

GROUPS MINISTRY TOOLBOX

ADULT MINISTRY
**CONNECT
GROUPS**

REACH

• **GROUPS**
MINISTRY TOOLBOX

EXPECTING "NEW" PEOPLE

The Connect Group ministry of FBCH is a community of "open" groups. One important feature of an open group is that it "always expects new people" to visit each week. It anticipates guests. A class that anticipates guests is more likely to be ready for guests. How can you make your Connect Group guest-ready?

Determine what would make the class experience a positive one for guests.

If you were new to a church, or a class, what would need to happen for you to feel welcome and comfortable, such that you'd be eager to make a return visit? Conversely, what *need not happen* in the class in order increase the likelihood of your satisfaction and comfort? Make a list of things that would make for a positive experience for a guest and those that would make for a negative one. Begin to view your class experience from the perspective of a guest and, in the ways that you can, modify your class sessions to make the experience more guest friendly.

Condition the class to become more sensitive to guests and newcomers.

Class time and classroom space, over time, can begin to take the shape of what feels most comfortable to those already connected. Be aware of the classroom environment and the group dynamics and encourage the class to make room for guests. Consider this:

- Is the seating arrangement in our class open – favorable to new additions?
- Is the space open – clear of excess clutter, unnecessary personal items, old supplies?
- Is the curriculum we use open – do the lessons rely on the content of previous sessions?
- Is the conversation in our class open – void of inside jokes, insider jargon, talk about experiences others weren't part of.
- Are the relationships in our class open – is there inclusion of others or familiar cliques?

Before guests ever arrive, have a plan in place for how they'll be received.

With your class leadership team, determine how your guests will be greeted, where they will be seated, and, overall, how they'll be registered, supplied, and included in the class experience. Some things to consider are:

- Enlist someone to greet guests at the door.
- Develop a procedure for registering guests and a person who'll supply them with materials.
- Establish a "buddy" for guests; someone they can sit with who'll introduce them to others.
- Set aside seats near the door for easy access to guests, particularly late arrivers.
- Invite guests to sit with class members in worship; ensure they don't sit alone.
- Invite guests to lunch after church or an upcoming fellowship.

Execute a plan for follow-up.

As a rule, contact should be made with guests as soon as possible after a class visit. Immediate contact increases the likelihood that the guest will be reachable at the contact information provided. It also increases the likelihood that the guest will remember their positive experience in your class and that your invitation to re-connect will be received eagerly because warm memories of the experience are still fresh.

Contact can be made in a variety of ways, by mail, telephone, text, visit, etc... Yet, the more personal the contact after that first visit, the better. For example, making a personal phone call to a guest might be a more personable approach than sending a text message. Remember that the goal of contact is to build a relationship with the guest. Contact communicates that you care – that your class takes note of people, cares about connecting, and cares about making strangers into friends.

Chuan Anderson
Director of Women's Ministry and Prayer

FINDING & REACHING PROSPECTS

Connect Group "prospects" are anyone in your group's immediate sphere of influence not enrolled in an open group Bible study elsewhere. With that definition, the possibilities for who can and should be enrolled in a Connect Group are endless.

The most obvious prospects for your group members pursue will be people to be reached *for* your class – those of your group's particular age or life-stage. Yet there are also dozens of people not of your group's age and life stage that have the potential to be reached *by* your class for worship and the Bible-centered community of a Connect Group. These include the friends, relatives, associates and neighbors (FRANs) of class members who may not share the same life-stage as group members. Prayers for and thoughtful stewardship of your group's FRANs is often a great step to becoming a prospect-loving, outreaching class.

A key to finding and reaching prospects is to start with names. One of the most valuable assets a church and Connect Group have are the names and information of unconnected people. All that is needed for a person to be a viable prospect is their name and some form of contact information for them, preferably a phone number. Consider the following lists as good sources of names:

- FRANs – a list of the friends, associates, and neighbors of your Connect group members who are not "enrolled" in a church or an ongoing Bible study.
- Church membership roll – a list people who have "enrolled" in the church, who may not be "enrolled" in an ongoing Bible study.
- Church visitors – a list of people who have attended worship or a special event, who are not "enrolled" in a church or an ongoing Bible study group.
- Connect group seekers –a list of people who have expressed an interest in finding a Connect group, who are not yet "enrolled" in one. (This list may include church members and church visitors.)
- Connect group prospects – a list of people not "enrolled" in a group who are assigned to your Connect group for follow-up as they are a good match for your group's age group or life-stage. (This list may include church members, church visitors, Connect Group seekers, and your group's FRANs, if they match your age or stage.)

Notice that the common trait among these lists is that the people are not "enrolled" in a Connect Group. Anyone not enrolled is a prospect for enrollment in a group. This includes church attenders and the unchurched, saved people and lost people; members on the church "roll", as well as non-members and guests not enrolled in a Christian community elsewhere.

One of the strongest sources of prospects for your Connect group is your Connect group prospect list. A listing of your group's prospects can be obtained from the Adult Ministries office.

Once you have identified people to pursue, the next logical step is to reach out with an invitation to attend. Letters and postcards in the mail, e-mails, phone calls, and text messages are great tools for inviting people. Yet, for the initial contact, the more personal the invitation the better. For instance, you may find that an invitation by phone is more personal and effective than a text message or postcard. Remember that the goal of any communication is not just contact, but to establish a connection and to build awareness of what's available. It may take days, weeks, or months for a prospect to attend. Yet, the relationship formed through frequent contact with those who remain prospects helps facilitate a future visit. You never know when a need or crisis in a person's life will intersect with a timely contact. Contacting those that remain prospects regularly lets them know that they are on your mind and ensures that your invitation remains on theirs. Consider this monthly schedule of contact with prospects:

- 1st week of the month – phone contact
- 2nd week of the month – text contact
- 3rd week of the month – postcard in the mail

This is a schedule of just 3 contacts a month. Consider reaching out in this way to all of your prospects for 3 consecutive months, or until a first visit is made, whichever comes first. After the prospect's first visit, follow-up with them as you would anyone who has visited your group.

If contact has been made for three months and there has been no visit, consider reducing the number of contacts to one every quarter and making it a phone call.

Another way to reach prospects is to invite them to class fellowships, class outings, class service activities, men's ministry or ladies ministry events. These forums often provide a less formal, more relaxed social setting for people to get to interact with people of the church and of your group.

