



HC — GROUPS

GROUP LEADER TRAINING

LIFE

IS

BETTER

TOGETHER



WELCOME TO HC GROUPS LEADER TRAINING

Dear HC Group Leader -

We are so excited that you're here! We know leading a group is a big commitment and there are lots of ways you could spend your time. That's why we can't thank you enough for choosing to serve in this way. The impact you will have on the people in your group is immeasurable, and we can't wait to hear the stories from your experience.

One of the values we have at Heritage is the importance of connecting in community, and being part of a group is one of the best ways we can do this. As the leader of a group, you are helping people connect with others and with God. Your role is to pave the way for a welcoming and engaging group experience - and this training will help you do just that!

Let's get started!
-Heritage Church

GOD CREATED US FOR COMMUNITY

God created us for community, and God embodies community—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We need an authentic community around us, encouraging us, helping us grow in our faith. We recognize that meaningful relationships cannot be built just by attending weekend services but need to be developed in smaller environments. Groups are our primary strategy for building community at Heritage.

Genesis 1:26

Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image to be like us."

Genesis 2:18

"It is not good for man to be alone."

Hebrews 10:25

And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another...

1 Thessalonians 5:11

So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing.

Acts 2:42-47

All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer. A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity—all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

Discussion:

- What do these verses tell us about community?
- How is being made in God's image relevant to community?
- Why is it important to meet regularly?
- What do you think are the key components in building a great group?

THREE LEADER ESSENTIALS

The Groups team at Heritage has identified three leader essentials that we want you to be aware of.

1. Connected to JESUS.

John 15:4-5

"Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing."

A group is only as healthy as its leader. Your relationship with Christ needs to be the top priority in your life (stay connected to the vine). Make time to spend in God's word and prayer, prepare for your time each week and pray for your group members and your meeting time together. Your group will greatly benefit if you make these things a priority.

2. Connect INTENTIONALLY to each person.

At a church as large as Heritage, it can be hard to find community if you aren't intentional about it. It's our hope and desire that each person who comes through our doors is known and connected. The people who are in your group have taken the step to get connected, and we want you—as the leader—to help develop those relationships.

During your session, be intentional in getting to know your group members.

- Go out for dinner, plan an activity, or serve together at least once during the session. (This is how you will spend the 8th week of this Group cycle together)
- Get cell numbers, and check in with your group members throughout the week. Even a simple text message to check in on a person shows them that you're thinking of them and you care.
- Invite your Group to meet up at a Sunday service, or after for lunch.
- Follow up on any prayer requests.

3. A desire to MULTIPLY.

Our mission as a church is to: Reach others for Christ, and train them to serve Him.

We want to see more and more people connected into a group, so that they have the chance to grow in their faith and experience community. For us to do this, we want to be intentional about creating new groups and developing leaders. By focusing on multiplying leaders within our groups, we will have space for more people to connect in groups!

Multiplying leaders can be done in many different ways, but it requires you to be thinking:

WHO ELSE CAN LEAD A GROUP?

Every session you lead, be intentional in identifying at least **ONE LEADER**.
This person may or may not be in the group you are leading. There are two main ways to do this:

- Identify a leader from within your group to start their own group.
- Identify a leader outside of your group and help them get started.

HC GROUPS STRUCTURE

HC STAFF/ PASTORS:

The goal is to provide resources for groups, promotion, & spiritual support

HC COACHES:

The goal is to provide encouragement, spiritual support, prayer, & training to each group leader

HC GROUP LEADERS

The goal is to create an environment where people are able to grow in friendship, their faith, & to get more connected

HC GROUP ATTENDEES:

The goal is to meet others, grow in their faith, and then consider hosting an HC Group in the future
(if it lines up with their gifting/they have a desire to do so)

GOALS FOR LEADING MY GROUP

When we get together, my HC Group will:

- **Talk together:** All groups should spend time getting to know one another, creating a welcoming atmosphere where each person can share and has a voice.
- **Have fun together:** Whether that's playing a game, laughing, or planning a hangout together ... fun is a huge value here!
- **Collect info of all new people:** Follow-up is a huge factor if we want to successfully reach and connect with the members of our group.
- **Grow together:** Each person should have the opportunity to take a step forward in their spiritual walk. We'll have weekly Bible discussions & video, and encourage people to get into the YouVersion Bible app and our HC weekly devotionals.
- **Pray together:** We'll make sure to intentionally set aside time to pray collectively as a group. It doesn't need to be formal, it's just a time to talk to God.

How should I divide up my time with my HC Group?

