serving
- Maintain unity by representing the philosophy of ministry and theology of Kingsway Church
- Be open to counsel from the assigned Coach and provide highlights and concerns about your life group regularly
- Encourage members to invite people who are outside the church

Leaders are asked to abide by an honor code and leadership commitment.

3.4 Honor Code

As an essential part of the Kingsway Church Leadership Family, you have a responsibility to develop and exhibit mature Christian behavior. This should be the basic premise of your desire to work in a Servant-Leader position.

While serving the Body of Christ as a Life Group Leader at Kingsway, you pledge to present a good appearance at all times. In both attire and behavior, you should strive to demonstrate biblical standards in all situations.

As Christians, the way we present ourselves is of vital importance to the way others perceive Christ. Our conduct should never be an embarrassment to Christ but should exemplify the best qualities of a mature believer and servant-leader.

Exemplifying the highest moral commitment, Kingsway leaders are to maintain a disciplined life of Bible reading, prayer and fasting. You must also refrain from such things as:

- Profanity
- Smoking or chewing tobacco
- Gambling
- Indulging in much wine or other alcoholic beverages • Dishonest gain
- Illegal drugs
- Pornography
- Sexual immorality
- All behaviors which might cause Christ to grieve and others to stumble.

By providing an example in speech and action, we encourage others to grow in Christ and become servant-leaders in themselves. This is a way of life measured by the heart and commitment of each leader in the Kingsway family. We should regard servant leadership as an essential part of our development, not as an imposition or restriction.

Things to Avoid:

- **BUSINESS** (e.g. personal business or promotional materials)
- **OFFERINGS** (No personal, speaker, or business-related offerings. If an individual within the group is in need you may help. If you are unsure, please contact your Chain of Communication.)
- **UNAPPROVED SPEAKERS OR MATERIALS** (All materials must be approved by the Campus Life Group Director)
- **CONTROVERSIAL TOPICS** (e.g. Politics)

3.5 Leadership Commitment

“The same goes for those who want to be servants in the church: serious, not deceitful, not too free with the bottle, not in it for what they can get out of it. They must be reverent before the mystery of the faith, not using their position to try to run things. Let them prove themselves first. If they show they can do it, take them on. No exceptions are to be made for women—same qualifications: serious, dependable, not sharp-tongued, not over fond of wine. Servants in the church are to be committed to their spouses, attentive to their own children, and diligent in looking after their own affairs. Those who do this servant work will come to be highly respected, a real credit to this Jesus-faith.” 1 Timothy 3:10-13 (MSG)

SECTION 4. YOUR LIFE GROUP

4.1 Getting Started

Prayer

- Pray about what type of group the Lord will have you lead
- Pray about whom to invite to your life group
- Commit to praying daily for your life group members and coach
- Encourage members in daily prayer
- Daily prayer for God's presence, His power, His peace, and His provision

Recruiting

- Start with the people who are already in your sphere of influence (co-workers, friends, neighbors)
- Find people around you who are new to the church, new believers, or have shown interest in getting involved
- Look for people who you think you can help draw out their potential
- Pray for God to send people to you whom you haven't already discovered
- Yes, people who don't go to Kingsway are allowed to attend

Location

- We encourage life groups as much as possible to meet outside of the church building.
- If you cannot meet in your own home, look for a host home (possibly the home of someone attending your group). Other possibilities for meeting locations include:
 - Library conference room
 - Recreation center
 - Community clubhouse
 - Park
 - Restaurant
 - Coffee shop

Note: Host will require background screening.

Childcare

Childcare plays an important part in life groups. Prayerfully consider whether or not you can offer childcare in your home. If you choose to offer childcare, you will have an opportunity on your Group Information Form to indicate the number of children you could accommodate.

