

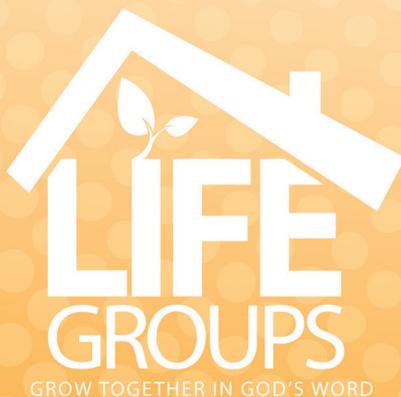
WORKBOOK



CONNECT.
GROW.
SHARE.

A six week study

St. John's Lutheran Church of Orange



GROW TOGETHER IN GOD'S WORD

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Let's GROW! Thank You for joining a Life Group. As your pastors we are personally blessed to know that you are taking this next step in your faith life. As you grow in God's Word and make new friends, we hope your life is transformed and God takes you to the next level of maturity as a Christian.

As you get to know people in your group and spend time thinking about what it means to CONNECT, GROW, and SHARE, try to put the best construction on your experience and push yourself to go beyond your comfort zone. Be an encouragement to each other and seek out ways to make a difference together.

God bless you and your Life Group!

In Jesus,

Pastor Tim

Pastor Chris

Pastor Michael

Essentials of Life Groups

We GROW in Life Groups.

Four key ingredients should be a part of every Life Group:

The Word of God: Whether we study straight from the Bible or study the Bible through devotional books/guides, we are committed to GROWING from the Word of God in Christ.

Growth: We are here because we want to GROW and see our lives transformed to be more like Christ. As part of this GROWTH we commit to pray for each other. We seek to encourage each other and hold each other accountable in the steps of our discipleship process: **CONNECT-GROW-SHARE.**

Acceptance: As members of this Life Group we seek to accept each other unconditionally as Christ does each of us, seeking to build strong friendships rooted in Christ.

Confidentiality: Everything shared in this group stays with this group. Gossip and slander are unacceptable. Like Christ we seek the best for each other.

How to Use this Book

Each session in this booklet corresponds to the video teaching you will be watching with your Life Group. Each week the format will be as follows...

Welcome and Introduction *(10-15 Min.)*

We encourage you to spend a few minutes getting to know each other and reviewing the Essentials of Life Groups.

Video *(15 Min.)*

Watch the video teaching for the week and write down anything that you find particularly relevant.

Discussion Questions *(30-45 Min.)*

We know that you might not be able to answer all of the questions. But spend some time discussing the content of the video and the connected Bible verses.

Discipleship Checkup *(2 Min.)*

At the back of the booklet is a discipleship checkup. You will fill out a new section each week to help you think about your own faith life and where God is leading you in the year ahead.

Closing Prayer *(10-15 Min.)*

Please take time to note any praise reports and prayer requests. Please keep these in prayer during the week.

Week 6:

This week you will take time to fill out a Discipleship Plan and set actions steps. This will be based on your weekly work with the discipleship checkup.

Session 1: CONNECT - Worship



 **Welcome and Introduction**
Introduce yourself and share
Read Essentials of Life Groups on page 4

 **Watch Video Session One: CONNECT - Worship**
CONNECT to God and His People in Worship

 **Video Notes:**

 **Discussion Questions:**

1. What stood out to you in this week's video lesson? Why?
2. What worship service do you attend most frequently?
3. What parts of the worship service are most meaningful to you (the message, the music, Bible readings, prayers, confession, creed, Lord's Supper, etc.)? Why?

4. **Read Exodus 20:8-11.** Remembering the Sabbath, making it a priority to CONNECT to God and His people in worship is very important. Pastor Tim stated, "As a part of the rhythm of creation God has created a need to worship and rest." What are the benefits of worshiping weekly and getting into that rhythm? What are the disadvantages of disrupting that rhythm by not worshiping weekly?

5. Have other events in your life taken priority over worship? What are they? Do you see how that might not be good for you?

6. How can you change your habits, customs, traditions, or family routines to focus on worship?

7. Why do you think God wants us to meet together regularly in worship? In what way is it a misconception that "you don't need to go to church to be a Christian?" Why is that sort of thinking unwise and damaging?

