

GO: MAKE DISCIPLES, BAPTIZING AND TEACHING



BRIDGE 42, LIFE GROUP COORDINATOR
107 CALVIN HEIGHTS, MORGANTON, NC 28655

INTENTIONAL CHRSTIAN COMMUNITIES

THE (CO)MISSION:

The command of Jesus is this:

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **GO** therefore and **MAKE DISCIPLES** of all nations, **Baptizing** them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **Teaching** them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” *Matthew 28:16-20*

Our mission is not simply a singular, individual charge; it is a command to everyone who follow after Jesus. No Christian can set aside this command, expecting the “trained professionals” to do the work. It is our *co-mission*, our most essential mission statement, and not only for the Church of Bridge42, but for each Intentional Christian Community. The root emphasis is to “GO MAKE DISCIPLES”. How do we do accomplish this? Baptizing & Teaching.

Important information regarding Baptism:

- The Greek Word, βαπτίζω (Baptizo), literally translated is “immerse”
- Any Baptized Believer can Baptize someone else, thereby bringing them into the Family of God. If you are unsure of the logistics of how to Baptize, please contact the Life Group Coordinator or the Elders for more training
- Immediately contact the Life Group Coordinator if someone has expressed a desire to be Baptized. This is so the Eldership of Bridge 42 can be fully aware and engaged with the birth of a newly made Christian, and the Baptism can be coordinated to assemble the Church. Do not deny the opportunity for the full number of the Church at Bridge 42 the chance to rejoice and praise God for such a wonderful occasion!
- In some instances, it may be apparent that Baptism is a critical, immediate need pressed upon the heart of the soon-to-be-Christian and Life Group Members by the Holy Spirit (note the case of the Ethiopian in Acts Chapter 8). In such a case, contact the Life Group Coordinator as soon as possible, preferably before the Baptism, but do not delay the immersion. It is important to be sensitive to the prompting of the Holy Spirit

More information of teaching will be given later in this document.

The purpose of this document is to establish an essential, working definition of what an intentional Christian Community looks like when they are seeking to follow the Great Commission. At Bridge 42, they are called Life Groups.

DNA & STRUCTURE

The body of Christ has many members, but all parts of the same body (1 Corinthians 12:12). Likewise, our Life Groups have the same basic bone structure and DNA, even though they do not all look the same. Nevertheless, each Life Group contains specific roles that members embody to help ensure that the community functions well. This unique leadership has a purpose: to produce fruit for the Kingdom of God by making Disciples, teaching them how to practically live out the Gospel of Jesus.

LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

- Authentic
- Passionate about Making Disciples
- Loving with a mind for Forgiveness
- Zealous for the Kingdom of God
- Earnestly desire to follow God
- Able to teach / instruct
- Able to coordinate and work in unity

LIFE GROUPS OF BRIDGE42

The Intentional Christian Communities

Name of Life Group	PURPOSE	Leader	Parts of the Body
<i>Modest Collective</i>	Actively participate in Christian community, teaching Disciples how to practically live for Jesus.	<i>Adam & Tracy Scott</i>	1. Leader
		<i>Matt & Kaylan Rogers</i>	2. Leader's Assistant
		<i>Bob & Victoria Clayton</i>	
<i>Sojourners</i>		<i>Cody & Jessica Wright</i>	3. Teacher
		<i>Jason & Anna Koon</i>	
<i>9:00 O' Clock Group</i>		<i>Stewart & Tammy Cook</i>	
<i>Senior Ladies</i>		<i>Trisha Hull</i>	4. Host

FAMILY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Life Group Coordinator: The Life Group Coordinator is a liaison between the Elders and Life Group Leaders. They are responsible for:

- The active promotion for people to get plugged in to Life Groups
- To ensure Life Groups are reaching out to potential participants
- Relay what's being taught in Life Groups to the Elders
- Encourage and edify Life Group Leaders and be a general support
- Training Life Group leaders and overseeing cell division

LEADER: Directly responsible for the oversight of the Life Group. They are responsible for the general direction of the group meeting, scheduling, and checking in with members. The leader should have a keen understanding of Scripture, be well grounded in their faith, be capable of not only teaching, but also mediating conflicts of any nature, and thereby having good discernment. In essence, the Leader is responsible for each individual in their group. The leader should be able to have a “pulse”, spiritually, on each participant with a heart set to help others grow in the Faith.

