

So You Want to Start a Group?

Awesome.

First, thanks for responding to this call. Groups are so important. There are so many things they can accomplish, but most of all they grow us in relationship with other people while growing with other Christians. Groups are the things that change the world.

Second, we want to resource you as much as we can. At Foundry, we believe groups should be casual, loosely related, but all focused on common goals. Our definition of a disciple is a person with a consistently expanding vision of Jesus Christ and His kingdom in relation to both their personal life and the world around them.

So this means we need to grow our interior life and our exterior life. It's those two things that we want to focus on in our group ministry. We desire people who can speak about this growth personally and believe in the personal spiritual rhythms of devotion, worship and service. We also believe that each of us will reach a "glass ceiling" of sorts by not living out our own spiritual growth while in relation to other people. John Wesley referred to this as "social holiness" and we also live this out by seeing our life with others as not just a necessary part of being a church, but of our own personal relationship with Jesus.

So we do this by a couple of deliberate moves.

We gather together intentionally with our group.

As the group leader, we only ask you to do a couple of things. The first is to keep track of the contact information for your group. We will do this using the "groups" app in Planning Center. Our staff will set you up in this and give you a quick rundown of how to use it. You will use this app to collect your group, schedule meetings, email folks and record attendance. This helps us know who is all in a group in our church. Part of intentional discipleship is keeping track with people, especially when we have as many folks in our orbit as Foundry does. We also realize you might encounter people in your groups that don't come to Sunday morning. We want to make sure we can provide for them as well.

We will gather intentionally as group leaders.

Once a quarter or so, everyone leading a group will gather together, as well as the folks who are praying about starting a group. This will be a time of learning together, praying with each other, and supporting other folks who are leading and discipling people in our community.

We will be intentional about our time together.

The most important things going on in our groups is not the content of the conversation, but the relationships that are being built up because of the conversation. We want to help you get started by resourcing everyone with a copy of AW Tozer's "Pursuit of God" and an additional devotional guide with questions. We also are constantly building what we call the "Massive List of Questions to Answer" as part of our Wesleyan focus on self-awareness and accountability. Part of our social holiness are groups consistently returning to a very small handful of questions to ask each other about life together.

Expectations

We also feel it is extremely helpful to have a set of baseline expectations for your group. At the least, it's an expectation of starting time and meeting frequency. Depending on the larger goals of your group (we will help you with that if wanted), that might be it. Or it can be pretty serious, see "The Band Meeting" below in the resources. When you meet with our staff, we will help you develop these expectations, but what we expect out of all groups are these things.

1. The group leader is keeping a roll in Planning Center Groups, as well as attendance/schedule for each meeting.
2. The group leader is leading by example for the others in the group in personal contact and praying for each member.
3. The group leader is leading by example for the others by committing to personal scripture reading and sharing.
4. Group meetings will be scheduled frequently and start and end promptly.
5. The group leader will stay in touch with Chad and other group leaders in personal meetings and participation in the quarterly meeting.
6. Groups will meet not just for personal study, but will also schedule time to be in mission and service together towards others.

Resources for you

The Pursuit of God

This is the beginning point of discipleship at Foundry. We do this so we can all have some of the same concepts and words to use together. Plus, it has been a HUGE influence on so many people across the last 60 years or so. We can provide books and a study guide to go along with this resource. We ask that this be the first thing your group does together.

The Band Meeting

As you prepare to start your group, we've got a great book for you. It's about how small groups focused on honest questions and accountability have shaped and shifted the world before. It's our gift to you. It might not apply to the situation of the group you feel called to lead, but it is a great resource to think about as far as "social holiness" and the power of living intentionally with others. If you want to start a same sex/stage of life group, it is a fantastic way to think about functioning as a group.

A Massive List of Questions to Ask

We believe in the power of honest questions being answered by groups of people. We've got an ever-growing list of questions crafted for folks to use for group discussion. These are also great for personal conversations with each other as well. You can find it [here](#).

NEEDS

Glossary

Questions to ask

Video on Planning Center Groups

Social/Announcements section