In general, an outreaching group keeps inviting unconnected people to connect.

Chuan Anderson
Director of Women's Ministry and Prayer

USING YOUR MINISTRY LIST EFFECTIVELY

Ministry List + Prospects = Opportunity

What is a ministry list (enrollment)?

- A list of people who have visited the church
- A list of people who have come to an event at our church
- A list of people who have asked for a connect group

What is a prospect?

- People you know that do not attend church
- People you know who have not gone to church in many years
- People you know that have spiritual needs and need to be in a healthy community
- Family members who do not attend church

What do I do with the list?

- Actively and intentionally pray over the people on the list
- Connect with the people on the list through letters, emails, texts, phone calls, and visits
- Invite them to attend your class, events, and activities

Expectations for the list

- Contact them
 - Email once a month with your calendar
 - Text once a month for prayer concerns
 - Call once a month for a quick conversation

Opportunities

- Most people attend this church because a person cares for them.
- Make your role a priority and not an afterthought
- If a person does not respond for sixty days, inform the adult team, and we will follow up with the person on the list.

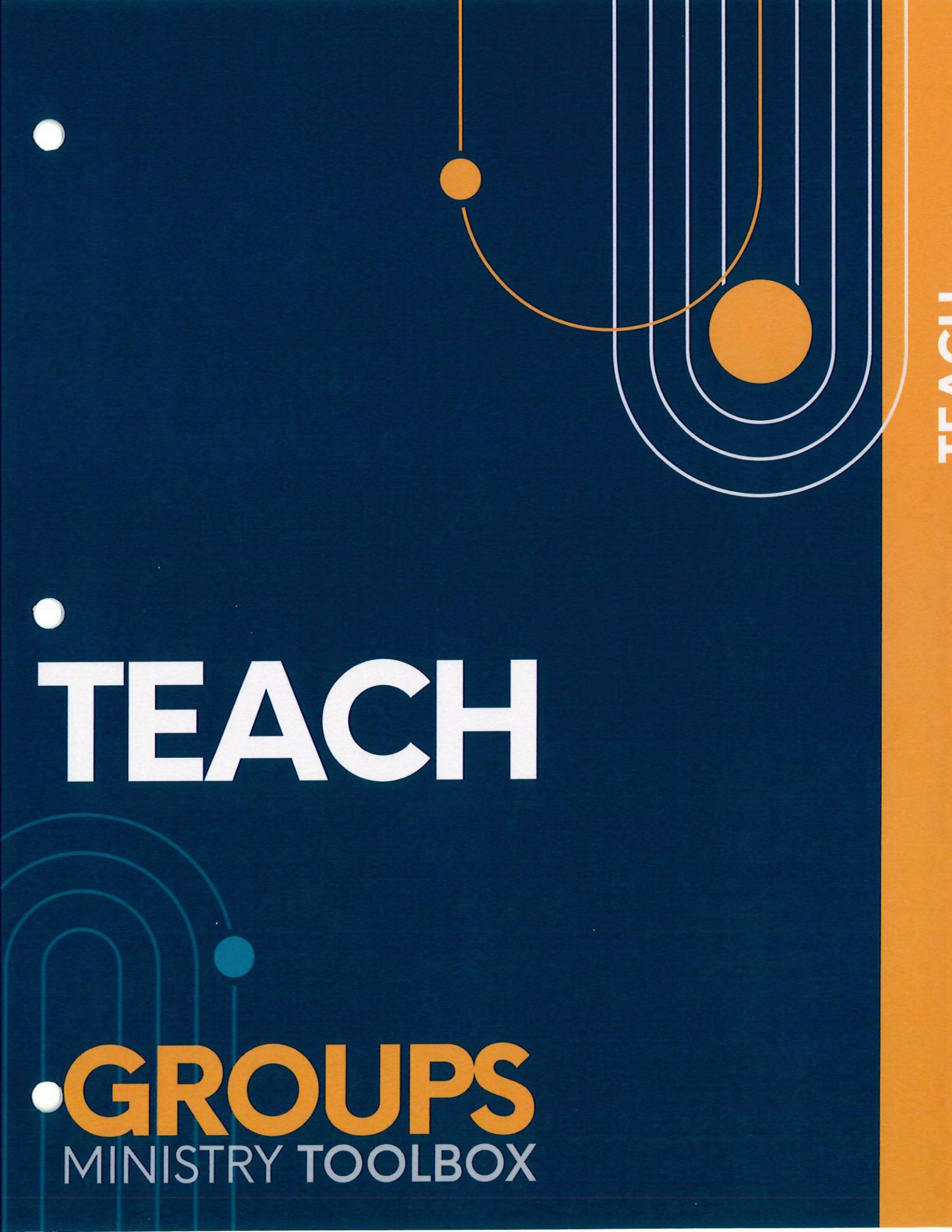
Brian Smart

Minister to Young Families/Community Outreach

Connect Group Evangelism Evaluation

Each Connect Group has three primary responsibilities: reach people, teach people, and care for or minister to people. How well is your group designed for reaching people? Respond to each question, rating your group on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being "not effective" and 5 being "effective."

- 1. I offer a relevant Bible study that uses a variety of teaching methods designed to engage non-Christians and new believers.
- 2. My group shows intentionality in welcoming guests, using nametags to identify everyone, and building relationships.
- 3. Group leaders encourage newcomers to enroll in the class as soon as possible.
- 4. Group members invite those in their sphere of influence to our class.
- 5. My group has an attendance percentage that averages to 50% of enrollment.
- 6. My group membership list is seen as a ministry list instead of a class roll.
- 7. My group gathers for parties regularly and includes the church and lost.
- 8. My group utilizes a care group structure for prayer and ministry to members.
- 9. My group members are becoming ministers to one another.
- 10. My group has a clear process for following up on prospects assigned.
- 11. My group sees their role as sending out workers to other classes.
- 12. My group seeks out ministry opportunities to reach the lost in the community.



• **TEACH**

• **GROUPS**
MINISTRY TOOLBOX

TEACH

Why We Teach

We teach because we are commanded to teach:

"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 EVERYTHING I HAVE COMMANDED YOU. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20

Connect Groups is our foundational strategy for disciple making - leading people to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and for building Great Commission Christians through Bible study groups that engage people in all aspects of discipleship including knowledge of and obedience to God's Word, evangelism, fellowship, ministry/service, and worship.

