



Missional Community
Groups Guide
April 2023

Table of Contents

Missional Community Groups.....	4
Leadership Teams.....	9
Huddles.....	12
Accountability Questions for Huddles.....	14
Missional Community Groups and Huddles Comparison.....	16
Group Rhythms.....	18
Missional Community Group Implementation Steps.....	21
Marks of a Disciple.....	23
Zion Discipleship Path.....	26
Group Conflict Management.....	28
Kids and Teens in Groups.....	31
Starting a New Group.....	34
Joining a Group.....	35
Mission OUT ideas.....	36
Leadership Covenant.....	39
Group Participant Covenant.....	41
How to Pray.....	42
How to Study the Bible.....	44
How to Share your Testimony.....	48
Additional Resources.....	49

*Leaders, please submit the Leadership Covenant
found on page 39.*

WHAT IS A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY GROUP?

A Missional Community Group is a midsized, diverse long-term group of people who are being spiritually formed and transformed by growing as a spiritual family and living on mission together. Members of Missional Community Groups follow Jesus together and demonstrate God's character to each other and to the world.

Vision of Missional Community Groups

The vision of Missional Community Groups is to connect people in groups for the purpose of growing in faith, loving one another, and serving the church (and world!) so that we may fulfill the biblical mandate to make and grow disciples. ([Matthew 28:18-20](#))

This is done in the context of spiritual formation, community and mission.

- Spiritual Formation - As members actively engage in relationship with God and follow His commands, they enter into the process of becoming more like Jesus. Spiritual formation is the intentional participation with the Holy Spirit's inward transformation of our hearts, which is reflected through our outward behaviors. Spiritual disciplines such as prayer, studying Scripture, fasting, worship, silence, fellowship, and service assist us in becoming spiritually formed. ([2 Peter 1:3-8](#))
- Community - As members gather together to eat, pray, worship, read Scripture, encourage one another, and serve others, they will grow as disciples of Jesus and discover the joy of taking part in a shared mission. ([Acts 2:42-47](#))
- Missions - As groups are intentional about serving neighborhoods and/or networks, the people in our city will witness a community that lives out the Gospel in tangible ways. ([Matthew 5:14-16](#))

Who can belong to a Missional Community Group?

Missional Community Groups are communities that people can belong to before they believe. This means that Missional Community Groups are a reflection of our entire church and are composed of mature Christians, new Christians, and non-Christians. Simply put, we want everyone to be in a Missional Community Group, because that is where both community and mission take place.

Core Values of a Missional Community Group

The values that drive Missional Community Groups are UP - IN - OUT. These correspond with Zion's core values of BELONG - BELIEVE - BECOME. Although they are stated in different orders, they are two ways of saying similar things. Because of God's act of love to us in the Gospel, Missional Community Groups respond with an upward movement toward God (BELIEVE), an inward movement toward each other (BELONG), and an outward movement toward others to represent Christ to their unique missional context (BECOME).

These core values drive various rhythms that allow the Spirit of God to transform members' lives and create a mission-centered community.

UP - Movement Toward God (BELIEVE)

In a Missional Community Group, people will pursue God and grow in their love for Jesus. This may sound simple, but in our fallen world people seek to become their own gods. We often seek to live apart from God, preferring our independence over a relationship with our Creator. But through the Gospel, Jesus transforms our hearts and moves us to a place where we recognize God as King, Father, and Savior! It becomes our joy to know, serve, and worship Him. ([Ephesians 2:1-3](#); [2 Corinthians 5:17](#))

Rhythms that include UP

- Studying and applying the Bible. ([2 Timothy 3:16-17](#), [Joshua 1:8](#))
- Making regular time to reflect, pray, and praise God for His work. ([Psalm 95:1-2](#))
- Engaging in discipleship Huddles ([2 Timothy 2:2](#), [Hebrews 10:24-25](#))
- Worshiping God in creative ways (songs, communion, etc.). ([Psalm 105:1-2](#))
- Confessing and repenting of sin, and reminding each other of the good news of Jesus Christ! ([James 5:16](#))

IN - Movement Toward God's People (BELONG)

In a Missional Community Group, people learn to love one another. This means sharing each other's burdens, praying for each other, and forgiving each other as Christ forgave us. New people are not left out, but drawn in as they experience the family of God living in light of the Gospel. ([Acts 2:42-47](#), [1 Thessalonians 5:11](#))

Rhythms that include IN

- Practicing hospitality and care for one another in practical ways (prayer, meals, service). ([Mark 12:30-31](#), [1 Thessalonians 2:8](#))
- Encouraging each other and building fellowship by sharing testimonies. ([Psalm 22:22](#), [1 John 1:1-3](#))
- Engaging in discipleship Huddles ([2 Timothy 2:2](#), [Hebrews 10:24-25](#))
- Praying, praising, and worshiping God together. ([Psalm 95:1-2](#), [105:1-2](#))
- Going to neutral places in the community, and loving people there. ([Mark 2:13-17](#))

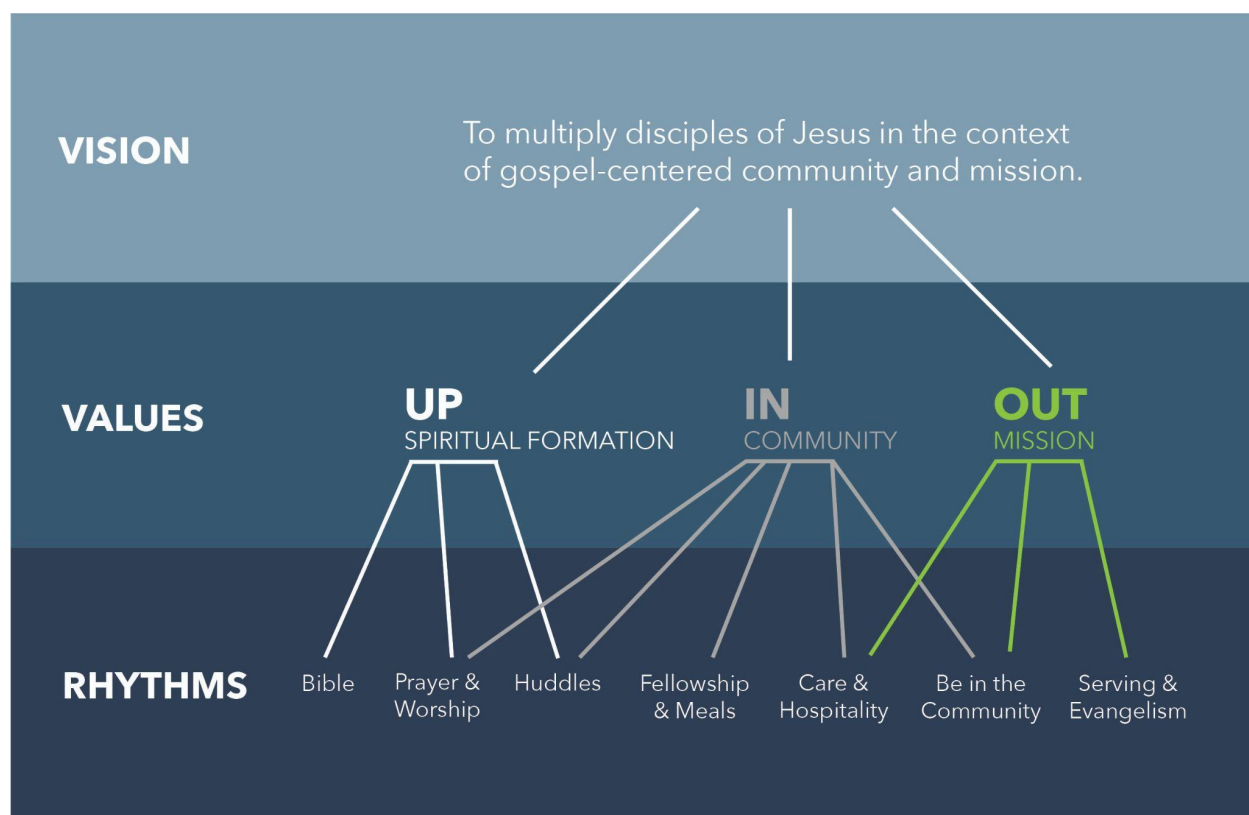
OUT - Movement Toward God's Mission (BECOME)

A Missional Community Group has a defined and shared mission. In other words, we are a family on God's mission together. Our shared mission is made up of a specific neighborhood or a network of people in North Iowa. For example: neighbors who live on your block or in your school district, young families with kids, single parents, coaches, college students, or recovering addicts.

