

what life groups are all about

Life Groups are our main strategy for encouraging a life of following Jesus. These groups will be focused on learning four life-giving practices. These practices form the pattern of each group, and we will be sharing stories from our week of how these practices are growing in our lives:

- **Life-giving Prayer:** Prayer for the purpose of being with God rather than getting something from God. This kind of prayer is focused on God (The King) and what he is doing (building his Kingdom) rather than on what I want him to do for me. We often use the words “glory, honor, and thanks” from Rev. 4:9 to structure our time.
- **Life-giving Truth:** This is the practice of telling ourselves God’s truth over and over again so that it sinks into our hearts and changes us from the inside out. Practically, this means we will think through the truth which we learned in the Sunday Sermon. We will help each other process the truth of God’s Word together.
- **Life-giving Relationships:** This is an invitation to authenticity, being honest with yourself and others about what’s really going on in our hearts, clinging to the hope that God himself is able and willing to heal our brokenness as we seek him together. This is where learning the truths of grace and humility really will manifest itself. Being real is better than being perfect. Practically this means we will seek to pray for heart issues, not surface issues. For example, someone might want prayer for a job – he might be laid off. We want to know how we can pray for his heart – maybe he realizes that he is struggling with trusting God to care for him. And so we would pray God’s will in this area.
- **Life-giving Impact:** Prayer is the work! We use the pattern of “Pray & Watch” – where we pray for those all around us and then watch for how God is working in their lives. When we see the Lord working, then we both rejoice and respond.

Life Groups are what we do during the week—we don’t have other programs. So if you want to be involved beyond Sunday morning, this is for you! We have men’s, women’s, teen’s, and couples’ groups meeting. And if you want to learn more about these Four Life-giving practices and how they work, tell us you are interested in being part of our 4 week “Getting to know LEFC” where we share about these practices, our mission, and our values.



For the week starting Sunday,
July 3th, 2016

In Jesus I am safe.

Psalms 4

Life-giving Prayer (about 10 min)

1. Do you have any stories to share this week about worshiping God in the everyday stuff of life?

2. Try using the simple sentences below, filling in the blank. You could spend a bit of time on “glory”, people completing the sample sentence as many times as they want. Then move onto “Honor” and then “Thanks”.

Glory: God, it’s amazing that you _____.

Honor: God, I choose (or want or surrender) _____ to you.

Thanks: God, thank you for _____.

3. Look at the bulletin from Sunday. Go through the Scripture or a song and see if you can pick out statements that give God glory, honor, or thanks.

Life-giving Truth (about 45-55 min)

There are a lot of questions here. Your Life Group Coach will pick out a few below that are best suited for your Life Group to help process this week's Life-giving Truth. Don't try to answer every question – just think through a few together.

1. Did anyone think about last week's Life-giving truth that *Someday God will Save Me*? Can you share a story about when you thought about it?
2. Read Psalms 4 out loud in your group. What truths about God does David reflect on?
3. What do you notice, appreciate, find amazing, or find confusing about this passage?
4. What was one thing you learned from the sermon on Sunday?
5. What was one question you have from the sermon on Sunday?
6. What do you long to be safe from? In other words, when you long for safety, what particularly do you long for?
7. Do you ever feel unsafe as a Christian? In what ways do you feel unsafe?
8. Read verse 8. This Psalm is written when David was in crisis and distress. Imagine him reflecting on the truths of the first 7 verses he has written just before he goes to bed. He will rest in peace and safety, he says. So what has David said in the prior 7 verses that would bring him this peace and safety?
9. Read Romans 8:31-39. Like Psalm 4, these verses in Romans have in view a time of distress, of crisis, of pain. And yet Paul stresses our eternal safety in the love of God in Jesus. Suppose you are talking to a Christian friend who is going through a fearful crisis. How could you use these verses to encourage this person in the midst of such hardship?
10. Pick a hardship to get in your mind. Either one you've experienced or can easily imagine experiencing. How might the Life-giving Truth that *In Jesus I am safe* help you keep perspective in the midst of that crisis?

11. Read v. 7. In Israel grain, like barley and wheat, began to be harvested in April and May. The “new wine” represents wine made from the first drippings of the juice before the winepress was trodden (and as such would have been particularly potent). The wine came from the grape harvest starting at the end of September. So “grain and wine” encompass the produce of the earth. And by saying it “abounds”, the great harvest would be emphasized. For people in an agricultural context, this would be the best of times, when joy was great because of the harvest. And yet the psalmist says he has been given more joy. Read 1 Peter 1:8-9. How would you describe this joy that is better than material prosperity to someone?

Life-giving Relationships (about 5-10 min)

If we have prayed for you in the past weeks, have you seen any way, small or large, that God is healing you?

Does anyone want healing prayer this week? Remember, this is praying for the heart of you, the person, not the circumstances you are going through or other people in your life. Is there anything churning in your heart that we can pray for?

Life-giving Impact (about 10 min)

1. Does anyone have any Pray & Watch stories from this week? Did you make a plan and follow through with getting together with anyone on your Pray & Watch list?
2. Get your Pray & Watch list. Let's spend our last minute or two together praying over all these names together.