LEADER'S ASSISTANT: This person is the second in command. When the leader is unavailable, it is the responsibility of the leader's assistant to step in and fill that role. The leader's assistant should be chosen by the leader after seeking counsel from the Life Group Coordinator. This is so the Elders of Bride 42 have a full understanding of who is chosen and why. It is also a good idea for the intention to choose a leader's assistant be communicated to the participants of the group. The leader's assistant must be one who is in the process of learning how to be an effective leader, with the intention that once the leader's assistant has matured, they will be able to split from the parent Life Group, forging a new intentional Christian Community.

TEACHER: This role may be filled by the Life Group Leader, Leader's Assistant, or any other participant with the ability to guide people through Scripture. The goal is to instruct participants through Scripture to help them better achieve biblical knowledge in such a manner that they can actively live out what they have learned. There is no set standard for the methodology of teaching. Take note: not everyone learns the same way. Teachers should be sensitive to what they are teaching, how they are teaching it, and if other participants are able to digest and use what is being taught. Often, it will be the role of the Leader to teach. However, after some period of growth, it will be most appropriate to begin to have other participants learn how to teach. Giving others this guided opportunity will help encourage them and spurn them into a season of growth, being beneficial for the entire Body of Christ.

HOST: The job of the host is to provide the space for the group to meet. This can be anywhere, at any time, and at any location that is agreed upon by the participants. The host is responsible for the coordination of any meal or activity the group will be doing. Remember, Life Groups do not *just* sit around reading scripture, they should also be out in the community, practicing what they learned. Also, part of being an Intentional Christian Community means that some events will just be for fun. You can go hiking, camping, kayaking, to a concert, or some other fun group activity. These can be a fantastic time for people to learn to be a family, and can help the group feel more at ease with one another. It can also be an opportunity for spontaneous moments of deep teaching, spirit-led worship, intimate moments of growth and authenticity. No matter what the activity, it will be the responsibility of the host to orchestrate, coordinate, and communicate these events and details.

Notice that each of these roles have some level of fluency. Note that the teacher and host roles do not necessarily have to stay the same each meeting. Feel free to transition the roles as the community sees fit. However, the role of leader and leader's assistant should remain stable. This is because of the nature of the unique "mentor-mentee" relationship that should be in place. Again, the Life Group's goal is growth, both spiritually in each individual, and also physically by bringing in new participants. Once the group achieves a full number, with the leader's assistant being fully mature, the expectation is that the group will split off of the parent Life Group. The time frame for the maturity will vary greatly between Life Groups.

RISKS AND CONCERNS

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

- False doctrines are intentionally / unintentionally taught
- Contentions arise between participants
- Participants no longer wish to participate

APPROPRIATE RESPONSES

If there is a time where contentions arise between participants, the Leader should be responsible for being an arbitrator for conflict resolution. In the instance that the Life Group leader is part of the contentions and the group cannot successfully resolve the conflict, the appointed Overseer and his guidance should be sought. Our Overseers are men who have been chosen for many reasons (1 Timothy 3), one of which is their ability to have impeccable discernment. Rely on your Overseer's good judgment, and strive for unity, always.

In the case of suspected false doctrines being taught (Jesus is NOT the Christ, Jesus and Satan are brothers, etc.), concerns should be addressed in a manner and spirit of love and the desire for unity. Note that people can *intentionally* and *unintentionally* teach false doctrines. Correction should be done gently, yet firmly, and ideally should be done in the guidance of the Life Group Leader. In the instance that the Life Group Leader is actively teaching the false doctrine, concerned participants should address it with them in the same manner. If for some reason these concerns are not resolved and corrected within the Life Group, it is critical to bring the issues before the Overseers. It is the specific duty of the Overseers to be vigilant against false doctrine. This is a particular area in which the Overseer's function is most critical. They must protect the sheep at all costs, and keep right doctrine being taught in our Life Groups. Life Group Leaders should be particularly careful as they too are responsible to always be teaching right doctrine.