What We Teach

At First Baptist Church our textbook is God's Word, our curriculum is God's Word, and our goal is the "so what's" – the application - of God's Word.

How We Teach

Every time we attempt to teach others we do so in one of three ways:

- **For Inspiration**

The teacher's primary purpose is to deepen appreciation or to develop a general attitude about the topic.

- **For Knowledge**

The teacher's primary purpose is to present facts, give information, and/or interpret meaning.

- **For Transformation**

The teacher's primary purpose is to secure a specific conduct response to the "so what's" of the topic in daily life.

Why do we teach? For inspiration. For knowledge. But first and foremost, so that disciples might be transformed into Christlikeness so he/she thinks and acts like Christ.

PREPARING TO TEACH WITH EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Experienced teachers prepare in many different ways to teach their Connect Group lesson, and there's not a perfect formula. What I believe is key, though, is that we give the Lord time to work in us through His Word before we take it to others, and that God calls us to be prepared well to teach this most important truth. Below is a 7-day plan for preparing to teach with Explore the Bible, along with a list of other resources we have available for you.

Pray and Read the Passage for Yourself - (Day 1)

- Begin with prayer, asking for understanding, clarity, and a heart to hear, obey, and lead others to do the same.
- Read through the passage (More than once)
- Make notes in the passage
- Underline Key Words
- Decide what God is saying about how this passage applies to you.
- Make a note about the main point or points of the passage

Read the Leader Guide, Personal Study Guide, and Study Notes (Days 2 & 3)

- Look for areas of misunderstanding or needed explanation of the passage.
- Consult commentaries if you desire additional sources of information and understanding.
- Identify parts of the passage that have key applications for your group, knowing who they are and what they're walking through presently.
- Circle the discussion questions that you'd like to use, taking care to understand where you believe the discussion will go. Modify or add if you believe other questions are warranted.
- Take note of the Apply the Text page and how you're going to move the lesson and discussion towards life application.
- Evaluate the learning activity ideas in the leader guide. It's always good to do something different each week to engage different learning styles and make the lesson memorable.

Prepare Your Lesson Plan - (Day 4)

- This can be as simple or as complex as is helpful. It might be notes in the Personal Study Guide, a typed-up simpler outline, printing out the discussion guide, or another means of planning. This is meant to help you have a plan for discussion that focuses on what is key for your group. I prefer to use the Personal Study Guide and underline and write additional notes and discussion questions in the margin. It helps me be prepared but keeps me on the same page as the rest of the group.

Let it marinate. (Day 5)

I love to study far enough ahead so that the Scripture is in my mind all week. That allows the Lord to do the work in me He needs to do before He can work through me. It also gives me time to discover areas of practical application and consider different means of explanation. It never helps to be rushed.

Review your lesson. (Day 6)

It's always helpful to review your lesson plan the night before or morning of, making some additional notes and taking time to read through the passage again. Then head out to teach!

Teach it! (Day 7)

Explore the Bible Resources Defined:

Leader Guide: The comprehensive leader book for preparation to teach, with commentary, discussion guides, questions for group discussion, and suggestions for learning activities.

Personal Study Guide: The group lesson book provided for all members of Connect Groups throughout the church. I encourage everyone to use this book, as it helps to see the scope of the study and encourages discussion. It's also a great gift that a guest can leave with!

Quicksource: Designed to give you a quick outline of the passage, a discussion guide, and some additional learning activities.

Leader Pack: Contains maps, posters, and handouts that can be used as visual aids. This is usually more practical for permanent rooms rather than portable spaces with partitions.

Digital Leader Plan in Word: Comes in the leader email and allows you to edit the Leader Guide Content in a Word Document.

Commentaries: We give out a whole-Bible commentary to our group leaders and have them available in the office. Feel free to ask if you haven't gotten yours.

Video Bible Lesson: Approximately 20-minute video lesson from Bruce Raley or another pastor teaching the lesson content.

Ben Baxley
Associate Pastor to Adults

How We Learn

Teaching would be simple if learners absorbed, remembered and were impacted by every word spoken by the teacher. But consider these statistics:

- People tend to remember 10% of what they hear, 50% of what they hear and see, and 90% of what they hear, see, and do.
- Only seven percent of the message that listeners receive comes from the words themselves.*
- The sounds a speaker makes (inflection, tonality, voice variety, emphasis, and energy) communicates 38 percent of the message.*
- What the listeners see carries 55 percent of the message. This includes the speaker's appearance, gestures, movement and visual aids.*

The stats seem grim, especially since the typical Connect Group teaching/learning experience involves a teacher either presenting a lecture or facilitating a group discussion. In both situations the primary experience is the spoken word.

However, there is hope. While people tend to remember only 10% of what they hear, they remember 50% of what they hear and see, and 90% of what they hear, see and do. By incorporating visual, physical, musical and other elements to our sessions, we increase the potential for learners to be impacted and retain the truths introduced.

The teaching/learning experience and the learner's retention can be greatly improved by sprinkling in activities based on the eight known learning styles.

- Verbal – debate, interview, case studies, storytelling, singing, drama
- Visual – posters, charts, maps, object lessons
- Logical – debate, statistics, worksheets, study guides, outlines
- Physical – role play, art activities, singing or memorization with motions
- Relational – small group activities, brainstorming, discussion, Q&A
- Reflective – lecture, discussion, case studies, study guides, Q&A, tests
- Musical – listening to recorded music, singing, quoting hymns
- Natural – nature walk, reflection on creation and the Creator, object lessons

Since we all learn in different ways no one learner will enjoy or respond to all eight approaches equally. Verbal, visual, logical and physical are the dominate learning styles, but almost every group will have members who best respond to relational, reflective, musical and natural approaches.

*B. Boylan, *What's Your Point?* (Warner Books, 1988)

If You Must Lecture...