- **Before you start (<15 minutes) :** People show up, mingle, music is playing on speakers, lights are turned on, space is clean, maybe appetizers or food is served.
 - It's important to create a welcoming environment, so please pay attention to cleanliness, music, environment, etc.
- **Group starts with an icebreaker question or game (<15 minutes) :**
 - Utilize our icebreaker questions, or come prepared with a game to play!
The goal here is to have fun, let everyone speak, and lighten the mood.
- **Watch video & discuss questions:** Make sure everyone can see/hear, then play the video all the way through, and move into the discussion questions together.
 - The discussion should always lead to application and life-change in Jesus.
- **Prayer Requests and Prayer (<10 minutes)**
- **Dismiss people with next steps**

What are some "wins" for my Group environment? -

- **Clean & Intentional:** Lights turned on, maybe music can be playing on a speaker, area for Group is cleaned up and intentional. We want people to feel welcome, and not like they're an inconvenience. Be ready 15 minutes before Group starts so that you can give your guests your full attention. Making food? Just make sure you're able to have it done when people arrive. Feel free to have a potluck as well.
- **Open & Honest:** We believe in the value of "no perfect people allowed," and we will embody that in our Groups. We desire to create an environment where people can be honest about struggles and issues they're facing, or where they are at spiritually.
- **Confidential:** If someone shares something in the Group, it needs to stay in the group unless it pertains to them hurting themselves, or someone else.
- **Fun & Encouraging:** A fun environment is a good environment, and it makes you want to go back for more. Stay positive, keep the energy high, laugh, and connect people to one another. Also, it's important to end on time in order to respect people's schedules!
- **Nothing Divisive:** As leaders, we need to fully avoid speaking about any divisive social or political topics, and encourage our Groups to do the same. Remember, everyone has a different background & personal beliefs, but in order to maintain a focus on Jesus, we have to avoid topics that may turn people away. If someone makes a comment about politics or politicians, or something social in our world today, just gently encourage the Group to move on in order to continue unity.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS THE SIGN UP PROCESS?

- People will go to HeritageChurch.com/Groups to sign up.
 - They'll choose from the different group options.
- Begin promoting it to your friends, neighbors & co-workers. Send texts, emails, social media posts, etc. Filling up your Group is the best way to make it a success!
- When they sign up for your group, you will be notified.
- You will follow up with each attendee with a welcome text
Hey _____! I am so excited that you signed up for my HC Group. Here are a couple things I wanted you to know:
1) The Group starts at _____, on this day _____, and my address is _____.
2) If you have any other friends or family members you want to bring, that's great! Just sign them up at HeritageChurch.com/Groups so we know to expect them! Let me know if you have any questions? See you soon!
- After week 1, if someone on your list doesn't attend, just send a friendly follow up text:
Hey _____! Hope your week is going great! We missed having you at group last night, but I'm hoping to see you next week. Let me know if I can pray for you at all this upcoming week.

HOW WILL I GET WEEKLY GROUP CONTENT?

- **ONLINE** - The Group Study Guides will be provided weekly for each group online. They'll be able to be downloaded to your phone, iPad, or computer. The videos that go with the curriculum will be on YouTube under our "Heritage Church" page.
- Each Group Study Guide will consist of: Icebreakers, Bible Study Questions, a Video (on YouTube), as well as follow-up discussion questions and next steps.
- You can print these documents. For some HC Group sessions, it's good for every attendee to download the Study Guide.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I HAVE TO CANCEL MY GROUP?

- It is the Group leaders' responsibility to communicate with each Group attendee via text ASAP. If you know you're going on vacation, try to plan ahead and see if someone wants to host in your absence. That is a great way to keep the Group together.
- If something comes up, like illness, the most responsible thing would be for you not to host the Group. Text everyone ASAP and see if someone is open to jumping in and hosting. If no one is able to host, feel free to cancel and resume the Group the following week.

WHAT IF I NEED HELP OR GUIDANCE?

- HC Group Coaches
- HC Group Staff

CONVERSATIONS ABC's

ABOUT THE TOPIC -

Let's stay focused on the topic at hand, as well as the scriptures and questions that are discussed!

We will avoid talking negatively about other churches, denominations, and politics completely.

BRIEF -

We believe that a great Group will allow every single person to be heard! When sharing, just remember to keep it brief so that others feel open to share.

CONFIDENTIAL -

This is a circle of trust. Whatever is said in this Group needs to stay confidential. There will be no tolerance for gossip, and we aim to lift each other up in prayer and support.

Notes:

Prayer Requests:

HC — GROUPS



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