

Small Group Covenant

Cycle Dates: _____ to _____

Leader (s): _____

Host (s): _____



This covenant will help us discuss and clarify our goals, expectations, and commitments as a group. Since healthy groups thrive on trust and participation, a clear covenant is an important starting point toward a successful group experience.

Small Groups: Our Basic Purpose

The Branch exists to help people live in an intimate relationship with God. A core practice that assists in accomplishing this is connecting with other believers in a small group. At The Branch, small groups meet to connect, grow, serve, and go.

Connect and Grow: Regular Meetings

Sharing: Each week, we will take time to share what is happening in our lives. At first this sharing will include some planned “sharing questions.” After the first few weeks, it will become more informal and personal as our group feels safer and more comfortable.

Study: Each week we’ll study a portion of God’s Word that relates to the most recent sermon. Our goal is to learn how to apply and live out our Christianity in our day-to-day experiences and relationships.

Support: Each week, we’ll learn how to take care of one another as Christ commanded (see John 15:9-13). This care will take many forms, such as praying, listening, meeting needs, and encouraging and even challenging one another as needed.

Serve and Go: Ongoing Life Together

During the life-cycle of the group, there will be opportunities to **serve** each other and the church body. We will also make intentional efforts to **go** outside of the group and into our community and world.

Five Marks of a Healthy Group

For our group to be healthy, we need to

1. Maintain a balanced approach to connect, grow, serve, and go.
2. Accept one another in love just as Christ has accepted us (Romans 15:7)
3. Take care of one another in love without crossing over the line into parenting or taking inappropriate responsibility for solving the problems of others (John 13:34)
4. Treat one another with respect in both speech and action (Ephesians 4:25-5:2)
5. Keep our commitments to the group – including attending regularly, doing the homework, and keeping confidences whenever requested (Psalm 15:1-2, 4b)

Guidelines and Covenant

1. **Dates** We'll meet on _____ nights for _____ weeks.
Our final meeting of the cycle will be on _____.

2. **Time** We'll arrive between _____ and _____ and begin the meeting at _____.
We'll spend approximately _____ minutes in singing (optional), _____ minutes in study/discussion, and _____ minutes in prayer/sharing.

3. **Study** Each week, we'll study the same topic(s) covered in the previous weekend's sermon.

4. **Prayer** Our group will be praying each week for one another.

5. **Children** Childcare will be handled by:

6. **Homework and Attendance**
Joining a Small Group requires a commitment to attend each week 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 a healthy group. Most weeks, the homework will require from twenty to thirty minutes to adequately prepare for the group study and discussion. If we cannot come to a meeting, we will _____
_____.

7. **Refreshments**

8. **Social(s)**

9. **Serve/Go Project(s)**

We agree together in Christ to honor this covenant.

(To be decided on and signed by each group member on or before the third week.)

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|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 9. _____ | 10. _____ |
| 11. _____ | 12. _____ |
| 13. _____ | 14. _____ |
| 15. _____ | 16. _____ |