1. Clearly identify the lesson aim or objective before starting preparation. Formulate an outline that leads to the aim and have the discipline to stick to it.
2. Use an opening story or activity that establishes instant interest in the subject.
3. State the lesson aim or objective at the start of the lesson. Help learners understand where you are going and how the topic applies to them.
4. Be enthusiastic about the subject. If you are not enthusiastic about the subject, why should learners become enthusiastic about it?
5. Fill the room with energy. Your presentation can make or break the lesson.
6. Vary your gestures, movement, tempo, and voice level to keep learners engaged in the presentation and subject.
7. Use intentional pauses to give learners time to catch up and their minds an opportunity to breath.
8. Encourage learners to become engaged in the session by taking notes.
9. Use a variety of examples, illustration and applications. Not everyone is interested in sports. If all your illustrations are sports themed, you will begin to turn people off from listening.
10. Use personal stories and illustrations when appropriate. Be willing to be vulnerable about your own experience with the truths of the passage. Realize that more truths are caught than taught.
11. Realize that attention spans vary and are shorter than you realize.
12. Allow time for questions and small-group discussion of the presentation.
13. Recap the main points of the presentation.
14. Help learners make personal application of the truths presented during the session.
15. Treat a learner's time and attention as gifts. Begin on time and end on time.

Connect Group Teaching Evaluation

Each Connect Group has three primary responsibilities: reach people, teach people, and care for or minister to people. How well does my teaching hold up to self-evaluation? Respond to each question, rating yourself and/or your teaching session on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being "not effective" and 5 being "effective."

- 1. I make time for adequate preparation, prayer, and communication with group members.
- 2. I have a clear teaching aim or objective for each lesson and structure my lesson plan to meet the aim.
- 3. I offer a relevant Bible study that uses a variety of teaching methods designed to meet the needs and interests of a variety of learning styles.
- 4. I use teaching methods that help students discover the truths of the passage rather than simply telling students what they need to know.
- 5. I encourage group participation and discussion while remaining sensitive to those who wish to remain silent.
- 6. I make sure to include the "so what's" in every lesson to help learners understand the aim of the lesson and to challenge them to apply the truths of the passage to their daily lives.
- 7. I regularly observe the spiritual growth of individuals in the group.
- 8. Class time for Bible study is protected and anticipated by the group.
- 9. I arrive early enough to greet and fellowship with members and guests.
- 10. I regularly take advantage of training opportunities provided by the staff of FBCH.

ASKING GREAT DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Sometimes when we're in Connect Group, the conversation runs dry or the questions feel basic and repetitive. Whether we meet early in the mornings or at night, we want our group to be challenged by God's word and hopefully walk away with new knowledge and application for life. When Connect Group feels like a rerun or the Sahara, try these tips.

Ask yourself if YOU had any questions about the scripture. If you have a question or are confused about part of the lesson, odds are others probably do as well. Take the time to think about the passage and write down what you walked away with in terms of an answer. Then take your question to the group and see what they have to say! You still have your answer, but the conversation in the group might bring to light something different. And it's always encouraging to know that even a teacher gets caught up by confusing verses.

Start having some questions in your toolbelt. Sometimes we repeat the same questions because they are important every week in applying scripture. It doesn't mean you're being lazy but being purposeful with your time.

- What does this passage teach us about God?
- What does this passage teach us about people/ourselves?
- Why would God put this in the Bible?
- How does this passage challenge or encourage you in your faith?
- Are there any new attitudes or behaviors that God is calling me to adopt after reading this passage?

These are good *starting questions* that can lead to discussion.

Follow up and inquire about statements made by others in the group. As the discussion progresses, it's important to ask follow-up questions to keep the conversation flowing. This demonstrates that you're actively listening and invites others to share more in-depth thoughts. For example, you might ask, 'You mentioned feeling frustrated by that verse—what exactly frustrated you?' or 'That's an interesting point—could you elaborate on why you see it that way?' These kinds of questions help participants feel heard and appreciated, creating a more engaging and open atmosphere.

Let your group share personal experiences. People enjoy sharing their personal experiences, particularly when they relate to the topic being discussed. Asking questions that tie the conversation to individual stories or viewpoints can foster a more inclusive and engaging atmosphere. For instance, you could ask, 'Has anyone had an experience that relates to this idea?' or 'How does this situation compare to something you've faced in your own life?'

Managing Your Class Time

With just an hour together every week, it's sometimes a challenge to get everything in for our group time to be healthy. Here I've included a suggested breakdown of your class time and some tips and tricks for leading your group time. I call it managing your wildlife and knowing your characters...

Suggested Schedule for Class Time: (order can vary as needed for your group)

Fellowship/Icebreaker - 10 minutes

Announcements/Ministry Planning - 5 minutes

Teaching Time - 30-35 minutes

Prayer Requests and actual Prayer (Smaller groups or as a whole) - 10 minutes

Manage your wildlife.

Shoot the Rabbits - I'm not talking about real furry cute animals. Rabbits are discussion topics or discussion tangents that tend to have a life of their own. One group member makes an observation, another brings up a related opinion, then a story comes out, and 10 minutes later we're talking about how we like our eggs cooked. Rabbits are harmless if we watch them for a second, but they can really get us away from hearing God's Word. It's the teacher's job to shoot the rabbit if it takes the group away for long.

Release the Squirrels - Squirrels, on the other hand, are self-inflicted distractions that come from a teacher wandering from where he/she intends to arrive. They might be bits of trivia, points we want to prove, or soapboxes we jump on a lot that the class has heard a few times already. They come from us preparing too much to say and not editing enough out, from not preparing enough and wondering what we should say, or our own tendencies of personalities. If we start chasing the squirrels ourselves, our class members tend to find more rabbits.

Catch the Lion - For our purposes, the Lion is that deep Biblical truth that has significant meaning and application for our group. It might wound us a bit, but often God's Word does that so that we can be renewed and restored. The Lion is what we're after. The Lion is WHO we're after. Many times we find we caught the Lion before we reached the end of the lesson, and we need to stop there and let the group consider together what it means for our lives. Remember, the win is catching the Lion, not getting through your lesson.

Know Your Characters and how to Handle Them

- **Praying Pete** - Pete is a wonderful man who is intent on your group praying for every need in the county. He's got a request every week, along with a drawn-out need for explaining them. I find it best to graciously handle Pete by having our prayer time in

group at the end, by grouping up for prayer, or by having our group write down prayer requests for us to send out later.

