



Most Frequently Asked Questions

Why Do We Do Connect Groups?

The Christian life was not designed to be lived alone; we *need* authentic relationships with others. Our connections do not just allow us to grow, they are a primary growth catalyst as we journey through life with people who love, encourage, pray for, teach, and challenge us. Unlike highly structured and intellect based curriculum, Connect Groups allow us to grow spiritually “right where we are.” We consider Connect Groups to be the hub of our ministry where the real ministry of our church takes place. They move us from a friendly crowd, to a connected church!

What Is a Connect Group?

A Connect Group made up of 8-14 people who meet weekly to study, to share, to pray, and to support one another in their Christian lives. Some groups choose to also spend some time in singing and worship. Each group is led by a leader and host couple. A typical meeting lasts approximately 90 minutes but will vary by group. These groups meet weekly with the goal of growing together spiritually through authentic relationships with one another.

How Long Does A Group Last?

Connect Group sessions run within the “trimester” of the church calendar (Fall, Winter, Spring). We’ve broken the year into these 3 sessions. At the end of each trimester, you have the choice of staying in the same group, trying a new group, or even taking a break. Most groups stay together throughout the entire year. However, groups do not meet June through mid-August, though some continue to meet informally or socially through the summer.

How Are Group Members Determined?

When you sign up for a Connect Group, we will do our best to help you land in a group that will allow you to form deep connections and assist you on your spiritual journey. One of the best factors for creating deep connections is to pair people based on being in a similar life stage (age, married, single, kids, no kids, etc....). Most groups, however, will also contain at least some variety of ages and stages of life to allow you to learn from and challenge one other.

What If My Group Isn't a Fit For Me?

We allow members to switch groups within the first three weeks of a session, but ask that by week four you sign a group covenant. It might take a couple tries before you find the perfect fit, but don't worry, you'll find it! You will also be asked at the end of each semester if you would like to stay with your group, or if you would like to try a different one.

What Is The Required Commitment?

Joining a Connect Group requires a 1 season commitment to attend the weekly meetings and to do the homework ahead of time. Obviously, allowances are made for sickness, vacation, work conflicts, and other special events...but not much more! This commitment is the key to strong relationships and healthy groups.

What About Childcare?

Connect Groups are intended for adults only. We leave it up to each family or group to work out how they will handle childcare. Sometimes it works best for families to share a sitter, to swap childcare with another family whose group meets on a different evening or time, to have children in a separate area of the house, or another option that works for the group. Parents are responsible to ensure (as much as possible) that their children are not a distraction to the meeting.

What Will We Study?

The studies are based on the previous weekend's sermon. Our Connect Groups are built upon what we call a "Lecture-Lab" model. If you imagine the weekend sermon as a lecture on Christian living, then the group meeting is a lab where you get to roll up your sleeves and discuss how the sermon works out in real life. Each week there will be a series of Bible passages and questions to study and complete before your meeting. The homework is included with the sermon note sheet found in your bulletin as well as online. It will usually take 20 to 30 minutes to complete the homework.

When and Where Do These Groups Meet?

Our Connect Groups meet on various days and nights of the week in homes throughout the community. As our church grows and the Connect Group ministry grows, we envision someday having groups that meet every day of the week, (some during the day and some in the evenings). The goal is a variety. Exact dates and times will be dictated by the leaders and hosts we have available.

How Do I Sign Up?

Church wide sign-ups begin a few weeks prior to the start of each new session (in August, January, and March/April). You can also sign up before or after any weekend worship service or by calling the church office. Our staff will be happy to help you find just the right group for you. Those who are new to the church (start attending in the middle of a session) can sign up and join any group that has openings without waiting for the start of a new session.

When Do They Start?

We will begin officially advertising Connect Groups sometime in July 2013. At this point we will also open up signups for people attending Park Place to join the groups they will be a part of. Connect Groups will begin meeting throughout the week at their regularly set time following the sermon on Sunday morning August 18th.

Why Are We Stopping Other Programs as We Start Connect Groups?

The church leadership (staff, LBA, and other key leaders) have spent more than a year praying and fasting about what God is calling Park Place to look like, listening to His leading, studying, and preparing. While many of our past programs have a rich heritage and have been instrumental in guiding our people along their spiritual journey, we believe that God is leading us to retire these ministries to focus on what He has called us to start. We feel that, in time, Connect Groups will replace many of the holes left by these other ministries, as well as offer deeper connections with other Christians, one of the most significant things lacking in Christian churches and society today. While it is always hard to let go of great things that have meant a lot to us, we have become convinced that it is God's desire for our church is to center our energy, resources, and focus on this new endeavor that He has called us to and to retire some of the wonderful ministries of our past.