If you are considering having childcare in your home, please note the following details:

- Your home should have enough space to create a clear line of separation between the group and the children.
- When possible, we will recommend childcare providers that have been screened for serving with children.
- Since the number of providers needed depends on the age and number of children who come to your group and we may not know exactly what your group's need is until signup or even the night of your first meeting, Kingsway will pick up the tab for childcare for the first group meeting only up to \$10.00 per hour, per provider (maximum of 2 providers). This will allow you time to discuss the best option to cover the expense of childcare with group members.
- You might have teenagers in your home willing to help with childcare, and if they are interested and have been screened, they would be given the opportunity to provide childcare first (since this would be a paid position).
- If you agree to have childcare in your home, we will advertise that with all information published about your group.

Group Information Form

Completion of this form is required in advance of the upcoming semester and contains information regarding the meeting location, day and time, and study focus for the group. The deadline for submission will be established for each life group semester.

Life Group Kick-Off Sunday

Campus Life Group Directors, Life Group Leaders and Coaches should be available to attend all campus services on the Sunday immediately preceding the Life Group semester start date. Campus Life Group Directors, Life Group Leaders and Coaches will be available to answer questions and accept sign-ups for life groups.

Life Group Leadership Training

This event typically takes place during the week immediately preceding the Life Group semester start date. Attendance is required for all Campus Life Group Directors, Life Group Leaders, and Coaches.

4.2 How to Lead Your Life Group Meeting

Every life group meeting should have (3) components:

WELCOME: This should involve food & fellowship. Every week, the group should spend time getting to know each other better. This will happen naturally as people chat over food. For the first gathering, the leader (or host) will supply the food but inviting others to share this responsibility helps build group solidarity and camaraderie. The Alpha group consists of meals being coordinated and provided each week as an essential component of the group dynamics. At some point during the group session, you'll gather the group for an "icebreaker." This will be a fun, light-hearted activity that allows you to learn things about your fellow group members.

WORSHIP / PRAYER: James 5:16 says, "Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results." Prayer will be the glue that bonds your group and holds it together. Every group must take time to pray together, bearing one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2), encouraging one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11) and comforting one another (2 Corinthians 1:4). If you want to include a worship time in your group (either live worship or with a CD), we have tools available to help you.

WORD: All group options provide discussion guides to assist you with facilitating discussion. Specific guidelines for each group will be handled one-on-one between Life Group Pastor, Campus Life Group Director, and the Life Group Leader, however, below is a general overview:

Sermon Series: The discussion time for the sermon series is centered around three to five questions from the previous Sunday's sermon. They will be life application questions. For example, if Pastor Bryon preaches on mission, some of the questions might be: "Who in your circle of influence are you sharing the Gospel with? What obstacles have you encountered in telling others about Christ?" The questions are meant to be a springboard for discussion. If you don't get through all the questions, that's OK. The emphasis is on connecting biblical truth that we learn on Sundays with living it out in our daily lives.

Leader's Choice: We encourage all first-time leaders to select the sermon series for their discussion topic. This provides an opportunity for new leaders to gain skills and confidence in hosting a group, facilitating discussion and managing group dynamics. However, if there is a particular study that the group would like to do, please forward information to the Campus Life Group Director for approval.

4.3 Preparing for Your First Meeting

- Invite people to your group
- Email or call the day before your group as a friendly reminder
- Communicate important details about coming to your location (e.g. parking, pets, etc.)
- Have food and/or snacks available
- Create an inviting environment

4.4 Icebreakers

Icebreakers are structured activities that are designed to relax people, introduce them to each other and energize them as a group. They help invite people to form random groupings in a nonthreatening and fun way.

Why use icebreakers?

- Create a positive group atmosphere
- Help people to relax
- Break down barriers
- Energize and motivate
- Help people to get to know one another

4.5 Group Dynamics

1. Give time for **DISCUSSION**. *Avoid doing all of the talking*. A good guideline is the “70-30” rule. Approximately 70% of the speaking should be from members and 30% from the leader.
2. Keep the discussion **POSITIVE**. Carefully lead the conversation back to the topic when tangents occur. Where sensitive issues or complex questions arise in your group, follow-up one-on-one after the meeting.
3. Steer the discussion in a direction where **EVERYONE** can participate. Remember that some people may not grasp phrases that may be common to use (e.g. spiritual warfare; the blood of Jesus).
4. Be prepared to **CHANGE THE DIRECTION** of the meeting if needed. The primary goal is to create an environment where people feel loved and accepted.