- Know-it-all-Nadine - Nadine is a kind, well-meaning scholar who likes to add to the lesson quite often. Often I might thank her for her input but ask for others to chime in, or ask people directly what they think about this question or topic.
- Soapbox Steve - Soapbox Steve somehow always finds a way to bring us back to that topic or social issue he's passionate about. Everyone knows when it starts to happen, and sometimes it's hard to stop once he gets going. Eventually I'll have to talk to Steve outside of class and let him know that we can't always go there, or steer the course of the conversation away with some humor.
- Mute Mike - Mute Mike loves to be a part of the class and is passionate about ministry, often serving in church in the background. He's a vital part of our group, but he'd rather not be called on to pray or read. Every once in a while he'll chime in to the discussion, and it's always a valuable insight.
- Late Louise - Gotta love her. Louise can't get to group on time to save her life. Sometimes I'm tempted to wait till she gets here, but if I start doing that the rest of the group tends to move to Louise time. She's starting to get here less late though since I've started on time regularly.

Disclaimer: No rabbits were shot, nor lions tamed, in the producing of this training content.

Ben Baxley
Associate Pastor to Adults

My Covenant as a Connect Group Leader at First Baptist Church Hendersonville

Because God has called me to serve as a Connect Group leader and in obedient response to that call as affirmed by the church,

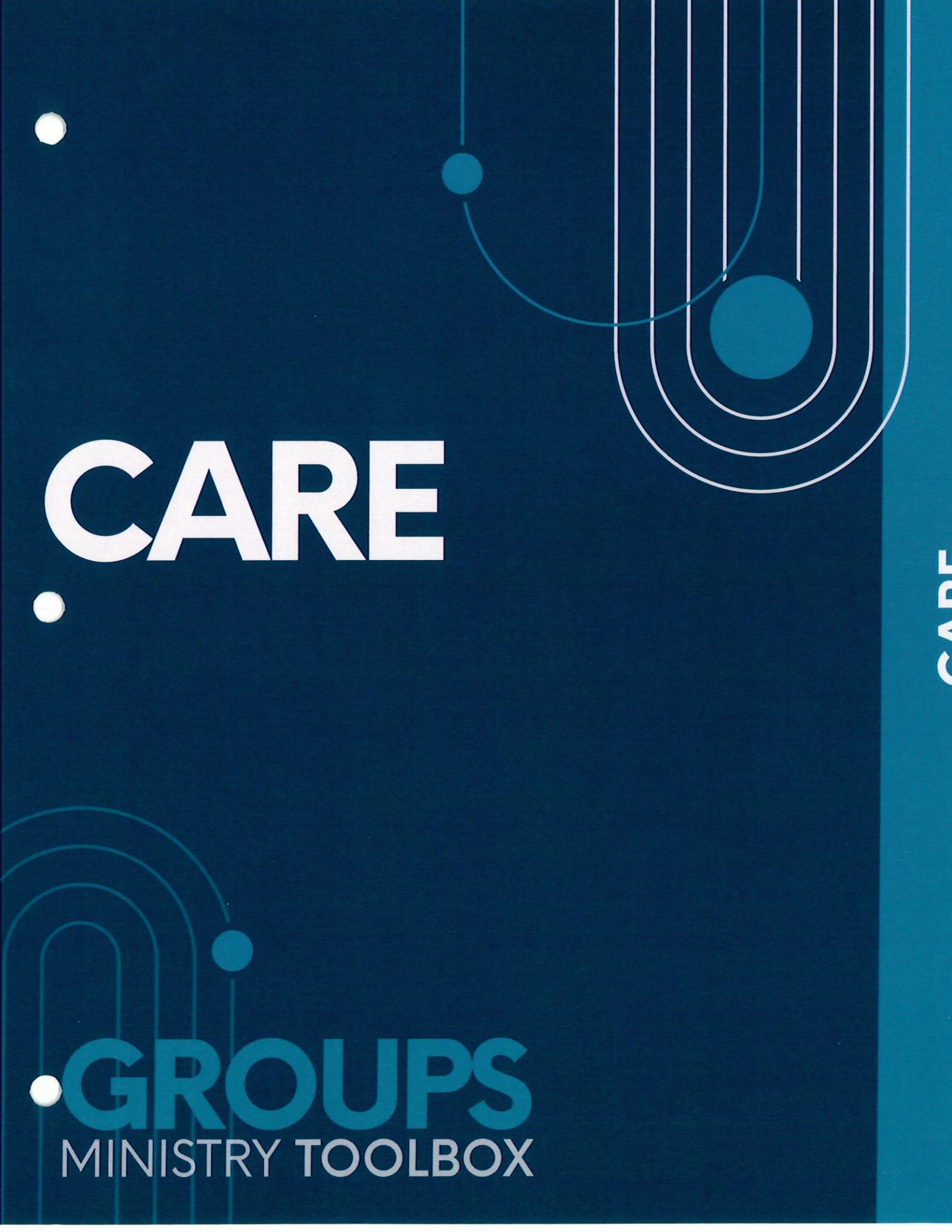
I commit to:

- ✓ Growing as a Christian through regular personal Bible study and prayer.
- ✓ Praying for and sharing the gospel with unsaved persons in my network of relationships.
- ✓ Actively seeking to enroll people in a Connect Group.
- ✓ Being an example to other believers in supporting the church and its ministries through participation, use of my gifts and talents, and sharing of financial resources as the Bible teaches.
- ✓ Adequately preparing for and fulfilling my responsibilities with complete dependence on the Holy Spirit.
- ✓ Serving with other leaders in my area to provide age-appropriate life-changing Bible study.
- ✓ Caring for members and prospects and their families through prayer, witnessing, regular contact, and ministry.
- ✓ Praying for and helping to raise up new leaders and helping to start new Connect Groups.
- ✓ Participating in leadership training to improve my skills and to support and encourage other Connect Group leaders.

Name: _____

Leadership Position: _____

Date: _____



CARE

• GROUPS MINISTRY TOOLBOX

CARE

GET AN A+ IN CARE FOR YOUR GROUP

Ben Baxley

Caring for your group is one of the essential things Connect Groups are organized to do. All of us have experienced groups that cared well, and sometimes groups that didn't care so well. The teaching in group can be wonderful, but if people aren't cared for, eventually our groups will lose touch with them. Conversely, a great care ministry in a group will keep people engaged for the long haul! So take a moment and give your care group ministry a grade.