8. How could the rhythms of your life change so that you and your family could make worship a top priority? How can you in your Life Group encourage each other in this spiritual challenge?

9. **Read Hebrews 10:19-22.** How is it possible for us to draw near to God? Notice that each verse tells us how.

10. How confident (Hebrews 10:19) are you in coming before the Lord each week in worship? How comfortable are you bringing your sinfulness ("guilty conscience" in Hebrews 10: 22)?

11. How does God CONNECT to us in worship?

12. In worship, what is more important, God CONNECTING to us or us CONNECTING to God?

13. What are the benefits of making weekly worship a consistent part of your life? Is there a difference in the rest of your week when you attend church?

Discipleship Checkup



Take time now to complete the CONNECT to God and His people in worship section of the discipleship checkup on page 24.

Digging Deeper:

Read John 15:1-11 – Discuss how this passage relates to CONNECTING to God and His people in worship.

As Lutheran Christians the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper takes central place in our worship services. Why is it significant that Jesus tells His disciples to do this "often"? Why is the Lord's Supper so powerful in CONNECTING us to God and to one another? If that's all we did in worship would that be enough? Why or why not?

St. John's has six worship services for you to attend.
Traditional: Saturday at 6:30pm, Sunday: 8:00, 9:30 & 11:00am
Contemporary: 9:30am & 5:00pm

Closing Prayer

Praise Reports

Prayer Requests

Session 2: GROW Together



Welcome and Introduction

Introduce yourself and share

Read Essentials of Life Groups on page 4

Watch Video Session Two: GROW Together

GROW together in God's Word through Life Groups

Video Notes:

Discussion Questions:

1. What stood out to you in this week's video lesson? Why?
2. Most of us throughout our lives have been a part of various organizations, teams or groups that really clicked together. What group was that for you and what was it about that group that made it successful and made you feel like a part of the team?
3. What would you like to get out of attending a Life Group and what do you want to contribute to the meetings?

4. **Read Hebrews 10:24-25.** What do these verses mean to you? Who has been an example or mentor to you or given you encouragement? Why did they do it? How did they encourage you?

5. How have others challenged you or held you accountable in your life as a Christian?

6. How important is it to GROW with other Christians?

7. Why is it important to be a part of a Life Group?

8. What are the benefits of being part of a group that encourages each other but also challenges each other in their Christianity? Do you see any risks in being a part of a group like this?

9. Do you pray for others in your life? Do you have other people praying for you? Why do you think it is important to have prayer be a part of your life?

10. **Read Acts 2:42-47.** This sounds like a group of people who were committed to each other. Fellowship happens as a result of people accepting each other like Christ accepts us. How are you at accepting other people? What makes it hard for you to accept others?

11. **Read Proverbs 11:13.** How important is it to you to know that what you share with someone won't be shared with others?

12. Why do you think it is good to have a place to talk about life confidentially?

Discipleship Checkup



Take time now to complete the GROW Together section of the discipleship checkup on page 24.

Digging Deeper:



Read John 15:9-17. How does this group of verses relate to GROWING together in a Life Group?

Closing Prayer

Praise Reports

Prayer Requests

Session 3: GROW in God's Word



Welcome and Introduction

Introduce yourself and share

Read Essentials of Life Groups on page 4.

Watch Video Session Three: GROW in God's Word

GROW together in God's Word through Life Groups

Video Notes:

Discussion Questions:

1. What stood out to you in this week's video lesson? Why?
2. If comfortable, share a time when someone gave to you strong words of encouragement.
3. If comfortable, share a time when the words of the Bible encouraged you.

4. Deuteronomy 6:6 says "These words... shall be upon your hearts." Hearts means more than one person. Have you studied the Word of God with others before? If so, how did it benefit you?

5. In John 6:68 Jesus said that His words are "spirit and they are life." The disciples agree in verse 68, "You have the words of eternal life." If Jesus' words are so good what keeps people from spending more time with them, what keeps them from realizing how powerful they are? (you might want to look at 2 Timothy 4:3-5).

6. Pastor Michael mentioned some shocking statistics about how much time people spend watching TV compared to being CONNECTED to God's Word. How much time do you spend with God's Word in a week? Do you think you need to spend more time in it? What keeps you from it?