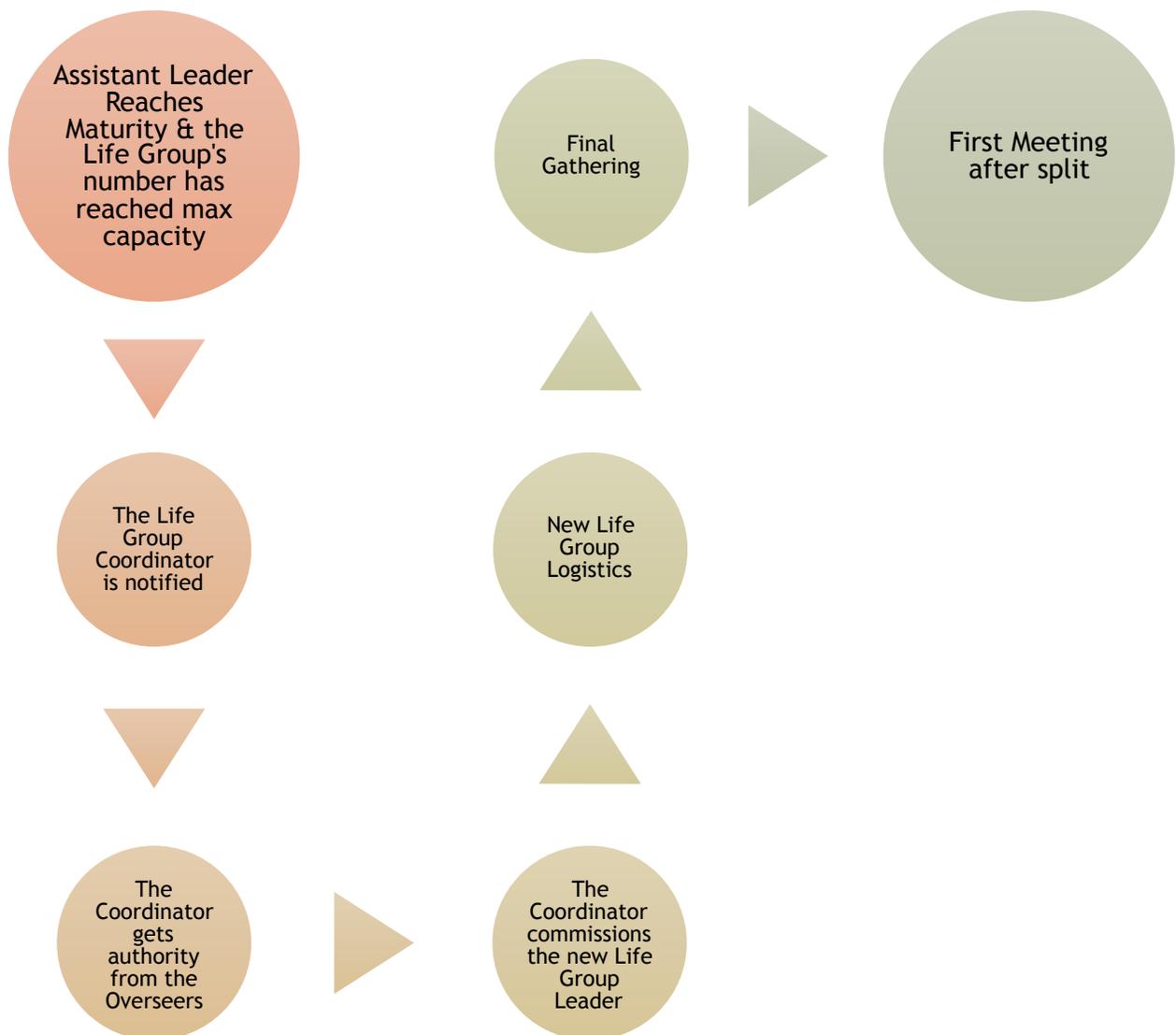
Some people may stop coming to Life Group for many different reasons. However, if people have stopped coming, it is important that the Life Group Leader (and other participants) check in and see what's going on. It may be as simple as work and scheduling issues, or a recent illness in the family. It may also be something serious, such as a deep spiritual issue with sin at the center, barring the person from fellowship. Whatever the reason, these participants are your *family*. Life Group Leaders are much like the spiritual parents of the group. As such, they should always be checking in on their family, especially in times when they no longer appear to be coming around.