- F - The class shows up for group, has a lesson, and has no contact otherwise.
- D - The class shows up and cares for the group members in crisis that they know and like outside of class.
- C - The teacher of the class cares deeply for the whole class, but they're doing it all by themselves.
- B - There are other members of the class besides the teacher doing some organized care for those in crisis or those who are absent.
- A - Every class member and member-in-service is divided up on a care group leaders list, is being cared for regularly, and called when absent.
- A+ - Every class member and member-in-service is on a care group leader's list (6-8 max) is being cared for well, and is being contacted weekly.

It's the dream of the adult team that every class member would be contacted weekly. If just that were accomplished, our groups wouldn't be able to fit in the building!

How Do I Organize My Group for Care?

Take your group's ministry list, including homebound, group leaders serving in NextGen, and absentee members, and list them in the following categories. (Connected, At risk, Disconnected, In Service, prospects.).

Divide that list into groups of 5-6 with an even distribution of each category. This will determine how many leaders are needed. Single gender is encouraged, or you can list by couples if you plan to enlist couples to do care together.

Enlist care group leaders personally for each group with the following very simple job description....

Care Group Leaders

- Pray weekly
- Contact weekly
- Celebrate Special Moments - (Birthdays, anniversaries, life events)
- Keep your group leaders and pastors(if needed) informed of needs

Give those group leaders the contact info needed and let them go to work. If more than 2 care group leaders are needed, it's wise to ask the most passionate leader to also be the Care Group Coordinator, who will keep track of adding new people to Care Groups and helping to enlist new Care Group leaders.

I'm praying for our church to be an A+ Care Church!

Additional Resources:

Connect Group Care Roster

Connect Group Care Evaluation

Connect Group Ministry List

Lead Teacher: _____

Outreach | eader:

Care Group Coordinator: _____

Co-Teacher:

Hospitality and

Secretary:

Care Group Worksheet

Categorize every person on your ministry list in one of the following categories:

Prospect: not yet enrolled						
In Service: serving in another group						
Disconnected: rarely or never attends						
At Risk: irregular attender						
Connected: regular attender						

Care Group Assignments

List Care Groups, evenly distributing the names of the people in each of the Ministry List categories among the groups (one group for every 4 to 6 individuals or couples).

Care Group One	Care Group Two	Care Group Three
Care Group Four	Care Group Five	Care Group Six
Care Group Seven	Care Group Eight	Care Group Nine

Connect Group Care Evaluation

Each Connect Group has three primary responsibilities: reach people, teach people, and care for or minister to people. How well does your group care for members and prospects? Respond to each question, rating your group on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree."

- 1. My group seeks to enroll people anytime, anywhere.
- 2. Group members invite and offer to bring others to our class every week.
- 3. My group is always open to new people who want to be a part of our class.
- 4. Guests can easily find my class and know who we are as a class.
- 5. My group uses nametags and other approaches to help everyone feel comfortable.
- 6. My group is organized to discover and meet the needs of everyone on our ministry list.
- 7. Everyone in my group has an assigned responsibility and knows how to do it.
- 8. My group has an effective way of collecting and communicating personal prayer needs.
- 9. My group does both formal and informal things to intentionally build relationships within our group.
- 10. In the past three months, my class has helped at least one person who had a need.
- 11. People in my group are regularly encouraged to serve in areas in our church.
- 12. Every person in my group knows how to share Jesus with a lost person.
- 13. My group regularly prays for the salvation of specific individuals.
- 14. My group makes personal contact with every guest or prospect.
- 15. One goal of my group is to help start a new group in the next 18 months.

PLANNING FELLOWSHIPS FOR YOUR GROUP

"There is nothing in this world that can compare with the Christian fellowship." - John D Rockefeller.

Spending time together, laughing, gathering about a meal, a fire, or even in an empty room has always been one of the greatest joys of being part of a church and has been essential to the Christian life since the beginning (Acts 4:42)

Don't wait to plan. Schedules get filled quickly and before we know it, every bit of spare time we have has been claimed by vacations, work, meetings, events, etc. When planning fellowships for your group, intentionally planning ahead is key. Look for routines in life that work for your group for fellowship. Holidays, summers, breaks in school, and big sporting events are preexisting cultural times for fellowship. Don't be afraid to even plan recurring fellowships every month or maybe once a quarter.

Remind your group frequently once your times are planned. Things slip through the cracks and get lost in the hustle and bustle of everyday life. Don't be afraid to be excited about the fellowship and bring it up. Spending time together should be something to look forward to! Mention it frequently so that those who attend regularly are reminded and so that those who are new or not frequent know about it as well.

Think about promoting outward-focused fellowships. Many times, we feel more comfortable inviting to a meal, game night, watch party than we do church or Connect Group. Encourage your group to think about those on their prospect lists that they could invite. Fellowships are great opportunities to make a next step in caring for those not in church.

Involve as many as possible in the planning and execution. The greater the number of people involved in the planning and execution, the stronger the participation will be. Certain examples of responsibilities can include asking them to

- Bring specific important items
- Be the one to reach out and remind certain people
- Decorate
- Set up for the event
- Be a greeter
- Make a music playlist

If you want high excitement and involvement in a fellowship, get as many to contribute as you can!

CONNECT GROUPS IN THE COMMUNITY

Connecting every generation to God, others, and service

Why should you serve through your Connect Group?

- Build Community with other believers
- Mobilize faster to meet specific needs
- Partner with people who share your passions
- Form relationships with people outside the church

Ideas on serving together:

- Assisting local schools with projects
- Assisting Foster Care Ministries
- Helping our seniors
- Feed Sumner
- Serve Sumner

How do we get started?

- Prayer walking neighborhoods
- Adopt a Neighborhood
- Prayer Map
- Contact Director of Outreach: Brian Smart bsmart@fbchtn.org

Form a strategy.

- Organize a team: 2-3 leaders
- Plan based off skill and availability
- Calendar: Aim for two serve projects a year

Set your calendar:

- Jan-March
- April- June
- July-Sept
- Oct-Dec

Brian Smart

Minister to Young Families/Community Outreach

WOMEN'S MINISTRY IN A CONNECT GROUP

Proverbs 27:17 says, "Iron sharpens iron, and one person sharpens the wits of another." The idea is that regular contact of one thing with another of like nature, or of similar strength and mettle is the best refiner of both things. People of like composition, put together in healthy interaction, are used by God to sharpen and improve one another. There is great potential in women-only and in co-ed Connect groups for iron-sharpening relationships among women.

