



grow groups



Week 1: Love One Another

John 15:12-17

GOAL:

Connect with your group members and preview the semester

CHECKLIST

- ☐ Reach out individually to all group members (new or returning) to welcome them and to give them details about this week's GG Kickoff.
- ☐ Prepare for your group meeting by praying for yourself and your group (feel free to use the prayer below) and reading through this Leader's Guide.
- ☐ Spend time catching up with your group and meeting any new members
- ☐ Discuss any logistics for your group (serve project, snack signup, social events, etc.)
- ☐ Take attendance in Planning Center, including guests/new members

PREPARING THROUGH PRAYER:

Heavenly Father, thank you so much for the love that you have extended to us, and for the way you demonstrated that love by sending Jesus to die for us 'while we were still sinners.' Jesus taught us that the love you have shown us isn't meant to stop with us - it's meant to be extended to others as well. And I pray that by the power of the Holy Spirit, that would happen in my group this semester. As we talk about the "One Anothers" of Scripture, please bind us together in unity and teach us how to share our spiritual lives more fully with each other. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. Hebrews 10:24-25

CONNECT

Begin by introducing new members and catching up with returning members.

If you have new members: To help new members connect with the group, take time to let ALL members, both new and returning, introduce themselves. You can ask them to share basic info, like telling about their family or what they do during the day (work, school, etc.), or you can make it creative, like what their dream job would be, their favorite restaurant, etc.

All Groups: Since this is the first time your group will have been together since the holidays, spend some time checking in to find out how each person's break was. Give each group member the opportunity to share what's been happening in their lives over the last few weeks. You might use "highs/lows" or just ask them to share a thing or two about their break.

COORDINATE

Spend a few minutes covering any details the group needs to know:

Schedule: Go over any specific schedule notes (weeks when you'll do something different, etc.)

Serving Project: Let everyone know the specific date your group will serve at the *Building for the Better* project.

Roles: This is a great time to invite people to serve in the group. You might ask some people to plan a social event, others to coordinate snacks, and someone else to reach out to people who miss a week or two. Also, please be thinking about who in your group you'd like to ask to facilitate one week during the semester.

DISCUSS

Leader's Note: Since we'll be spending time together in the Worship Center for the Grow Group Kickoff, you may end up spending all of your time catching up and previewing the semester. If so, that's great! But, if you end up with a few extra minutes, here are a few questions you might want to discuss:

- As you listened to the preview of this semester during the Grow Group Kickoff, what excited you? What made you nervous?
- In what ways would you like to see our group strengthen the "One Another" part of our life together?

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. Hebrews 10:24-25

PRAY

Leader's Note: Please feel free to include any specific needs that group members shared in this prayer time. But let's also spend time intentionally asking the Holy Spirit to stretch us this semester in the "together" part of our spiritual journeys. As Pastor Larry shared, let's pray for a higher "risk ceiling" in our groups!

Here's a potential prayer order you might want to use today:

THANKS:

Let's begin our prayer time by thanking God for all of the good things he has done. If you feel comfortable, you can say something like, "Thank you, God, for bringing us back together today," or "Thank you God, that you've given us this group to help us find encouragement and support." Feel free to pray more than once or not at all.

Give time for this portion of the prayer.

INTERCESSION:

Now, let's take a few minutes to ask God to help our group grow together this semester. You might say something like, "God, please help us to have a higher 'risk ceiling' in our group like Pastor Larry said," or "Lord, please help us give and receive encouragement in our group."

Give time for this portion of the prayer, then offer a brief closing prayer.