Just as Jesus came to demonstrate the Kingdom through selfless acts of service, we should actively look for opportunities to meet the felt and real needs of our neighbors and community. We seek to become a blessing to our neighbors, and demonstrate the reality of God's new Kingdom. This mission is a blessing to be a part of, as we get to take part in God's redemptive work in people's lives. ([Matthew 28:18-20](#); [2 Corinthians 5:20](#))

Rhythms that include OUT

- Going to neutral places in the community, and loving people there. ([Mark 2:13-17](#))
- Inviting people to your Missional Community Group. Allowing the Gospel to be seen and heard in community is powerful and can help people see the joy of worshipping Jesus. ([John 13:35](#))
- Caring for your neighbors in practical ways. Planning and organizing service projects or events that meet a need in your community. (i.e. Organizing a truck-or-treat, meal train for a family, or a playground pick up.) ([Mark 12:30-31](#), [1 Thessalonians 2:8](#))
- Meeting new people by participating in existing community events that have been organized by neighborhood groups, non-profits, or businesses (i.e. Thursdays on Main). Jesus regularly attended community events. ([John 10:22-30](#))





LEADERSHIP TEAMS

Missional Community Groups are the primary context in which we hope to make disciples, build those individuals into maturing leaders, and experience Gospel-centered community. Because of the different giftings needed to maximize the impact of a Missional Community Group, we believe in shared leadership. ([1 Corinthians 12:18-20](#))

UP Leaders - Spiritual Formation

- Helps to create environments of worship, prayer & praise.
- Helps group members grow in their knowledge of God and application of the Gospel.
- Allows space for repentance and confession to take place regularly.
- Provides sound biblical teaching and content for group discussions.
- Overall purpose is to help people worship, know, and experience Jesus.

IN Leaders - Community

- Ensures new members or visitors feel welcomed and included.
- Helps existing members get connected to Huddles.
- Directs Huddle group conversations as needed (does not facilitate Huddles).
- Models and encourages hospitality both inside and outside of regular meetings.
- Facilitates and organizes meeting spaces, hosts, and meals.
- Creates environments that allow members to connect and care about one another.
- Confronts unresolved conflict, gossip, or relational tension.
- Communicates weekly with the entire Missional Community Group.

- Sends emails or posts in the group's Facebook Group to communicate meeting times, locations, and goals.
- Keeps a list of group contact info (phone numbers, email, Facebook, etc.).
- Makes announcements relevant to the whole group (Zion opportunities, Mission opportunities, etc.)

OUT Leaders - Mission

- Defines and casts vision for the overall shared mission (Neighborhood or Network).
- Helps organize and oversee service projects, community outreaches, and partnerships.
- Works to inform/educate the Missional Community Group of the existing physical and spiritual needs within your missional context.
- Provides resources to train and equip members for living on mission.
- Overall purpose is to help members experience the joy of living on mission while growing the group through missional efforts.

Responsibilities of all Missional Community Group Leaders

- Prays for the Missional Community Group and its members. This includes praying for the group's health and growth.
- Develops future Missional Community Group leaders by regularly delegating responsibility, evaluating results, and investing in their character.
- Oversees and facilitates childcare for the group.
- Communicates regularly (phone, email, meeting, etc.) with the Adult Ministries Director or designee.

- Coordinates and communicates gatherings and events.
- Participates in church-wide leader meetings and group connecting events.
- Casts vision for church-wide events and/or needs (retreats, service projects, etc.).
- Shares leadership of the group.
- Spiritually shepherds the group by leading the group to rest, pursuing members who have wandered away from the group, and leading the group through times of hidden sin, mourning, weird theology not grounded in Scripture, conflict, or isolation.
- Integrate new people quickly and meaningfully into your Missional Community Group.
- Communicate with other leaders on what is working well and what needs to change in the group. (Consider meeting as a leadership team after the group's meeting once a month for 15-30 minutes.)
- Attend quarterly Missional Community Group Leader meetings and trainings.
- Complete the "Belong," "Believe," and "Become" training courses.

WHAT IS A HUDDLE?

Huddles are an extension of Missional Community Groups. They are a place where two to four people of the same gender gather to pursue Jesus together!

Vision of Huddles

Huddles are designed to nurture a truly confessional community among its members where deep discipleship can occur. A Huddle is a place to be known by others in such a way that you can be completely honest with your joys and struggles, confess sin, speak the truth of the Gospel to one another, and point each other to Christ!

What people do during their time in Huddles varies, but generally speaking, Huddles help us to deepen friendships, live in transparency and accountability, and pray for one another. These Huddles typically become one of our first lines of care at Zion.

Why are Huddles helpful?

Often in a group of fifteen to forty people it can be difficult to have enough time for each person to share the important details of their life and receive meaningful support. In a group of two to four people it can be easier. Breaking into Huddles can help every Huddle member to be known and supported. We hope Huddles will be an environment that offers every member an opportunity to share openly, offer and receive care and support, and pray specifically and regularly with those in their group.

Transparency, vulnerability, confession, confidentiality, encouragement, support, and accountability are all important components of Huddles.

How: Share & Prayer

There are many different ways to structure Huddles. The following is a very simple format that may provide ideas as you prayerfully consider how you might best use this time intentionally. In this model, we simply focus on "Share & Prayer".

Share

This is a time when you might share the important things going on in your life. As the Spirit leads, ask one another questions to help care for, support, protect, encourage, correct, and advise one another in love. Praise God for His grace and for the great things He's been doing in and through you. During this time of sharing, we ask how we can support each other, point one another to Christ, and build one another up in love.

Rhythms in Sharing

HEAR & OBEY

Each person shares what they have been reading (SOAPing) in the Bible and what they have been hearing from God. Then share how you can obey God from what you learned from the Bible. ([2 Timothy 3:16-17](#))

ENCOURAGE & CELEBRATE

Take turns calling out the greatest attributes or areas of growth in each other. This is a great way to celebrate how you've seen God work in each other's lives and encourage each other how everyone is growing in Christ. ([Hebrews 3:13](#))

REPENT & BELIEVE

We all sin, and we all need to repent of that sin. Each person shares how you have sinned against God this past week (the accountability questions below can help with this), and then repent (turn) from your sin. But then spend time speaking out loud the good news of Jesus' work for us! Hearing the Gospel spoken aloud to each other enables us to believe. ([James 5:16](#))

Prayer

Pray specifically for one another and for others, including those who don't know Jesus. Commission one another to go in the power of the Spirit to make disciples in the world.