Here are some ways to build connections among women in your Connect Group for spiritual refinement and spiritual encouragement:

- ***Organize for Care.***

Enlist women in the group to care for other women as Care Group leaders. This can work within a couples Care Group structure, or as an alternative to a Co-ed structure. A class may adopt a single-gender structure for Care Group ministry. The investment of time and individualized attention, woman to woman, will likely help build relationships and will help in addressing the practical needs and prayer needs of women that may not be voiced in mixed company.

- ***Organize for Fellowship.***

Consider women-only fellowship gatherings. Carve out time in your class's annual fellowship calendar for women to get to know one other and gather in activities that, in general, may be more relaxing and enjoyable to women than men. The informal setting of a paint party, comedy night, or ladies potluck can give women a "safe" setting in which to swap stories, fulfill social needs, and mobilize around ministry opportunities they may have an interest in. Often a small, more intimate gathering is helpful to women who want to create encounters for lost and unchurched friends to connect to church. In that sense, single-gender activities can become a helpful front door for gathering new people to the church and your group. You might start by enlisting a woman in your group to plan one woman's fellowship this year and a man in your group to plan a men's outing.

- ***Organize for Discipleship.***

Encourage periods where women gather for growth or more in-depth study beyond the open-group setting of your Connect Group. In every group, there are inevitably women (and men) who would benefit from more intensive study and more personalized help in applying Biblical principles. In short-term study huddles, accountability groups, or one-to-one mentoring, people are challenged by the intersection of high Biblical content and relational depth to become more devoted followers of Christ. You might consider enlisting a woman in the class to lead a 3 or 4 session study on a book of the Bible or topic of interest to the women in the class. FBCH Ladies Ministry can help with that. Short Bible studies are made available for women wanting to gather peer groups for short independent study. These independent studies could double as fellowship opportunities. Another alternative is to identify a woman or two in your class who are particularly mature in their faith to serve as mentors or "coaches" to other women seeking such a partnership. Not only will those mentored be refined in their faith, but those who mentor will be refined in their faith as they serve in this way as well.

Chuan Anderson
Director of Women's Ministry and Prayer

WHAT CONNECT GROUP LEADERS CAN EXPECT FROM ADULT MINISTRY STAFF

1. Prayer support, encouragement, and appreciation.
2. Instructional worker training meetings.
3. Connect Group information for members, prospects, and guests.
4. Connect Group directories printed as requested.
5. Curriculum, resources, and supplies ordered and provided.
6. Office/administrative help as requested.
7. Up-to-date member/ministry records.
8. Names and information of new guests and new FBCH members who need Connect Groups.
9. Work with Media sources to promote new classes/groups.
10. Assist in scheduling & room reservations for class meetings & fellowships.
11. Maintain and record weekly Connect Group attendance.
12. Provide printed Connect Group rolls for groups who do not use online posting.
13. Deposit offering envelopes in Lock Box
14. Record guests & forward contact info to teachers of first-time guests.
15. Keep ministry/member rolls up to date with adds/drops/transfers.
16. Move guests to member roll after guests have visited 3 times.

For Assistance and Information, or to update ministry rolls, please contact:

Sherrie Thomas
Adult Ministry Assistant
sthomas@fbchtn.org**615-447-1317**
Office hours: Sunday-Wednesday

Touchpoint Mobile App Attendance For Leaders

If you are a lay leader for your church, you can take attendance for the classes you lead using the TouchPoint Mobile App. A staff member can follow these same instructions list below. The difference is that a staff member will not have the role **OrgLeadersOnly**. However, he does need to follow the other requirements.

Getting Started

1. Download the **FBCHville App** from the Apple Store or Google Play.

Open the Mobile App

1. Next, click the **person icon** in the middle of the screen where you see **Sign In** and then select **Sign In** on the next screen. See image below. See Options image below.

Note

If you do not remember your password, you have the option to select **Forgot Password**. Then you can enter your username or the email address on your record in the database and press **Request Password**. You will receive an email with a link allowing you to reset your password. Then you can return to the app and log in.

2. Enter your username (or email address) and your password. These are the same as when you access TouchPoint on your computer.
3. You will then have the option to set a **4-digit PIN** number and use **TouchID** (on the iPhone). The next time you log in you will just use either the **TouchID** or your **PIN#**.

Take Attendance

1. Once you have logged on, you will be viewing the **My Profile** screen for your record. Select **Tools > Attendance**.
2. Next, select the **Involvement/Meeting** for which you want to record attendance. You will see only those involvements in which you are a leader. If you have involvements with multiple schedules, you will see an option for each meeting.
3. The Members will display first, sorted alphabetically, followed by any Guests. Press the **name** of each person present. The attendance will tally at the top of the screen split by Members and Guests.

Note

If you need to enter a **Headcount**, press in the top section of the screen. Then enter the headcount total. You can record attendance for those you know are present, and then enter the total number present if you know there are more people in attendance than you can account for. See image below.

4. If you want to **Drop** an existing Member, **press and hold** and select **Drop**.

Note

For anyone in the attendance roster list, you can press and hold and select **View Details** to view more about that person - address, phone numbers, family members.

5. When finished recording attendance press **Back** at the top left of the screen to return to the Attendance list of involvements. Press **Back** again to return to your My Profile screen.

Note

You can return to the same meeting if someone comes in late. Just click the Involvement/Meeting and follow the same procedure as above...depending on whether the person is a Member or a Guest.

Add a New Guest

1. To add a new guest press **New Guest** at the top of the screen when viewing the list of Members.
2. **Search** for the person as you would on the normal application using part of a first name, a space, and part of the last name. If the person you are looking for is in the results list, **select** his name and he will be added as a New Guest to that meeting and his name will display after the list of Members.
3. If you want to make any Guest a Member, while still viewing the roster list, **press and hold** the Guest's name and select **Join**.
4. When searching for a New Guest, if you do not find the person the first time you search, you have the option to **Search Again**, or perform a **Family Search**.

Searching

We always recommend that you search again, perhaps using a nickname or using less of the name in the search. The person might be in the database under a slightly different name or with an incorrect spelling. The best way to avoid creating duplicate records is to search effectively.

