



# Leadership Handbook 2.0

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Tips, Tools and Training for Group Leaders



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# Welcome

*Welcome to a great team of staff and volunteer leaders that make up our small groups ministry at Eastview Christian Church! We're blessed to have you with us and we're praying for a great season of ministry for you as you navigate small group leadership. As we move forward, let me direct you toward the following areas of encouragement and equipping:*

*First, our staff and your GUIDE are here to answer any questions that arise and to cheer you on as a host or leader. Please know that you are not alone or isolated. There are hundreds of group leaders at Eastview Christian Church that are engaged in a similar journey. Look for ways to celebrate the victories and share the burdens along the way.*

*Second, make sure that you take advantage of the Ongoing Leadership Development opportunities (page 24) that we offer to help you and your group grow toward maturity in Christ.*

*Third, familiarize yourself with the contents of this leadership handbook. You will find this handbook to be a foundational support for you as a leader. Utilize the partnerships we've created for you to succeed as a leader.*

*Once again, welcome to the team! We trust that our ministry will be better by the addition of you! We are confident that you will grow closer to Christ as you are surrounded by this great team.*

*In Christ,  
Jim Probst*

*Pastor of Small Groups  
(on behalf of the small group staff)*

*E-Group*

# Foundations

## 4G Values

Small Groups at Eastview (E-Groups for short) provide the primary environment for the life change and spiritual growth Jesus Christ intends for every person. Small groups are the vehicles we use for carrying out our “4G” values. These 4G values are the foundation for each E-Group:

- **Gather** together at least twice per month.  
*(Hebrews 10:24-25)*
- **Grow** to be more Christ-like.  
*(Romans 12:1-2; 1 Peter 1:14-16)*
- **Give** of themselves in various ways.  
*(1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 4:11-16)*
- **Go** on to impact the world around them.  
*(Matthew 28:19)*

The goal is for harmony between the 4Gs; to recognize the synergistic effect of having all of these values working together for the greater health and effectiveness of the group. We will talk more about how these values are played out in a group setting in the “Growing Healthy E-Groups” section of this handbook.

# E-Group Leadership Support

Small Groups at Eastview are a big deal and therefore we take equipping you as a leader seriously. We pray for you and your group daily. Our staff structure is designed to equip and support you well as you navigate the facilitation and leadership of your group. If there is any type of “Support Chart” that we could visualize it would be something like this:



Your guide is your go to person for all E-Group related items. As a small group staff, we are also happy to trouble-shoot with you, challenge any small group assumptions you may have, help tackle theologically difficult topics, pray with you, visit your group, and anything else that may be a support for you.



# Host, Leader, Guide

E-Groups are a critical component to the success of our church. Therefore, the development of E-Group “Hosts” and “Leaders” are significant. If you are a host or leader it is necessary that you work closely with your guide to ensure a successful start for your group. Let’s define a few key leader roles for our ministry.

## THE HOST

The host has the responsibility of organizing or administering the group in its initial stages. Many times hosts are voted upon by other group members or have volunteered to get things started. Your role is critical in starting a group well! You set the tone and expectations of the group for the first 6 weeks. Often, individuals who begin as hosts become ongoing leaders for the group.

## THE LEADER

The leader has the responsibility of advancing the group beyond the initial 6 week commitment. Leaders complete an application and continue to work with their guide. Leaders look to multiply leadership and empower others in the group. Leaders also participate in ongoing training and leadership development opportunities. We call this training “LEAD STEPS.”

## THE GUIDE

The guide is a leadership coach and an experienced small group leader who is committed to encourage and navigate you through the stages of group leadership. Each new host or leader is paired with a guide. We believe this pairing will create a unique and helpful mentoring relationship that should enhance your leadership.

## Host, Leader, Guide (Cont.)

As a host or leader you can expect your guide to:

**ENGAGE** – *The first 6 days*

*Your guide will reach out, initiate a relationship, pray with you, and help you communicate expectations to your group.*

**EVALUATE** – *The first 6 weeks*

*Your guide will meet with you during the first six weeks to help you assess the group and your leadership. Your guide will visit your group within the first 6 weeks and it is recommended you visit his or her group as well.*

**EQUIP** – *The first 6 months*

*As you transition from a host to a leader, your guide will continue to meet with, encourage, and provide you with resources as your group develops.*

**ENCOURAGE** – *The journey beyond 6 months*

*We anticipate you forming a solid relationship with your guide after meeting together for 6 months. As you continue in small group leadership, we encourage you to keep journeying with your guide. As you journey, your guide may connect with a new leader as well. We hope a “leadership group” of you, your guide, and a new host begins to form. Don’t be surprised if you begin a guiding relationship too.*

Regardless of how you found yourself in E-Group leadership, remember these things:

- *God equips those he calls*
- *Commit yourself to starting the group well*
- *Pray for each member of the group*
- *Pray that God will equip you to lead*

We are eager to see how God uses you to build up the church and His Kingdom!