7. **Read 2 Timothy 3:14-17.** What does verse 15 say about what the Scriptures (the Word of God) do for us?

8. According to verses 16 and 17, what else are the Scriptures helpful for?

9. **Read Deuteronomy 6:6-9.** Moses is telling the people that you've got to talk about these words (the Word of God) with each other, in your families, at home, in the car, before bed, when you get up in the morning! All the time! Did you grow up in a family like this? If so what were the benefits? What are some ways we can live out God's advice to us here in Deuteronomy 6?

10. Moses's words remind us that we need to GROW together in God's Word with other believers. Discuss some ways to ensure that the words of our family, friends, and most importantly Jesus Christ prevail over all of the other messages that society hurls at us.

Discipleship Checkup



Take time now to complete the GROW in God's Word section of the discipleship checkup on page 24.

Digging Deeper:

What do Hebrews 4:12 and Matthew 4:4 tell us about God's Word?

Read 2 Timothy 3:10-4:8. Do you see any other insights into the importance of God's Word for our lives?

Read Psalm 119:105. How does this verse speak to you?

Closing Prayer

Praise Reports

Prayer Requests

Session 4: SHARE Christ with our Service and Resources



Welcome and Introduction

Introduce yourself and share
Read Essentials of Life Groups on page 4

Watch Video Session Four: SHARE Christ with our Service and Resources

SHARE Christ with our Words, Service and Resources

Video Notes:

Discussion Questions:

1. What stood out to you in this week's video lesson? Why?
2. Pastor Chris talked about the difference one person can make in the life of another. Who has made a difference in your life in Christ? How did they SHARE Christ with you through their service (their actions, time and talents)? How did they SHARE Christ with you through their resources (finances, possessions, etc.)? How would your life be different if that one person thought they couldn't make a difference?

3. **Read John 6:1-7.** Philip was overwhelmed by the need. Talk about the temptation to ignore serving others because the need seems to be too great.

4. What area of need in the world do you feel most inspired by? What cause do you feel most passionate about? If you're not already serving in that area, what is the greatest obstacle keeping you from it?

5. With what talents, abilities, skills, and /or spiritual gifts has God blessed you? How can/do you serve with them? Where is your greatest area of influence?

6. With what resources has God blessed you (finances, possessions, property, etc.)? How can/do you use them to serve God?

7. **Read John 6:8-13.** Jesus used the meager resources of the boy (five loaves and two fish) and the service of the disciples to meet an overwhelming need. Have you ever been part of something like this, when each person did their part and God blessed it in an amazing way?

8. How have you been blessed by serving and giving to others?

Discipleship Checkup



Take time now to complete the two sections of the discipleship checkup on page 25: SHARE Christ with my Service and SHARE Christ with my Resources.

Digging Deeper:

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-15. Discuss what these verses tell us about how we use the resources that God has entrusted to us. Sometimes people use verse 7 as an excuse not to give because they are reluctant. What do you think God is really saying to us in this verse?

Read Malachi 3:6-12. Discuss what these verses tell us about how we use the resources God has entrusted to us. Have you ever tested God in this way? What were the results?

Closing Prayer

Praise Reports

Prayer Requests

Session 5: SHARE Christ with our Words



Welcome and Introduction

Introduce yourself and share

Read Essentials of Life Groups on page 4

Watch Video Session Five: SHARE Christ with our Words

SHARE Christ with our Words, Service and Resources

Video Notes:

Discussion Questions:

1. What stood out to you in this week's video lesson? Why?

2. How did you come to know Jesus as your Savior? For some of us it may have been through parents and a life involvement with the church. Others may have come to faith later in life. Whose words about Jesus helped bring you to the faith?

3. **Read Romans 10:10-15.** Jesus said, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few" (Luke 10:2). There are people in your life that need to hear about Jesus. Pastor Chris talked about relational evangelism. Who do you already have a good friendship with that needs Jesus? Do they have a need in their life that you can help them with? Think for a minute and write down their names below.

4. What keeps you from SHARING Christ with them? Take some time this week and pray for the right opportunity to talk to them about Christ.

5. Pastor Chris talked about casually starting a spiritual conversation by mentioning church in normal everyday conversation. How could you do this with people in your area of influence?