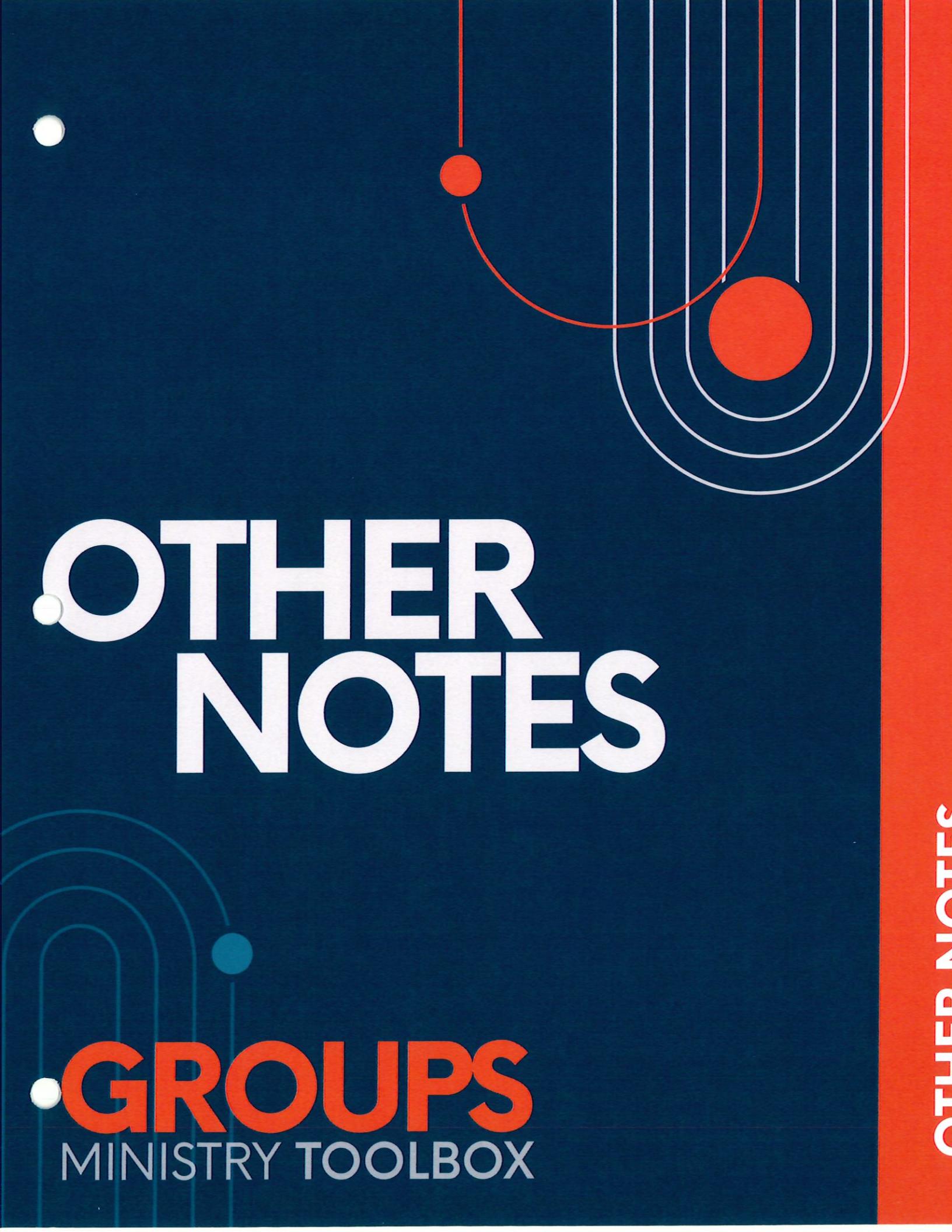
Family Search

If you still do not find the person, perform a **Family Search**. You can search by only a last name and phone or email or address. This is to see if there is anyone in his immediate family in the database.

If you find a family member, when you select him, you will be **creating a new record** for your New Guest. However, he will be **added to the family** of the person you selected. Enter the required information and press the blue **Add Person** at the bottom of the screen.

If you do not find a family member, you can either Search Again (this will allow you to repeat the family search) or you can **Add New Person**. If you add a new person, complete the information requested and press the blue **Add Person** button at the bottom of the screen.

Each New Guest will be added to the roster list under the names of the Members and will be marked present.



• OTHER NOTES

• GROUPS MINISTRY TOOLBOX

OTHER NOTES

CONNECT GROUP LEADER ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

Teacher – Encourages group members and guests to encounter God through group and personal Bible study. The teacher serves as the primary group leader and enlists others to serve the Connect Group functions. Until other leaders are enlisted, the teacher leads not only in Bible study, but also in prospect discovery, follow up, member care, and fellowship.

Apprentice Teacher – Develops skills and serves the group in anticipation of leading his or her own group. The apprentice teaches once every six weeks and more often in preparation for starting a new group. This leader assists the teacher in Bible teaching and group member care. The apprentice may also assist in outreach, record keeping, follow up, and fellowship until other leaders are enlisted.

Group Secretary – Helps to ensure that no one who is visiting or part of the group feels left out, uncared for, or forgotten. The group secretary greets and registers guests and maintains the group's ministry list and records for members and prospects. Reports to group leaders for guest follow up, group member care, and fellowship.

Outreach Leader – Leads the group in inviting and including new people in the group. The outreach leader works with the group to discover prospects and to follow up with guests.

Care Group Leader – Ensures the personal care and contact of each person in the group. The care group leader provides care, prayer, and ministry to 5-7 people that are part of the group through weekly contacts, prayer, and encouragement. He or she reports on absentees each week during the Bible Study session and makes personal visits to group members who are sick or in need.

Fellowship Leader – Builds closer relationships among group members by organizing events that help bring people together for fun and fellowship. The fellowship leader plans and organizes regular fellowship times for the group to get together outside the group session.

Service/Mission Leader – Inspires group members to be on-mission Christians by building members' awareness of opportunities to serve in the church's ministries and missions. This leader organizes ministry/mission projects.

Prayer Leader – Unifies the group in prayer by coordinating the prayer effort of the group. The prayer leader works with care group leaders to gather prayer concerns and reports on prayer concerns. The prayer leader champions the group's involvement in the prayer ministry of the church and in church-wide prayer gatherings.