# Leadership Pathway

We desire to equip those whom God calls to lead a group and we believe that everyone has a sphere of influence in which groups can be started. Because of this we try to make it easy to start a group and begin the leadership process, while providing a few steps that prepare and equip you toward ongoing small group leadership. The following visualizes our leadership pathway:



# Guides

Guides are experienced small group leaders who demonstrate their commitment to Christ, their alignment with Eastview, and their availability to serve, coach, and encourage other leaders. Specifically, through an intentional relationship, a Guide helps a Host or Leader navigate the various stages of group life. This highly intentional one-to-one mentoring relationship can greatly enhance the leadership of the host or leader while expanding the impact of a Guide.

Guides are expected to:

## **ENGAGE** – *The first 6 days*

*It is crucial to establish a relationship quickly. Call, email, and schedule a face to face within the first week of being paired with a new host or leader.*

## **EVALUATE** – *The first 6 weeks*

*Feedback and evaluation are critical during the beginning stages of a new group. It is critical for both the GUIDE and HOST to discuss and evaluate if small group leadership should continue and what skills should be further developed if leadership is to be ongoing. The following are best practices for Guides:*

- *Pray daily for the host or leader.*
- *Have the host or leader visit your group.*
- *Visit the host or leader's group and provide observations and encouragement.*
- *Communicate as needed with the small group staff regarding concerns, victories, etc.*
- *Confirm with the small group staff whether the host should be empowered to transition into formal group leadership. Your recommendation to staff is an important part of a host becoming a leader.*
- *If the answer is yes to formal group leadership, have the host complete the "Leadership Commitment." Please provide a copy to the small group staff.*

## Guides (Cont.)

### **EQUIP** – *The first 6 months*

*After the first 6 weeks are over, guides will provide ongoing connection with leaders. Here are just a few examples:*

- *Establish a pattern of regular connection (meet weekly, bi-weekly, monthly)*
- *Review and discuss the “Assessing Your Group” resource.*
- *Invite the leader to LEAD STEPS and other trainings such as EQUIP, RE-Fresh, and First Tuesdays.*
- *Help the leader develop personal spiritual disciplines.*
- *Encourage the leader to identify and recruit new leaders.*

### **ENCOURAGE** – *The journey beyond 6 months (GUIDE 2.0)*

*GUIDE 2.0 is all about continuing the journey with your leader while walking alongside another new host or leader. We encourage you to keep your regular pattern of connection with your leader or at a minimum, “check-in” monthly. The following are easy check-in type questions to ask:*

- *What is the best thing that happened in your group this month?*
- *What is the worst thing?*
- *What’s next?*
- *How can I be praying for you?*

**Thank you for your investment into this Guide process!**

# Starting Well

How a group starts can determine a lot about the success of a group. That can seem like a lot of pressure on you as the host/leader. Never fear! You can do this! As you start the group, consider the following ideas in order to get your group up off the ground and running.

- Pray. Let's be honest, the most important thing you can do as a leader is pray. We are far better when we realize we are insufficient for the tasks that lie before us. Make every effort to surrender your wisdom, agenda, and authority to God in prayer. He is eager to use you. Pray regularly for your leadership and your group members.
- Contact all members of your group and remind them of the date, time, and location of the first gathering.
- Plan for the first gathering to be a time for people to get familiar with one another. Plan for ample time to share and listen to each other. Using an icebreaker question or having folks answer a questions like "What do you hope to gain from a small group?" are good ways to start. Having group members connect with each other is an important first step in starting a group.
- Keep it simple. Generally speaking our small group formats consist of four things: fellowship, prayer, study, and worship.
- Spend time talking about what they can expect from the group and what the group can expect from them.
- Connect with your guide before the first gathering with any questions you may have.

# Finishing Well

While our hope is that every group has a long shelf life, we know that for a variety of reasons some groups run their course and fulfill their purpose. John 10:11-15 indicates that a shepherd will take care of his sheep, but a hired hand will let the sheep scatter. Finish well. Be the leader that shepherds the group members faithfully through the end of this group and in to another. If you see that your group is coming to the finish line use the following suggestions to finish well:

- Notify the Small Group Staff as soon as you know or decide on your group's transition.
  - *The staff will help you devise a good transition plan.*
  - *The staff will also connect with the new leader and/or members for support.*
- Forecast clear next steps with all group members.
  - *If the group will continue with a new leader, communicate when this transition will occur and look for ways to empower and encourage the new leader.*
  - *If the group will not continue, communicate when the next Connections Event will take place and challenge the group to go together to look for new groups.*
- Evaluate how you as a leader will continue to be in community. Often leaders not only step down from leadership but inadvertently step out of community and into isolation.
- Follow through with everything that you forecast as a leader. Make sure each person has an action plan for continued connection.
- Shepherd your group well. Not everyone in the group will understand the transition of the group or agree with the decision. Make your best weeks of leadership the last weeks of leadership.
- Pray diligently for your group members and that you will faithfully finish well.