Also, talk about how your conversations are going with your non-believing friends. Plan on how you can share Jesus with them, and weave them into your community or Missional Community Group. Then pray for them by name for God to save them. ([1 Timothy 2:4](#))

Accountability Questions for Huddles

- What is God saying to you? How does it align with Scripture? What are you going to do about it?
- How has your anger or fear or anxiety or addiction shown up this week? How does that reveal what you're trusting in besides God?
- What truth or promise of the Gospel do you need to hear and believe to trust in God again?
- In light of God's love toward you, do you need to reconcile with somebody? Are you subconsciously holding a grudge?
- How has the Holy Spirit been growing you this week? Did you respond in faith or grumbling?
- How have you felt yourself resisting to obey God this week? Has it shown up in your mission OUT to the lost? Has it shown up in your sacrificial love for one another?
- How have you battled sexual or intimacy temptation, and how are you preparing to deal with it next week?
- Is there anything (school, work, technology, etc.) isolating you from important relationships?
- How have you seen or been experiencing God's grace this week?
- How have you struggled to honor Jesus this week in your work? Are there any sins you want to confess?
- How has selfishness shown up in your life this week?
- How have you felt weary or discouraged this week?
- How are your spiritual rhythms going (e.g., Bible, prayer, mission, resting, creating, worship, tithing, fasting)?
- How have you been enjoying God (e.g., His love, forgiveness, provision, joy, friendship, beauty, truth, power, comfort)?

Accountability Response for Huddles

Prayerfully seek to follow the Spirit, and discern how best to respond to what someone shares with you. Sometimes, it might be most helpful to encourage, and at other times it might be helpful to gently correct. Sometimes, it might be helpful to listen and empathize, and at other times it might be helpful to speak more boldly. Discerning the right question and discerning the right way to respond can be helpful in Huddles.

As our biblical knowledge grows and our spiritual discernment sharpens, we become better and better at “speaking the truth in love” with one another.

Missional Community Groups and Huddles Comparison

	Missional Community Groups	Huddles
Definition	An intentional community that is seeking to live out the gospel where they live, work, and play	A discipleship group
Goal	Multiplying Communities of Disciples	Multiplying Disciples
Gender	Co-Ed	Gender-Specific
Size	Mid-Size (15-30)	Small (2-4)
Communication Method	Facebook Group or Email	Text Thread
Benefits	Multi-generational family experience. Perspective from both men and women. More resources for serving/mission	Ability to have deep relationships. Peer-to-peer or mentoring relationship. High challenge and accountability
Formation (UP)	Forming Christ-like character in believers Disciplines: Corporate Worship, Prayer, Confessing Sin, Fasting, Bible Study	
Rhythms	This primarily looks like discussing the Sunday sermon and Bible passage together and seeking to apply it to each others' lives.	This primarily looks like studying a book of the Bible, reading a theology book, or talking about what each person is learning in their own daily Bible reading.
Community (IN)	Becoming a community that cares for one another	

	Disciplines: Fellowship, Meals, Celebration, Service	
Rhythms	This primarily looks like gathering for a “family meal” 1-2 times a month but could include game nights, seasonal parties, bonfires, and so on.	Examples would include coffee hang-outs, going to a restaurant, movie night, and so on.
Mission (OUT)	Living on mission where we live, work, and play Disciplines: Sharing the Gospel, Hospitality, Service, and Participation	
Rhythms	This primarily looks like serving a specific people or place in tangible ways, hosting events for non-believers to come to or participating in community-planning events.	This primarily looks like challenging one another regularly to share the gospel where they live, work, and play but could also involve the group as a whole inviting non-believing friends to do something fun.

GROUP RHYTHMS

Although each Missional Community Group will look different, the core meeting of each Zion Missional Community Group will include the following elements:

- All Missional Community Groups devote time to building community. This could include doing things like sharing a meal or snacks and using that time to talk and catch up on life. It could include serving together in a ministry or outreach.
- All Missional Community Groups devote time to God's Word. This could include discussing a sermon, doing a Bible study, and discussing books that are based on Scripture. However, most group meetings will include discussing the sermon from the previous Sunday as the group members seek to understand and apply the sermon content. Most weeks we provide an Zion Sermon Discussion Guide that can be found on our website (zionclearlake.org/mcg-resources) or our app to help facilitate the discussion. We strongly encourage this approach, because it can promote unity when our whole church is studying the same passages of scripture together each week. However, based on the specific needs in each group, Missional Community Group Leaders will have the freedom to tackle different areas of study in different seasons for the group. Please work with Zion's Adult Ministries Director or designee to ensure your plan is coordinated well with Zion leadership.
- All Missional Community Groups devote time to deeper sharing and specific prayer. This could include praying together in the larger group with all the Missional Community Group members, it could include breaking into smaller Huddle groups to pray more specifically for one another and share more deeply about the details of their lives, and/or it could also include meeting together at Zion's prayer and worship nights.

The bottom line is, every Missional Community Group is different and has its own personality. Yet all Missional Community Groups work to include the three essential elements listed above.

We anticipate most Missional Community Groups will meet for about an hour and a half to two hours, but that too will vary. Many groups take breaks during the year, often during the months of July and December, to allow periods of rest. In addition, groups

are asked to attend group connecting events and outreach opportunities in lieu of meeting regularly those weeks.

Sample Meeting Formats

OPTION #1 – WEEKLY RHYTHMS

1st through 4th weeks of the month:

- 30 minutes devoted to talking, catching up, and encouraging one another.
- 45 minutes devoted to Bible study and sermon discussion.
- 45 minutes devoted to the smaller group “Huddles” for more specific prayer and accountability.

One week per month:

- Serve or do outreach together.

OPTION #2 – MONTHLY RHYTHMS

1st and 3rd weeks of the month:

- 60 minutes devoted to Bible study and sermon discussion.
- 60 minutes devoted to talking, catching up, and encouraging one another during each meeting.

2nd and 4th weeks of the month:

- 60 minutes devoted to talking, catching up, and encouraging one another during each meeting.
- 60 minutes devoted to smaller group Huddles for more specific prayer and accountability.

5th week of the month:

- Use this opportunity to serve or do outreach together.

OPTION #3 – FAMILY RHYTHMS

1st week of the month:

(Full group meets, intentionally involving children in some or all of the meeting time.)

- 45 minutes devoted to talking, catching up, and encouraging one another.
- 45 minutes devoted to Bible study and sermon discussion.

2nd week of the month:

(Women only meet.)

- 90 minutes devoted to smaller group Huddles for more specific prayer and accountability.

3rd week of the month:

(Full group meets, intentionally involving children in some or all of the meeting time.)

- 45 minutes devoted to talking, catching up, and encouraging one another.
- 45 minutes devoted to Bible study and sermon discussion.

4th week of the month:

(Men only meet.)

- 90 minutes devoted to smaller group Huddles for more specific prayer and accountability.

5th week of the month:

(All ages meet.)

- Use this opportunity to serve or do outreach together.

OPTION #4 – COMBINATION

1st through 4th weeks of the month:

- 30 minutes devoted to talking, catching up, and encouraging one another.
- 45 minutes devoted to Bible study and sermon discussion.

1st and 3rd week of the month:

(Women only meet.)

- 45 minutes devoted to the smaller group “Huddles” for more specific prayer and accountability.

1st and 3rd week of the month:

(Men only meet.)