6. If comfortable, would anyone share a time when they were able to tell someone about Jesus? How did it turn out? Are you more comfortable with believers or non-believers? Why?

7. Is there someone in your life that believes differently than you? Is your relationship with this person an opportunity for the Lord to work?

8. **Read Luke 10: 1-4, 16.** Jesus sent out 72 teams to SHARE the message with the world. Who has Jesus sent you to? Verse 16 is powerful. What is Jesus saying about the words you SHARE about Him?

9. Are you ever afraid of talking about Jesus because you don't think you know enough? Pastor Chris stated the best way to talk about Christ is to SHARE how your faith in Jesus has made a difference in your life personally. How has your faith in Christ made a difference in your life?

Discipleship Checkup



Take time now to complete the SHARE Christ with my Words section of the discipleship checkup on page 24.

Digging Deeper:

Read Jeremiah 29:4-7. The Israelites didn't want to be in exile, but the Lord said to pray for the peace and prosperity of that place. Have you ever been somewhere in your life, whether it be a job or in a friendship or organization and you just didn't want to be there? Could it be that the Lord wanted you there to bring peace and prosperity to that place?

Read 1 Peter 3:15. What do these verses say about SHARING Christ with our words?

Read Luke 12:8-12 and Acts 1:1-8. Discuss the role of the Holy Spirit in SHARING Christ with our words.

Closing Prayer

Praise Reports

Prayer Requests

Session 6: CONNECT - GROW - SHARE



Welcome and Introduction

Introduce yourself and share

Read Essentials of Life Groups on Page 4

Watch Video Session Six: CONNECT - GROW - SHARE

CONNECT to God and His People in Worship

GROW together in God's Word through Life Groups

SHARE Christ with our Words, Service and Resources

Video Notes:

Discussion Questions:

1. What stood out to you in this week's video lesson? Why?

2. Pastor Tim said that discipleship (being a Christian) is not a fast food faith but rather it is "low and slow, not microwaved, not forced." It's a marathon not a sprint! Have you seen this to be true in your life? How?

3. **Read John 8:31-32.** Pastor Tim said, “The truth is that there is nothing in us that merits God’s love, but in Jesus Christ, God has poured out His love on us and we can stand confidently before Him. The truth is that He loves us. The truth is the Son of God has set us free. The truth is that sin and death cannot in any way hold us captive. We proclaim this truth and this life in Jesus as the core of the gospel. To know Jesus is to be CONNECTED to God.” Discipleship starts with being CONNECTED to God by His grace. Discuss the importance of starting with God’s grace!

4. **Read Revelation 7:14-17.** God gives us a picture of the last day, the endgame, our future as His people. How can keeping this picture in our minds help us as we seek to CONNECT – GROW – SHARE?

Review Discipleship Checkup and Discipleship Plan:

Look at the Discipleship Checkup you completed on pages 24 and 25. Privately review your scores and circle the appropriate responses on the Discipleship Plan on pages 26 and 27. Complete your Discipleship Plan by identifying one way you can GROW in each of the areas of discipleship in the next six months.

5. After completing the Discipleship Plan, if comfortable, share with the group an area that you plan to GROW in and how you plan to do that.

6. As we have studied CONNECT – GROW – SHARE the past six weeks, what is one of the most significant things you’ve learned about God and yourself?

Digging Deeper: 

Pastor Tim put forth some challenging questions. Read through them and answer any that you feel comfortable with. “No matter what stage or place you are in life, whether a young adult, single, raising a family or an empty nester, we are called to go and make disciples. How are we working now to instill habits of worship, service, prayer and spiritual growth in our children and grandchildren? How are we ensuring these habits in our own lives? Are we taking this call seriously to help those in our church and community to follow Jesus? How are we setting up our families as places where our children are equipped for a lifetime of following Jesus? Are we showing them and others the path? Are we having conversations that lead them to see Jesus? Are we reinforcing the values we talk about with our actions and behaviors? I can’t answer these questions for you, but each question deserves serious attention.”

Read Revelation 7:9-17 again. How do all these people get before the throne? What’s our role in getting them there?

 **Closing Prayer**

Praise Reports

Prayer Requests



Discipleship Checkup

This checkup helps you discover strength and growth areas in your life as a follower of Jesus Christ. Rate yourself on a scale from 1 to 5 for each section. Mark your total in the appropriate column on the chart below.