5. Be sensitive to and avoid intense one-on-one ministry to the **OPPOSITE SEX**.

4.6 Ground Rules

Ground rules are set-up prior to the discussion. They help the leader avoid awkward confrontations with group members. Sharing the ground rules and allowing everyone to agree to them gives you permission to correct someone lovingly, if necessary.

Here is a recommended list to share at your first group meeting:

1. Confidentiality - what is said in the group, stays in the group
2. Keep sharing on topic and relevant to the discussion (avoid rabbit trails). It's OK to set a time limit.
3. We won't interrupt each other.
4. Give everyone a chance to speak (no conversation hogs).
5. Don't give advice.
6. Do not correct your spouse / significant other in front of the group. (Don't throw your spouse under the bus.)
7. Be compassionate. We recognize that members of the group are at different points in their spiritual journey. Please, err on the side of grace.
8. Start on time and end on time.
9. We will embrace the awkward silence. People need time to think about their answers.

4.7 The Unseen Element

*"For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them."
Matthew 18:20 (NLT)*

Think of a recent worship service or life group meeting that you really enjoyed. What made it encouraging or helpful, so that you were looking forward to the following week? Aim to lead a life group meeting that you want to attend!

- A **POSITIVE ATMOSPHERE** that is full of faith, hope, and love inspires people to grow, facilitates healthy relationship building, and allows the Holy Spirit to work. Life groups are an expression of church in your home. There should be a culture of encouragement, blessings, and unity. Your meeting reflects the heart and vision of Kingsway Church.
- As a leader it is your role to set the **tone** and **CULTURE** of your group. Atmosphere does not just happen! How can you create an effective atmosphere that builds others up? Consider the location of your group, your preparation for the meeting, and the example you can set as a leader.

Cultivate a **LIFE-GIVING** atmosphere. Be a source of encouragement. You do not need to know all the answers or be the source of all wisdom. The Holy Spirit is there to help and guide you.

4.8 Understanding ESPN

Your capacity to develop **HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS** will enhance your ability to minister in **TIMES OF NEED**.

We believe you can effectively lead a life group if you can:

- **ENCOURAGE PEOPLE**
- **SHARE SCRIPTURE**
- **PRAY**
- **NEXT STEPS**

“Know well the condition of your flocks, and give attention to your herds,”

Proverbs 27:23 (ESV)

Your primary role as a life group leader is to come alongside of people on life's journey and help them further their **WALK WITH CHRIST**.

Understandably, this is a subjective exercise. Matters of the heart always are. But, what is in our hearts makes its way out into our words, behaviors, attitudes, and decisions. Therefore, life group leaders endeavor to observe the external while discerning the internal issues of the heart. A tall order to be sure. However, the **HOLY SPIRIT** helps us.

When a group member struggles, ask yourself first and then the other person, these questions:

1. What stirs our affection for Christ? This helps examine **DESIRE**.
2. What helps us be intentional in following Christ? This helps assess **DECISIONS**.
3. What equips us to persevere in following Christ? This helps measure **DETERMINATION**.

4.9 Understanding the (5) Faith Catalysts

As a church, our mission is to help people find and follow Jesus. But how do we do that? Spiritual formation or discipleship happens through personal initiative. In other words, as much as we want to (or God wants to), we can't make people engage in habits or disciplines that will grow their faith & help them to be more like Jesus. However, we've learned that there are catalysts that inspire, build up or stir up faith in people. (See also Ephesians 4:11-16, 23; 1 John 2:27)

1. **P**RACTICAL TEACHING

- Teach for a response. Teach for life change.
- People are more interested in what works than what is true; so teach truth in a way that people can apply it to their lives and build faith.

2. **P**PRIVATE DISCIPLINES

- Daily prayer
- Daily Bible reading
- Fasting

- Scripture memorization
- Giving
- There is a direct correlation between a person's private devotional life and their personal faith.