- 45 minutes devoted to the smaller group “Huddles” for more specific prayer and accountability.

5th week of the month:

- Use this opportunity to serve or do outreach together.

Missional Community Group Implementation Steps

0-2 Months Before Starting Group

Pray about the future group (leaders, members, group dynamics, group connection, leader and group unity, soft hearts, and grace and patience with one another).	
Read and sign Zion Leadership Covenant.	
Leaders select roles/delegate tasks.	
Decide start date and date, time, and location of gathering.	
Reserve Zion facilities (if applicable).	
Decide on group rhythm (format).	
Invite members who easily make sense joining the group (namely spouses, significant others, spouse's other group members, etc.).	
Communicate leader roles, gathering details/specifics, and group members to Zion Adult Ministries Director.	
Arrange childcare or decide when that'll be available for the group.	
Create a Facebook group and add members.	
Have at least one meeting with all leaders to connect, plan, and pray.	

0-2 Months After Starting Group

Pray about the group (Huddle connections, OUT mission opportunities, new people to invite in).	
Meet socially (IN only) for a few weeks before incorporating sermon discussion guides into the meeting format.	
Have the Zion Adult Ministries Director share the Missional Community Group vision to the entire group.	
Discuss Group Participant Covenant with all participants	

Bring in childcare if that hasn't already occurred.	
Start looking for natural Huddle connections. Consider having the group's men and women meet separately for a season to start modeling Huddles.	
Have regular leader check-ins to evaluate what's going well, what needs worked on, and to pray. (Consider staying after gatherings 15-30 minutes throughout this time period.)	

3-4 Months After Starting Group

Pray for the group (missional/serving opportunities, new members, Huddles, etc.)	
Start forming Huddles.	
Encourage Huddles to create their own Huddle thread.	
Start monthly OUT mission/serving opportunities.	
Start inviting new members to the group (including people who bring diversity to the group).	
Bring in childcare (if applicable).	
Connect with Zion Adult Ministries Director on the status and needs of the group.	
Review Missional Community Group Guide again and implement anything that might be missing/lacking.	
Have monthly leader check-ins to evaluate what's going well, what needs worked on, and to pray.	

5+ Months After Starting Group

Implement changes as needed (and communicate those changes to the Zion Adult Ministries Director).	
Connect new people into the group and into Huddles.	
Identify, disciple, and raise up new potential group leaders.	

MARKS OF A DISCIPLE

As people who have been saved by Jesus, we want to continue to grow as disciples of Jesus. The Bible teaches that the good news of the Gospel ends all earning, but not all effort. It's only God's grace through faith in Jesus that saves us, which means we can't earn God's favor ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#), [Titus 3:5](#)). At the same time, the Bible teaches that by the help of the Holy Spirit, we need to put in effort to grow in holiness and obedience to Jesus ([1 Corinthians 9:24-27](#), [Philippians 3:12-14](#)).

Measuring how we're growing as disciples can be really challenging. The following nine marks (practices) of a disciple are helpful points to consider as you think about your relationship with Jesus.

Personal Growth

As you read through the marks of a disciple, ask yourself these questions:

1. What does this look like in my life?
2. What areas can I grow in?
3. What are things I can do to grow in these areas?

Missional Community Group Growth

You can do the same thing in your Missional Community Group, because we don't follow Jesus alone. We follow Him in community. Ask your Missional Community Group these questions:

1. What does this look like in our Missional Community Group?
2. What areas can we grow in?
3. What are things we can do to grow in these areas?

LOVE GOD AND YOUR NEIGHBOR ([Matthew 22:36–39](#))

Loving God means to put Him first in every area of your life and to desire more of Him. Loving God also means obeying Him ([John 14:15](#)). It's normal for us to want to please those we love. When we love God, we will want to obey Him ([Psalm 40:8](#)). Our love for others is a response to God's love for us ([1 John 4:19](#)).

REPENT & BELIEVE ([Mark 1:14–15](#))

Repenting and believing first happens when a person places their faith in Jesus. But repenting and believing is a lifelong process. As God convicts us of sin in our lives or lies we have wrongly believed, we repent of that and believe that Jesus is better. In other words, we turn from our sin and turn toward Jesus. By doing so, we will walk more closely with Jesus ([Colossians 3:1-17](#)).

FOLLOW JESUS ([Matthew 4:19](#), [John 15:4-5](#))

Following Jesus means to daily set aside our priorities, and take up Jesus' priorities. Sometimes following Jesus means taking radical steps. Following Jesus means that Jesus is the leader of our whole lives.

Abiding in Jesus means to live, continue, and remain in Him. When a person is saved, the Bible says that we are "in Christ" ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#)). Abiding in Jesus paints a picture of an intimate and close relationship with Jesus, not just a superficial acquaintance.

MAKE DISCIPLES ([Matthew 28:18–20](#))

Making disciples is important because people are God's method of spreading the good news of the Gospel to all peoples of the world. Disciple-making includes evangelizing, baptizing believers, and helping them follow what Jesus teaches.

DENY SELF ([Luke 9:23](#))

Denying yourself is not simply denying certain things, rather it's denying personal control of your life. Jesus also says this is a daily and continued action in the life of a believer.

BEAR FRUIT ([Galatians 5:22–24](#))

In nature, good fruit is the result of a healthy plant producing what it was designed to produce. In the Bible, good fruit is an image for godly characteristics becoming more evident in the life of the believer. Good fruit is produced by the Holy Spirit as we grow with Jesus.

PRAY ([Philippians 4:6–7](#))

Prayer in the life of a Christian is a conversation with God. It's a way we spend time with God and listen to His voice. Additionally, throughout the Bible we see the phrase "when you pray...", which means a devoted prayer life is expected of a believer. Prayer is a learned discipline meaning that we will grow overtime in praying ([Luke 11:1](#)).

FORGIVE ([Colossians 3:13](#))

Forgiving others means that when you are wronged and betrayed, you forgive others as Jesus has forgiven you for your betrayal of Him. Forgiving others means we are compassionate, gracious, and loving. ([Psalm 103:8-12](#))

ZION'S DISCIPLESHIP PATH

[\(Matthew 28:18–20\)](#)