	Just Beginning	Getting Going	Well Developed
 CONNECT to God and His People in Worship (Week 1) I'm committed to a local church and attend a worship service weekly	1	2	3 4 5
While in a worship service I fully participate in singing, praying, confessing my sins and faith, listening/applying the sermon, receiving the Lord's Supper	1	2	3 4 5
I've been baptized and find great strength in my identity as a child of God	1	2	3 4 5
TOTAL: _____			
 GROW Together (Week 2) I'm involved in a Life Group and regularly attend	1	2	3 4 5
I have Christian friends that I confide in and hold me accountable	1	2	3 4 5
Others pray for me and I pray for others regularly	1	2	3 4 5
TOTAL: _____			
 GROW in God's Word (Week 3) I'm involved in a Life Group that studies God's Word	1	2	3 4 5
I read God's Word every day	1	2	3 4 5
I am avoiding addictive behaviors (food, TV, busyness, alcohol, etc.) to meet my needs	1	2	3 4 5
TOTAL: _____			
 SHARE Christ with My Words (Week 5) I cultivate relationships with non-Christians and pray for opportunities to share my faith	1	2	3 4 5
I invest my time in another person/group that needs to know Christ	1	2	3 4 5
I regularly invite un-churched or unconnected friends to my church, Life Group, etc.	1	2	3 4 5
TOTAL: _____			

Just Beginning
Getting Going
Well Developed



SHARE Christ with My Service (Week 4)

I know my abilities and spiritual gifts and use them for God's glory

1 2 3 4 5

I serve regularly (once a month or more) in a ministry in the church or the community

1 2 3 4 5

I'm a team player in my Life Group and share responsibilities willingly

1 2 3 4 5

TOTAL: _____



SHARE Christ with My Resources (Week 4)

I view my possessions and resources as God's, I merely manage all that he has given me

1 2 3 4 5

I give regularly, intentionally and generously to God's work and His people locally and globally

1 2 3 4 5

I tithe (give 10 percent of my income) to my home church

1 2 3 4 5

TOTAL: _____

	Connect	Grow Together	Grow Word	Share Words	Share Service	Share Resources	
15	<input type="checkbox"/>	Well Developed					
14	<input type="checkbox"/>						
13	<input type="checkbox"/>						
12	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good					
11	<input type="checkbox"/>						
10	<input type="checkbox"/>						
9	<input type="checkbox"/>	Getting Going					
8	<input type="checkbox"/>						
7	<input type="checkbox"/>						
6	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair					
5	<input type="checkbox"/>						
4	<input type="checkbox"/>						
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	Just Beginning					
2	<input type="checkbox"/>						
1	<input type="checkbox"/>						

Discipleship Plan

I will share my plan with _____ who will be my spiritual partner to help me GROW as a Disciple of Jesus Christ.

(Plan to review this plan in six months to see how you've grown.)

CONNECT to God and His People in Worship

Circle overall score for this area:

Just Beginning – Fair – Getting Going – Very Good – Well Developed

In the next six months I plan to do the following to GROW in this area of discipleship:

GROW Together

Circle overall score for this area:

Just Beginning – Fair – Getting Going – Very Good – Well Developed

In the next six months I plan to do the following to GROW in this area of discipleship:

GROW in God's Word

Circle overall score for this area:

Just Beginning – Fair – Getting Going – Very Good – Well Developed

In the next six months I plan to do the following to GROW in this area of discipleship:

SHARE Christ with My Words

Circle overall score for this area:

Just Beginning – Fair – Getting Going – Very Good – Well Developed

In the next six months I plan to do the following to GROW in this area of discipleship:

SHARE Christ with My Service

Circle overall score for this area:

Just Beginning – Fair – Getting Going – Very Good – Well Developed

In the next six months I plan to do the following to GROW in this area of discipleship:

SHARE Christ with My Resources

Circle overall score for this area:

Just Beginning – Fair – Getting Going – Very Good – Well Developed

In the next six months I plan to do the following to GROW in this area of discipleship:

This workbook belongs to:

CONNECT to God and His People in Worship
GROW together in God's Word through Life Groups
SHARE Christ with our Words, Service and Resources