3. **P**ERSONAL MINISTRY

- Understand individually and convey corporately that when we “go,” when we do ministry, we experience the power of God.
- Don't be afraid to do ministry together as a group. (e.g. 2nd Saturday, Trunk or Treat)
- Get on a team. Individuals become connected and become part of the body through serving.
- Model serving through our actions. The sooner we get people into ministry environments, the better.

4. **P**ROVIDENTIAL RELATIONSHIPS

- What makes relationships providential? There are TWO things in particular:
 - We hear God through someone.
 - We see God in someone.
- Providential relationships are dynamic. Be creative with your small group environment.
- We can't manufacture relationships, but we can create environments that foster relationships. God will connect the dots.

5. **P**IVOTAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- Defining moments: events good or bad that impact our faith, drawing us to God or away from God.
- As a leader you can help people as they go through pivotal circumstances draw closer to God.
- Share life with someone. Be there in that moment.

4.10 Tips to Being a Successful Life Group Leader

1. **PRAY DAILY** for group members. Tell them you are praying for them and encourage them to pray for each other.

2. **DEVELOP** an assistant. This may be the most fulfilling accomplishment of leadership. Helping someone find his/her purpose in God by learning to help others.
3. **SPEND TIME** individually with group members between meetings.
4. **FOSTER COMMUNICATION** within the group. Encourage your group members exchange contact information and to fellowship outside the group.
5. **ENGAGE** in a serve project or outreach during the semester.
6. **RALLY** the group around a member going through crisis. Use wisdom and be sensitive.

Your Co-Leader

A co-leader is optional for your life group. A co-leader's role is the same as the leader's role in caring and praying for life group members. The co-leader is paired with the same coach as the leader.

4.11 A Family Within A Family

"God places the lonely in families..." Psalm 68:6 (NLT)

God knows we need a loving group of people around us. It is through life groups that we can see the church family functioning in relationship with genuine love and practical care. In Life Groups we celebrate personal victories, we support each other through difficult times, we believe in each other's potential, and we show loyalty by keeping confidence.

"Relationships are the currency of change in the local church." – Tim Keller

We care for Life Group members in practical ways:

1. **ACCOUNTABILITY** – Ask tough questions. Help them keep commitments.
2. **AFFIRMATION** – Offer words of encouragement and support. Affirm their strengths.
3. **ASSESSMENT** – Evaluate their condition objectively. Help them gain perspective.
4. **ACCEPTANCE** – Provide unconditional love and grace even when there is failure.

5. **ADVOCATE** – Speak words of encouragement and support as options are determined or decisions made.
6. **ADMONITION** – Offer words of caution and warning so they can avoid pitfalls.
7. **ASSETS** – Give tangible gifts and resources (e.g. book, CD or a personal contact).
8. **APPLICATION** – Direct them to discover how they can practice what they have learned.

4.12 What About the Fear Factor?

When you are afraid, you must **RELY** on God.

“For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.” 2 Timothy 1:7 (ISV)

If you’re uncomfortable, that’s a good thing. You need **GOD**.

“If you wait for perfect conditions, you will never get anything done.” Ecclesiastes 11:4 (NLT)

Seeking the Support of the Life Group Ministry Team

As a leader, if you encounter a difficult situation within your Life Group, please know that you are not alone. If you are unsure of what to do, don’t hesitate to ask! The Chain of Communication is available to help you troubleshoot and advise you on challenging situations.

It is possible that a group member may need more personal ministry than you are able to offer, because of life circumstances or emotional difficulties. Your Campus Life Group Director can help you assess when a call to the pastoral staff is necessary.

4.13 Developing Future Life Group Leaders

Leaders grow future leaders. As a leader we have the awesome opportunity to speak into the lives of our members and help them take steps to serve the church as God has gifted them.

A future **Life Group Leader** is a member that you would like to invest your time into by developing their God given abilities to lead. The individual will be trained alongside a leader to eventually lead a new group or take on the existing group allowing the current leader to form a new group.