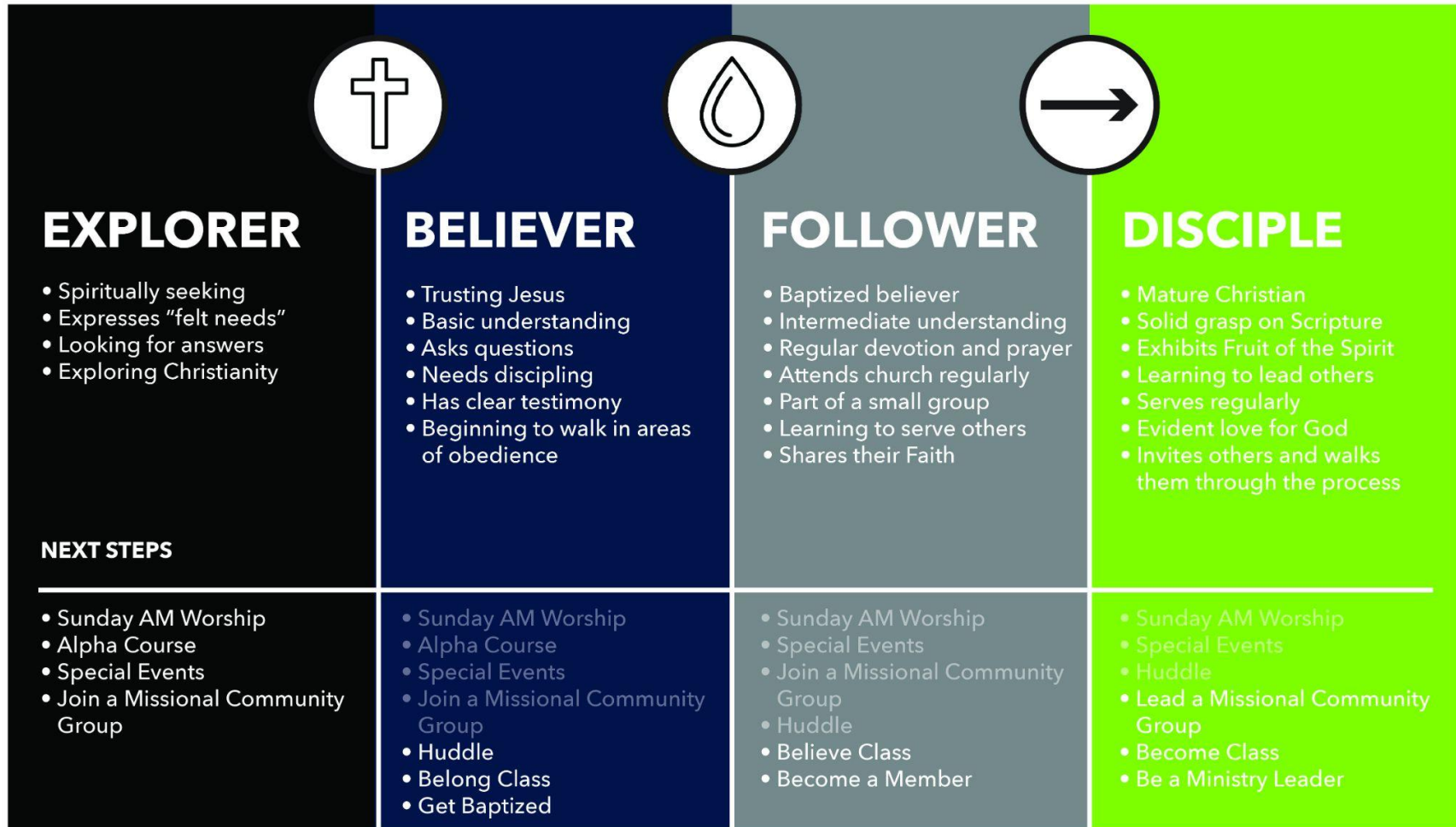
The Zion's Discipleship Path is a tool to help people identify where they (or someone they know) might be on their faith journey. It identifies the next steps a person can make in order to continue growing into a disciple of Jesus Christ. This is not a checklist; it is a process. A person might find that they have characteristics of more than one stage, in which case, they should focus on strengthening areas that are weak.

Spiritual Explorers express felt needs and are looking for answers. It's important to note that people "Belong" even if they don't identify any of these characteristics to be true. However, most people who join a Missional Community Group or come to church are likely exploring faith. Explorers become Believers by trusting in Jesus. A great next step for Spiritual Explorers is Alpha.

Believers have a basic understanding of Christianity but still have questions. They have a clear testimony of coming to trust Jesus as their Savior. Believers become Followers by acts of obedience (like baptism). A great next step for Believers is to get connected into a Missional Community Group.

Followers exhibit regular devotion and prayer. They are learning to serve and share their faith. Followers become disciples by continuing to grow in their faith, becoming more like Jesus. A great next step for Followers is to serve or become a Zion church member.

Disciples have a solid grasp on Scripture and exhibit the fruit of the Spirit. They serve and are learning to lead others. They invite others and then disciple them by helping them walk through this process. A great next step for disciples is to invite and lead other people.



GROUP CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

[\(Matthew 18:15-17\)](#)

The deeper the relationships, the more complex they become and the greater the opportunity for conflict to arise. Settling disagreements is time consuming and hard work.

When in conflict, own your feelings, and resist the urge to make assumptions. Make sure you understand how the other person feels and ask him/her to explain further when you don't understand. Be quick to listen and slow to speak. Focus on the major issues and work to make the problem the issue (and not the person).

Settling a conflict by allowing all parties to be understood may actually strengthen the group.

Accountability

[\(James 5:16, Galatians 6:1-2\)](#)

For the mutual edification, growth, and benefit of all its members, group members should hold one another accountable. Disciples should strive for a life of radical obedience to God. Meanwhile, other group members should provide abundant grace to their brother/sister while they try to radically live out their faith. There is a risk of creating conflict when we hold someone else accountable.

Therefore:

- Give and get prior permission to hold each other accountable.
- Mutually desire the best for each other, and desire growth in their lives.
- Give accountability, and get accountability. Accountability works best when it goes both ways.
- Uphold values of the Kingdom of God.

How do Missional Community Groups handle correction and care?

It's important to clarify that we all struggle, we all sin, and we all fall short of the glory of God, but in this discussion about correction and care (sometimes referred to as

“church discipline”), we are referring to a situation in which a Christian is “in sin” (continually disobeying God without repenting [\[1 Tim 5:20\]](#)). The Bible prescribes a process for caring for a Christian who is “in sin”. However, every person and situation is different, so there is not a one-size fits-all specific task list to follow. Therefore, Missional Community Groups strive to faithfully obey the process that the Bible prescribes while following the Spirit in discerning the specific ways to apply the Bible’s process.

The following Care and Correction Process may help Missional Community Groups to navigate caring for a group member who is in sin. We ask our group members to work through the following process:

PHASE 1: HAVE A PRIVATE CONVERSATION

Try to win them over through a private conversation.

- Have a private conversation with the person in sin ([Matthew 18:15](#)).
- Express sincere love and humility. Ask good questions, seek to understand, and listen carefully. Strive for the facts to be clearly understood, clearly shown to be true, and clearly communicated.
- Use prayer (ask God to turn their heart), encouragement (inspire, motivate, nurture), and admonishment (mild correction).
- If they remain unrepentant, take one or two others along to talk with them ([Matthew 18:16](#)).
- If they turn from their sin and obey God, you have won them over. If they remain unrepentant, then continue on to Phase 2.

PHASE 2: INCLUDE YOUR MISSIONAL COMMUNITY GROUP LEADER, AND FOLLOW THEIR LEAD

Try to win them over by including your Missional Community Group Leader and following their lead.

- Inform your Missional Community Group Leader of the situation and ask for their guidance. The Missional Community Group Leader will guide the process going forward.
- Continue praying for the person in sin, consider fasting for them, don’t give up on them, and persevere for their good.
- If they still remain unrepentant, then the Missional Community Group Leader will work with the Adult Ministries Director or designee to determine how best to love and care for the one in sin, continuing on to Phase 3.

PHASE 3: INCLUDE THE ADULT MINISTRIES DIRECTOR OR DESIGNEE AND FOLLOW THEIR LEAD

- The Missional Community Group Leader will include the Adult Ministries Director or designee for advice and to help win them over.
- The Adult Ministries Director or designee will guide the process going forward, serving on behalf of, and following the instruction of the Zion Pastors.
- Upon repentance and demonstration of the fruit of repentance ([Luke 3:8a](#)), the person who was in sin will be joyfully restored to fellowship in their Missional Community Group and Zion.
- In the unfortunate situation that they remain unrepentant, the Missional Community Group Leader and Adult Ministries Director or designee will work with the Zion Pastors to consider whether to recommend to the congregation ([Matthew 18:17](#)) that the person in sin be removed from membership ([Matthew 18](#); [1 Corinthians 5:1-13](#)). Whatever is decided, it will be done in humility and love, for the sake of restoration of the person in sin, and for the good of the church as a whole.