MATURITY ACHIEVED: CELL DIVISION

After a gardener spends time planting, watering and feeding a plant, there comes a time when the plant produces fruit. All the dedication they have spent on the plant is finally beginning to show some serious growth. Soon it will be ripe, having reached full maturity. It is the same with our Life Groups. After a period of growth, we should start to see fruit; sometime after, we should see maturity. Once maturity is achieved (the Life Group Leader should have good discernment to determine when this “time” is), the Life Group to divide

This is going to be a bitter-sweet moment where families intentionally tear themselves apart. It should be painful. This pain is a marker that you have created something authentic between one another. Remember: the cellular division is how the Kingdom of God will grow in Burke County. The more intentional Christian Communities we are, the more space we have to invite others into our family. Through this method we can grow exponentially.

CELL DIVISION STEPS



LIFE GROUP COMMITMENTS

If we look at Acts 2:42, we can see there are some fundamental areas in which an Intentional Christian Community actively participate in:

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (ESV).

THE APOSTLE’S TEACHING

The knowledge and pursuit of understanding God’s Revelation to Mankind. It is the understanding of our King, and the theology of Who He is.

- Reading God’s Word with purpose
- Discerning God’s revelation through nature, conscience, moral reasoning, appreciation of beauty
- Practicing spiritual gifts as a means of revealing God’s nature and glory
 - To understand the Maker, study the things He has made
 - To know the Giver, practice and understand the gifts He’s given
 - God reveals Himself in unique ways through His creatures
 - God is infinitely complex and faceted. It just makes sense that His diverse beauties would be visible in the proliferation of creatures He’s designed. His beauties can be seen in those intent on knowing Him and in those intent on suppressing knowledge of Him. We just can’t help it. Even if we dislike or hate God, His good attributes will still be visible in us.
 - It’s our responsibility, as His people, to point out what looks like Him, what comes from Him, what owes its existence to Him, in the people, culture, world around us.
 - Thinking through the gospel and its implications deliberately and regularly together

FELLOWSHIP & BREAKING OF BREAD

The intentional sharing of essential elements of life. It is authentic community, connected in the fashion of an intimately devout family.

- Breaking bread: this is a common meal at a common table. Enjoy sustenance with one another!
- Food, play, devotions, responsibilities, struggles
- Cultivating friendships around shared interests
- Exploring identity as gospel-shaped people in various roles: employees, siblings, sons and daughters, spouses, parents, friends, professionals:
 - What does it mean to be a Christian in these roles?
 - What should a healthy Christian Community look like?
 - How should it function?

- What differentiates us from the world?
- What values, principles, convictions do we stand by?
- Seeking to support one another in physical, emotional, spiritual, relational, and intellectual domains of life.

THE PRAYERS

The act of Communion with God and others. The open petition and communication with The Father, through the Holy Spirit, and with one another, collectively within our Intentional Christian Communities.

- Bonds us with those *for* whom we're praying in intimate ways
- Bonds us with those *with* whom we're praying in intimate ways
- Allows us to assume a posture of humility and poverty of spirit with one another
- Allows us to speak into one another with the power and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit - intercession has both a prophetic and a priestly element
- Ought to be regular and scheduled, as well as fluid and spontaneous

SERVICE

Within our Life Groups, within Bridge 42, and within our community. This is a direct implication of devoting oneself to the Apostle's teaching. We are to be servants in the Holy Spirit, loving God and loving people. Building ramps for the physically impaired, helping at Burke United Christian Ministries, laboring with Urban Missions, janitorial service for Bridge 42, lawn care of those who need it ... Jesus washed the feet of his disciples; what can you do? Through service, We make effectual disciples and fulfill the purpose of the Great Commission.

DISTINCTION

This brings us to an important warning. This document has shown at length what a working, essential definition of “Life Group” is. By contrast, take note that a Life Group is *not just*:

- Bible Studies
- Social Gatherings
- Family Entertainment Nights
- Platforms to discuss the latest Star Wars film
- “Playgrounds” for children to socialize
- Communal Service days

It is important that the Life Group Leader has an awareness about the effectuality of time spent together. Notice that the items above *are* a part of what Life Groups do, but in connection with many other activities and domains of living a life for Jesus. If a Life Group has started to specialize in one of these areas, it may be a good idea to seek support with the Life Group Coordinator to help things get back on track.

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ELDERS OF BRIDGE 42

ELDER: _____

DATE: _____

ELDER: _____

DATE: _____

ELDER: _____

DATE: _____