STEP 1: PRAY

Ask God to direct you and prepare the heart of the perspective leader.

“One of those days Jesus went out to the mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called His disciples to Him and chose twelve of them, whom He also designated apostles.” Luke 6:12-13 (NIV)

STEP 2: DELEGATE

Who in your group is a Christ follower and has shown that they are able to take on responsibility and genuinely care for the welfare of others?

“Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God’s Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.” Ephesians 4:12-13 (NLT)

STEP 3: MAKE THE ASK

Make sure they understand what a leader is and what qualities you see in them that led you to believe they would be a great leader!

Share with your Life Group about the person that is going to come alongside you and make sure they understand the purpose for this leader. Let the group speak into the process as well so they take ownership of it and can one day celebrate together as a new group is formed.

STEP 4: LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Give your future leader the opportunity to lead while you are there to observe, not as a substitute when you can’t be there. Also, give your future leader the freedom to change things up as his or her personality dictates, keeping the purpose of the group intact. Follow up the time with dialogue on how they felt and share any constructive area for improvement. Give affirmation and encouragement to your future leader each step along the way!

Growing spiritual leaders is vital to the heart of God - it is following Christ’s example. It’s a way to multiply you and let go in order to let others take the lead. It’s saying no to the urgent in order to say yes to the potential of the important.

STEP 5: LET GO!

Only release leaders when they have a good chance of succeeding! Release them to go through Growth Track (if they haven't already) and/or contact the Campus Life Group Director to get started leading a new group. It may be possible to grow your group to where you can divide into (2) groups.

Support them through prayer and keep in touch to see how they are doing.

SECTION 5. PRAYER

*“Always be joyful. **Never stop praying.** Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.” 1
Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NLT)*

At Kingsway Church, we believe heart-felt prayer is key to leading people to Christ and essential to what we do as a church.

Prayer is the **FOUNDATION**. As leaders, it is vital that you set the tone for prayer. When you look to the example of Jesus, you help lay the foundation.

*“For no one can lay any foundation other than the one we already have – Jesus Christ.”
1 Corinthians 3:11 (NLT)*

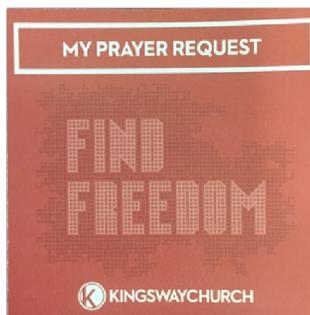
Intentional prayer **COVERS, PROTECTS** and **ENLIGHTENS**.

It is important to spiritually prepare the environment before group members arrive.

- Humble yourself
- Invite the presence of the Holy Spirit
- Ask God to work in the hearts of those He is calling to be there and to prepare them to receive what He wants to impart
- Pray that members will have personal revelation and understanding of God’s Word

Prayer is a **CONNECTING POINT** for ministry. Your group needs to offer an opportunity for the ministry of the Holy Spirit to take place in people’s lives.

Make sure you have the **PRAY FIRST** resource.



Prayer Request Cards should be made available to the Life Group members before and after each session. All requests should remain confidential unless the prayer request has been shared with the entire group.

SECTION 6. RESOURCES

The HUB: Life Group Leader Resources

For Kingsway, "The Hub" is simply an online connection point for our church family.

ONE LOGIN. ONE PLACE. MANY CONVENIENT OPTIONS.

FOR EVERYONE: The Hub gives access to your church profile, ensuring that we have the most up-to-date contact information for you and your family. The Hub also gives you the ability to connect with your Life Group and to view your financial statements.

FOR LIFE GROUP LEADERS:

- Life Group Management (Participant Contact Information and Picture)
- Prayer Requests/Prayer Request Card
- Attendance Reporting
- Group Registration Form
- Worship (songs, chord charts, and worship booklets)
- Reference Materials: Icebreakers, Ministry Through the Use of Scripture, Plans for Presenting Salvation

NOTE: It is important that you read and understand the contents of this manual. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact your Campus Life Group Director or Coach.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR WORK AND SERVICE!