Situations of suspected child or vulnerable adult abuse or neglect are to be reported immediately to a Zion pastor who will help direct you in the appropriate reporting guidelines as stated by the Iowa Department of Human Services. Zion is required by law to report abuse. Threats of self-harm or violence to others are to be reported to a Zion pastor.

Situations Requiring Abundant Grace

Situations may occur where a group member may be faced with some problem which is beyond the skill or ability of the people in the group to support. Significant life issues do come up, but it is not a reason to give up on a person. The group should continue to offer grace, support, and encouragement while also encouraging the person to seek outside help from a pastor, support ministry, or professional counselor.

If the topic consumes too much of the group's time to the detriment of the other members, the leader should approach the person one-on-one to discuss options.

KIDS AND TEENS IN MISSIONAL COMMUNITY GROUPS

Kids

We invite all Missional Community Groups to involve children and teens in their groups in meaningful ways. For example, younger children (5th grade and younger) might join the full group for the mealtime and the “talking and catching up” time, and then go to kid’s ministry or childcare during sermon discussion and Huddle time. Sometimes Missional Community Group members rotate providing childcare or ministry to the children in the group while the adults meet together. In other Missional Community Groups, the parent(s) or guardian(s) might arrange to pay external childcare providers to care for the children during the adults’ meeting time. Zion’s Missional Community Group guidelines include a childcare reimbursement policy. We invite kids to join our group when we do outreach, and serve our city and world.

Teens

We invite teens (6th grade and up) to participate in most aspects of Missional Community Group life with the adults. We encourage them to join us during the whole group time when men and women, young and old, married and singles get together to catch up on life, process a sermon, do a Bible study, etc. We invite teens to join our group when we do outreach, and serve our city and world. Depending on the teen’s age, personality, and other factors, their parent(s) or guardian(s) may pair their teenage child with the other teens during the Huddle time, or their parent(s) or guardian(s) may pair with their own teenage child and the other adults in their Huddle group for some intergenerational time. If teens are in a Huddle by themselves, it is important that parents guide their conversation, modeling what Huddle life is. The parent(s) or guardian(s) decides what is best, and we encourage teens to join in the Missional Community Group experience in an appropriate and beneficial way in accordance with the standards of their parent(s) or guardian(s).

Visiting Kid/Teen Without an Adult Parent Present

In the case that a child or teen would like to visit or join a Missional Community Group and their parent(s) or guardian(s) do not attend with them, (i.e. the child attends with a friend who's parent(s) do attend the group), the adult responsible for the child who regularly attends is responsible for the child who is the guest.

Childcare

Each group is responsible for the childcare in their group, and each group will look different. Although each group looks different, all Missional Community Groups are required to follow the Zion Ministry Policy Manual, and all Missional Community Groups are encouraged to welcome children and teens in their Missional Community Group family.

We understand that the expense of childcare can be a deterrent to participating in a Missional Community Group. Because we are committed to removing as many obstacles as possible, the church supplements group participants at a predetermined rate for their group's childcare expenses, if needed.

Childcare Reimbursement requests will only be accepted for expenses incurred within the last 60 days. Reimbursement requests are for regular group meetings only (including OUT missions if the child cannot participate, but not including social-only activities like date nights), and costs are only reimbursable up to 2 ½ hours. The rate of these funds is \$15 per hour per childcare provider. These budgeted funds are on a first come/first serve basis until funds are gone. Documentation support will be required for reimbursement.

Reimbursement requests are submitted online at <https://forms.gle/Lv6xK44rWPj31o638>.

HOW DO I START A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY GROUP?

The process to help you prayerfully consider leading and launching a Missional Community Group is a relational process with you and the Adult Ministry Director or designee. The process is tailored to you, and it's fluid, meaning you and Zion's staff will follow the Spirit and do what makes the most sense. Sometime during the process, you will need to complete the steps below.

STEP #1. TRAINING

Complete the "Belong" course. These videos provide more detail on Zion's core values and how to lead a group.

Over the course of the next 12 months, also complete the "Believe" and "Become" courses. These courses can occur after your group launches.

STEP #2. APPLICATION

Fill out and submit the "Missional Community Group Leader Application." The Adult Ministries Director or designee will typically get back to you within ten days to schedule a meeting.

Leader Application: <https://forms.gle/HH3Zv1WkiMKtPYLb6>

STEP #3. INTERVIEW

You will complete your "Missional Community Group Leader Interview" with the Adult Ministries Director or designee. The interview typically takes 30-45 minutes.

STEP #4. LAUNCH

Once approved, work with the Adult Ministries Director to launch a Missional Community Group or be assigned to an existing Missional Community Group for modeling and coaching. If you are already in a Missional Community Group, then you will want to share the news with your current Missional Community Group that you are leaving the group to lead a new group.

HOW DOES SOMEONE JOIN A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY GROUP?

These are a few different options to join a Missional Community Group.

OPTIONS:

- Attend the Sisterhood/Hero Makers Group Connecting Event. These events are designed to be like job fairs for groups where you can meet and talk with the leaders.
- Complete a Zion Connect Card online or in-person, and someone will be in contact with you.
- Submit a Missional Community Group interest card online.
- Directly contact a Missional Community Group online about joining their group.

In the interim between connecting in and joining a group, Zion will assist you in staying connected and help you transition through your next steps through our Mentoring Program!

We ask that new members commit to staying with the group for six to eight weeks. This allows individuals to get to know each other and get a feel for the group's rhythms. It usually takes this long before someone feels comfortable in the group.

OUT RHYTHMS: LOVE THIS CITY & SERVE THE WORLD

Missional living is not an event we tack onto our already busy lives. It is our life. Mission should be the way we live.

It is best to look for people to serve in normal, everyday things that people are already doing, and then do those things with Gospel intentionality. Ask the question, "where do people already spend time and naturally go? How can we gather there?" Identify the places that are neutral ground that are informal and non-committal. It naturally fits into the rhythms of your non-believing friends' lives, and we do it regularly. These places create a space where someone can belong before they believe.

Invite In - Activity Ideas

- Neighborhood picnic or grill out
- Hiking
- Disc Golf or Frisbee
- Sand Volleyball
- Lake day with kayaks and canoes
- Restaurants
- Go get ice cream
- Book club
- Game nights
- Shooting range
- Axe throwing/bowling/laser tag
- Sporting events
- Pool Party
- Gyms
- Kids play dates

Join In - Clear Lake Rhythms

- Saturday Farmer's Market
- Thursdays on Main
- Triathlon/Color Runs/5K races
- Christmas by the Lake

- Color the Wind Kite Festival
- Water races (sailing/paddleboards)
- Brews on the Beach
- Clear Lake Lions meals

Other OUT Ideas

- Serve at a special event together.
- Help a neighbor paint, do lawn care or clean up, or do small house projects.
- Help someone move.
- Take up a collection (monetarily or supplies) to provide for a family.
- Volunteer one day to clean-up or do other maintenance work at the church.
- Provide meals for someone who is sick or just had a baby.
- Rake leaves or shovel snow for someone in the community.
- Greet people at the weekend worship services.
- Go Christmas caroling at places like a nursing home.
- Clean the house of someone who is sick or recovering from an illness or surgery.
- Visit someone who is homebound and offer to read to them, share a Scripture, or pray with them.
- Take an elderly person grocery shopping or do their grocery shopping for them.
- Help a neighbor with gardening needs.
- Serve communion together at a worship service.
- Help wash church windows.
- Invite neighbors over for dinner.
- Do a food or supply drive.
- Do a summer get together with neighbors.
- Host a sports watching party.
- Host a coffee and dessert night.
- Set up a carpool among neighbors.
- Have a fun yard ice cream party in the summer.
- Bring breakfast into work once a month for everyone in your department.
- Rotate taking lunches into group member's workplaces.
- Organize and throw office parties as appropriate to your job.
- Throw a baby shower for a co-worker or single mom you know.
- Visit co-workers in the hospital.
- Organize a co-working group for local remote workers at a coffee shop.
- Pick a place you visit regularly (coffee shop, park, etc.), and become a regular.
- Volunteer with non-profit organizations.

