



A **Life Group** is a gathering of 6-15 people who regularly meet in homes to study scripture, do life, and serve others together. They are designed to be a balance of **Biblical, Relational, and Missional** in nature. Life Groups center on God's Word, encourage authentic relationships, and seek out ways to be used of God in the lives of others.

How is a Life Group Different than a Small Group?

It is quite possible that your small group is already operating like a Life Group. It is also possible that through years of being in a small group, the small group may have taken on a life of its own. Introducing Life Groups is LEFC's way of encouraging the groups to support the mission of the church.

Several Distinctives of a Life Group

(How they might differ from existing small groups)

1. **A Life Group will have a leader.** – We believe there should be someone who is driving the ship. The leader should be someone who sees this group as an opportunity to minister to the group members-someone who sees the spiritual growth of those in the group as their ministry. This means:
 - a. Choosing the next study; encouraging members to all be giving back to the group; delegating the tasks of having a group; making sure the care is taking place; and guiding the time spent together, as well as the conversation. Is OIKOS mentioned and prayed for?
 - b. Colossians 1:26-27 – The leader is a communicator of this mystery, but is in daily need of His grace...A leader is one who is willing to admit their need, model receiving this grace, and then communicate it to others.
 - c. So that in Colossians 1:28-29 – this leader's purpose is to PROCLAIM CHRIST!!

2. **A Life Group will be Open** (Missional in nature)
 - a. We are asking that groups be open to including someone else. The end goal is not incredible intimacy among those in the group. While this is something we hope all groups attain along the way, I don't think it's our target. Being willing to accept another person, and allowing

them to experience this community is living out “loving God and loving others.” You have loved them enough to put your comfort aside.

- b. Our hope is not to force any existing small group into transitioning into a Life Group. Unless there is an existing reason, we don’t foresee dropping 3 couples into your group. What we do ask is that your group be on board with welcoming a person/couple from your Oikos or neighborhood.

3. A Life Group will tackle the 3 O’s...We ask that these are a focus of the group and regularly discussed and prayed for...

- a. Oikos – God has placed each one of us in a unique set of relationships, your Oikos. To proclaim the Gospel in this circle of close relationships, it is hard and takes intentionality. Encourage one another. Be praying for each other. Share stories with each other.
- b. Overlap – In this Life Group, there are several individual Oikos circles present. How can these spheres overlap, becoming a group Oikos? Imagine a Venn diagram, with circles overlapping. Where/When/How does this happen? Maybe it’s moving a stranger or cooking spaghetti for a dinner a group member is hosting. Every group will do this differently...the leader should be praying to this end!
- c. Outside Ministry – Each group will be assigned a LEFC missionary. Each group should also ask if there is any outside ministry they can do together (building relationships, strengthening Oikos, and serving the Lord).

4. A Life Group will meet 3 times a month (relational in nature)

- a. While we aren’t asking every group to meet every week (which by the way, I think is preferred), we are asking that they meet at least 2x per month in a group study format, and have at least 1 other touch point throughout the month. This could be ice cream and a movie, a service project, or anything where you spend time together. In order to share life together, you’ve got to spend time together.
- b. Real conversation happens in the context of real life. Spend time at the dinner table together. Interact and include each other in normal daily life. Create the space to do life together!

5. A Life Group will be Biblical in nature...

- a. We expect these groups to incorporate God’s Word into every lesson. Whether it’s stepping directly through a text or studying a book written on a topic, Life Groups will be in the Word!