- Organize an effort to help take care of the elderly.
- Offer to babysit neighbors' kids or kids from single parents so they can have a date night/night out.
- Serve at local festivals, parades, or celebrations.

ZION LEADERSHIP COVENANT

Please print, sign, and return this Leadership Covenant. Or submit it online at <https://forms.gle/44TJfWneW2zuGEVW7>.

Our mission is to be a church that looks more like Jesus. In order for that to happen, each of us must commit to looking more like Jesus--which happens through a growing personal relationship with him.

Leaders are ultimately lead examples. We humbly and boldly model what it looks like to be examples who are increasingly worshiping Jesus, being transformed by Jesus, and intentionally living for Jesus in everyday life. We recognize that those we are serving will be influenced and impacted by our attitudes, lifestyle, character, behaviors and, most of all, by our Christ-like love ([John 13:34](#), [1 John 4:7-8](#)).

Therefore, in joining the leadership community at Zion, I agree to:

(If you are unable to check off any of these statements, please let us know so we can discuss further, and hear your heart.)

- _____ Support Zion's Mission, Vision, leadership and direction in both actions and words. ([Hebrews 13:17](#))
- _____ Identify Zion as my church home, and regularly participate in worship services as well as growth experiences. ([Hebrews 10:25](#), [Matthew 18:20](#), [Acts 2:42-44](#))
- _____ Live wisely and generously with my God-given resources as well as contribute financially to Zion as my church home, toward and even beyond tithing. ([Matthew 6:24](#), [Malachi 3:10](#))
- _____ Be edifying in our discussions about others—speak well of and assume the best in others, filling the “gap” with trust. ([Ephesians 4:29-31](#), [Psalm 19:14](#), [Colossians 4:6](#))
- _____ In the spirit of unity, pursue reconciliation with those who are directly involved when there is conflict. ([Ephesians 4:1-7](#), [14-16](#); [John 17:23](#))
- _____ Approach conversations in which there are differences of opinion with humility and openness, seek to understand more than to be understood

and request pastoral/theological counsel when necessary. ([Proverbs 2:2-5](#), [Proverbs 17:27](#), [Proverbs 19:20](#))

_____ Seek to understand and live-in harmony with [Zion's Teaching Statement](#). ([1 Timothy 4:16](#), [James 1:21-22](#)) **See additional agreement below for pastors, staff, Congregation Council, teachers, speakers, prayer team, and group leaders.

_____ Prayerfully and intentionally raise up another leader from those I am serving and leading. ([Luke 10:2](#), [2 Timothy 2:2](#))

_____ Hold each other accountable in love to these commitments. ([1 John 3:18](#), [Galatians 6:1-2](#))

As team leaders at Zion, you can trust that we will:

1. Seek the Lord for the direction of Zion. ([Acts 15:28](#); [John 7:18](#))
2. Provide ongoing equipping and empowerment for you to succeed. ([Ephesians 4:11-13](#))
3. Be available for support. ([1 Peter 5:2](#))
4. Model the same leadership expectations in this covenant. ([1 Timothy 4:12](#))

**Pastors, staff, Congregation Council, teachers, speakers, prayer team, and group leaders:

_____ Communicate and teach in accordance with [Zion's Teaching Statement](#). ([James 3:1](#))

Signature_____ Date_____

Printed Name_____

GROUP PARTICIPANT COVENANT

Our Missional Community Group will: Gather together regularly to continue the process of becoming more Christ-like, living Spirit-filled lives, making disciples, and building up the body of believers by:

1. Inviting others to join our group.
2. Being hospitable to any visitors to our group.
3. Studying and applying God's Word together.
4. Praying together.
5. Serving together, inside or outside the church.
6. Having fun together as a group!
7. Encouraging one another to gather each Sunday at Zion for fellowship and worship.
8. Building community with love and devotion to one another.
9. Sharing our faith, reaching out to the lost, and serving others.
10. Being open, honest, and respectful with one another.
11. Speaking the truth in love and sharing our true feelings.
12. Admitting our weaknesses and confessing our sins to one another.
13. Lovingly forgiving one another and gently holding one another accountable with abundant grace.
14. Seeking to live radically obedient and exemplary Christ-centered lives.
15. Being available and willing to support one another.

I will:

1. Make group meetings a priority, making every effort to attend all group meetings and arrive on time.
2. Be prepared and ready to participate in the discussion for that week.
3. Keep information that is shared confidential.
4. Create a safe place for each member to share with no judgments attached.
5. Be transparent and accountable to the group concerning my spiritual growth.
6. Take ownership of my responsibility of being faithful, accountable, and teachable.
7. Pray for my fellow group members, our church, and my non-believing friends.

I, _____, will keep this document as a reminder of the voluntary covenant I have entered into on this date: _____.

HOW TO PRAY

Why

We pray in groups, because the Bible says that prayer is a way to deepen our relationship with God. We are commanded to pray, including praying for others ([1 Thessalonians 5:17](#), [James 5:16](#)). It is through prayer that we voice our dependence on God, strengthen our resistance to temptation, and invite God into the group and ask Him to act. Prayer creates opportunities to hear from God and see God work. Not only that, but praying is an avenue to bring praise and thanksgiving to God!

How: The Lord's Prayer

([Matthew 6:9-13](#))

Jesus taught us how to pray. Using the Lord's Prayer as a template, pray about these things:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name,

- GOD'S CHARACTER: Praise God for who He is. Everything flows from the Father's character.

Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven,

- KINGDOM: Ask for God to build and grow His Kingdom here on earth. Every Kingdom reflects its King, and the citizens of that Kingdom should want to reflect their King's heart and desires.

Give us this day, our daily bread,

- PROVISION: Present your needs to God. Everything comes from and is through the Father. All we have is a precious gift from Him. He is our Provider, and He also calls us to be His hands and feet of provision for others.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us,

- FORGIVENESS: Confess and repent of your sins. Offer forgiveness to those who have hurt you. God provided the means of forgiveness of our sins through Jesus. Just as we are forgiven, we must also forgive those who have sinned against us.

And lead us not into temptation,

- DIRECTION: Ask God to guide you. We look to Him and His Holy Spirit to guide us through life and life's trials and away from the temptations we face.

But deliver us from the evil one.

- DELIVERANCE: Ask for God's protection. God has provided our rescue from sin, death, and the dominion of darkness through Jesus. We look to Him daily to deliver and protect us from the lies and threats of the Enemy.

How: The A.C.T.S. Method

- A is for Adoration, which is simply telling God how awesome He is. God wants us to praise Him, because it shows that we love Him and want to be in relationship with Him.
- C is for Confession, which is where we admit and repent of our sins, our mistakes, and the ways we have let God down.
- T is for Thanksgiving, which is the natural next step after receiving God's forgiveness and grace. Along with that, we thank God for the blessings of the day, for answered prayers, and so forth.
- S is for Supplication, which is where we present our requests, needs, and desires to God. This includes praying for yourself and others.

The other part of praying is to stop talking and listen to God. We listen for His direction, guidance, words of love, words of affirmation, and if there's something He's asking us to do.

Group members should pray out loud in the presence of each other. Rhythms of group prayer include: one person prays for the group (which rotates throughout weeks), members pair up and pray out loud with and for that person, everyone who feels led to pray in a group prayer, each member of the group prays for another person in the group until everyone is prayed for, each member prays one or two sections of the Lord's Prayer or ACTS prayer method, etc.

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

Why

We study the Bible in groups, because the Bible says we should be people that encourage and admonish each other to follow Jesus. Not only that, but studying God's Word in a group should stir us to bring praise and thanksgiving to God!

How: Inductive Method

A good Bible study method is the Inductive Method. The Bible study method examines in detail larger passages of Scripture in order to understand the passage in context and how it relates to Jesus and the Gospel.

Begin with Prayer

Pray that God will illuminate the truth of the Bible to the whole Missional Community Group. We can't overlook the importance of the Holy Spirit's leading!

Background and Context

Knowing the background and context helps us appropriately interpret Scripture. Things to consider are the author, original audience, type of writing (i.e. narrative, letter, poetry, etc.) and the purpose of the writing.

Resources like study bibles and the Bible Hub app are helpful in understanding the background and context.

Make Observations

Go through each verse and make observations. Ask questions like "What does this passage say about God/Jesus? What does it say about mankind? What commands are given?" Look for themes. What's repeated? How does the structure of the text reveal what's important? Remember, the Bible is God's Word, and we can always keep mining the text and make more observations.

Cross Reference

Looking at other Scripture passages that talk about similar things helps bring a greater understanding and clarity to the primary Scripture passage. This is where the notes in your study Bible or in commentary are really helpful. How do these cross references help you understand the primary passage?

Summarize

Summarize the big main idea or main point of the passage. Use your observations and information from cross references to do this. Taking time to determine the point of the passage will give you greater understanding of what God is saying. It also helps to make appropriate and accurate connections to the Gospel.

Make Gospel Connections

This is the most important part of the Bible study. How does the Scripture passage relate to Jesus and the Gospel? The whole Bible either points to Jesus or looks back on Jesus.

Here are a few things to look for when making Gospel Connections: Explicit reference to Jesus/Gospel, foreshadowing of Jesus coming, major Gospel themes (i.e. kingdom, sacrifice, resurrection, new creation).

Don't miss this part of your study!

Application

Making personal/group applications helps God's Word come alive in our lives. Applying the Bible is crucial to be spiritually formed more into the image of Jesus.

Ask yourself/group, "How can you apply what you learned? What thoughts or attitudes do you need to turn from? What truths about the Gospel do you need to believe?"

End with Prayer

End your time together by praying that God will help you apply what you learned and His Word will bear fruit in your life!

How: SOAP

SOAP stands for: Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer. When you have your daily time with God, use SOAP to help you think through what you're reading.

Scripture

Copy down the verse or verses that stuck out the most. When reading, ask: Who is the author? Who is in the passage? What happened before and after this passage? What things are repeated or emphasized? Then summarize the passage in your own words.

Observation

Write down what you noticed. How do you think the author wants his audience to respond? What does it reveal about mankind? What does it reveal about God? How does this point to Jesus and the Gospel? Write down thoughts, feelings, questions, or ideas that come to mind.

Ask yourself: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

Application

How can you apply what you learned? What thoughts or attitudes do you need to turn from? What truths about the Gospel do you need to believe? Getting practical with the Bible helps it come alive in your life.

Ask yourself:

- How should this change my life?
- How does this form my thinking?
- What can I learn from this?
- How does this make me love others more?

Prayer

Write a prayer to God based on what you just learned and ask Him to help you apply this truth in your life.

Example of SOAP

Scripture: John 15:1-11 *"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."* (John 15:5) Jesus and His disciples are celebrating a final Passover Feast before Jesus is arrested and crucified. Jesus is teaching about abiding in Him and bearing fruit.

Observation: We don't naturally abide in Jesus so He commands us to abide. Following this command is not burdensome, but actually for our benefit. Jesus is the true vine, and if we abide in Him we will bear fruit. The fruit we bear is glorifying to God. Jesus says that He taught all of this so that His joy would be in us. The joy Jesus gives is full, complete, and better than any other joy.

Application: How am I abiding in Jesus? In this passage "abide" is such an intimate word; to always remain in Jesus. What are ways I can remain in Jesus? Jesus says I will abide in Him if I keep His commandments, but am I actually doing that? Abiding in Jesus allows me to experience the fullness of joy that Jesus has for me. I can continue to abide in Him through developing a deeper prayer life, and reading the Bible to actually connect with Jesus instead of doing it just to look smart in front of my friends.

Prayer: Jesus, thank You for saving me! Please always remind me of how amazing Your Gospel is. I confess that most of the time I would rather do my own thing than abide in You. I try to look good for others and that only steals more of my joy in You. Teach me more about what it means to abide in You and I pray that abiding in You would result in great fruit for Your glory!

How to use SOAP in Huddles

Each member of your Huddle will SOAP throughout the week. Then have members share one or two things they heard from God. Ask and share with each other how you are going to obey what God spoke to you. Have members confess sin that may have surfaced and talk about what repentance would look like then pray as a group.

HOW TO SHARE YOUR TESTIMONY

Each of us has a story to tell how Jesus came into our lives, saved us from our sin, and called us to Himself. Sharing our story is important, because it helps us move from strangers to family. All of our stories are different, but when we hear others' testimonies, we see just how much we have in common in the saving work of Jesus Christ! Use the three sections and questions below to help you write out your story.

1. Before I accepted Christ (or gave Him complete control)

- What was my life like that will relate most to the non-Christian?
- What did my life revolve around the most? Where did I find my security and happiness?
- How did those areas begin to let me down?

2. How I received Christ (or gave Him complete control)

- When was the first time I heard the gospel?
- What were my initial reactions?
- When did my attitude begin to turn around? Why?
- Why did I go ahead and accept Christ?

3. After I accepted Christ (or gave Him complete control)

- What are the specific examples of changes that Christ made in my life?
- Why am I motivated differently?

Helpful Hints

- Write the way you speak; make the testimony yours.
- Practice this over and over until it becomes natural.
- Keep it short – 2-3 minutes. At that length, it's easily something you can put into a conversation without it becoming a monologue.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Zion Teaching Statement:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OYFsOkIWtYhsy6-y3YRfSLBt9NtlqdyQ/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=105611561580188853306&rtpof=true&sd=true>

Zion Prayer Team Skill Training:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1nXIExoO55gEcOILa6WA5TvYXUUMdRC6ucR5_R4uycUk/edit?usp=sharing

Zion Mentoring Program Guide:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1WcB4MECHFkteV5deknEO0uyUHFYjGUUmyfttky2XkUA/edit?usp=sharing>

Zion Hospitality Guide:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1T1qVnMG6KG0beVPwPZf4hE22SZzYS9b-2qm8r6OLj40/edit?usp=sharing>

Zion Huddle Resources:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1WJ08mqObf1v3SEn_bhGl9Gbk1mt45vVjfr6rHk8oy74/edit?usp=sharing