# Covenant

The E-Group Covenant is designed for you to use as a way to outline expectations for your group. This covenant helps define what is important and sets boundaries for your small group experience. We desire authentic Biblical community and intentional spiritual growth in Small Groups. We do this by committing to the following:

- *Biblical Teaching*
- *Committed Participation*
- *Confidential Conversations*
- *Encouraging Community*
- *Honest Dialogue*
- *Prayerful Support*
- *Priority Planning*
- *Sacrificial Serving*
- *Increasing Influence*
- *Irresistible Impact*

We encourage you to introduce the covenant within the first two weeks of your group meeting. A copy of the covenant is located in the “E-Group Leader Resources” section of this handbook.



# Facilitator Tips

As you facilitate your E-Group, keep these simple tips in mind:

1. *Pray – God is eager to use you to accomplish His purposes in the group.*
2. *Prepare in Advance – Preview the study enough to confidently facilitate it.*
3. *Direct rather than Dominate – Engage others in conversation and look for ways to incorporate the group.*
4. *Establish Expectations – Use the covenant to express basic expectations for a healthy group environment.*
5. *Facilitate the Group, Disciple the Individual – Look for opportunities to follow up with individuals between the meetings in order to dive deeper into specific areas.*
6. *The Main Thing is to keep the main thing the main thing – Primary goal is to build relationships that are guided by Biblical principles.*
7. *Empower Others – Look for ways to empower others. Recruit participation from group members for various small group responsibilities. Look to increase ownership and participation in group.*
8. *Call for Backup – You are not meant to do this alone. Utilize your guide and the small group staff as often as necessary and then some.*

## Empower Others

We do not expect you to do everything on your own. One of the ways to quickly create ownership in your group is to empower others to take various responsibilities for group life. Use the “E-Group 411” document in the “E-Group Leader Resources” section to help “spread the wealth” of small group responsibilities.

Considering the following areas that you can delegate responsibility:

- *Who will host the next small group gathering?*
- *Who is willing to bring food/snacks?*
- *Who will be the GIVE coordinator, responsible for organizing service opportunities?*
- *Who will be the GO coordinator, responsible for connecting the group to local or global outreach opportunities?*
- *Who will record praise and prayer requests? (Encourage that person to send an email update in between the meetings)*
- *Who will initiate communication with the group in between meetings?*
- *Who do you see as a potential leader capable of leading portions of the small group gathering?*

The goal is ownership of your group by all members and not just yourself. Consult your guide about other ways to empower group members.

## Building Momentum

As your group begins to get some mileage together, look for ways to build on the positive momentum from the previous week(s).

- *Build consistency into the group gatherings.*
- *Allow time for people to talk and catch up.*
- *Allow the Holy Spirit to do His job.*
- *Look for continuous ways to incorporate prayer into the gathering.*
- *Spend time celebrating what God is doing in the group and in your lives.*
- *Be creative and look for new and fun ways to interact.*

# Next Steps

## *FOR GROUPS*

As your group nears the end of a study, begin forecasting what is next. The best time is to begin the conversation a week or two before you end the current study. Many groups will incorporate a social gathering after the conclusion of a study and before they begin another one. This helps provide space to make a good decision about what is next.

While our hope is that every group is a good fit for everyone, we recognize that schedules or other conflicts may prevent group members from continuing. If a group member is not able to continue, you have a significant leadership role in making sure they get connected to a new group. Communicate with your guide or the small group staff about the next Connections event. Steer those group members to the next Connections event. We encourage you to attend with them and help them get reconnected.

Prayerfully involve the group in deciding what the next study should be. It is important to choose a study that will continue to strengthen the spiritual growth of everyone involved. Consult your guide for next study options.

### Suggested Studies Include:

- *Walk*
- *Sermon Based Studies*
- *Recalculate*
- *I Am*
- *Table Talk*
- *Basic Series*
- *Follow Me*

For a list of the curriculum pathway contact the small group staff.

## Next Steps (Cont.)

### *FOR LEADERS*

- *Meet with your guide and determine how your group will move forward.*
- *Attend the annual EQUIP Leader Conference and the Global Leadership Summit.*
- *Evaluate your group using the “Assessing Your Group” resource located in the “Growing Healthy E-Groups” section of this handbook or on the small group website.*
- *Participate in “Lead Steps” our ongoing leadership development training.*

*Growing Healthy*

# E-Groups

# Effective Leadership Development

Our small group ministry is focused on biblical leadership development for our leaders and small group members. Specifically, we desire Ephesians 4 type of leader development, “the equipping of saints for the work of service.” We believe that all members of Eastview should be equipped for the work Christ has called us to do. We desire every small group to equip, challenge, and launch its members into the service for which they were designed. In a nutshell, our purpose for leadership development is to develop leaders who will develop and empower people for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:12).

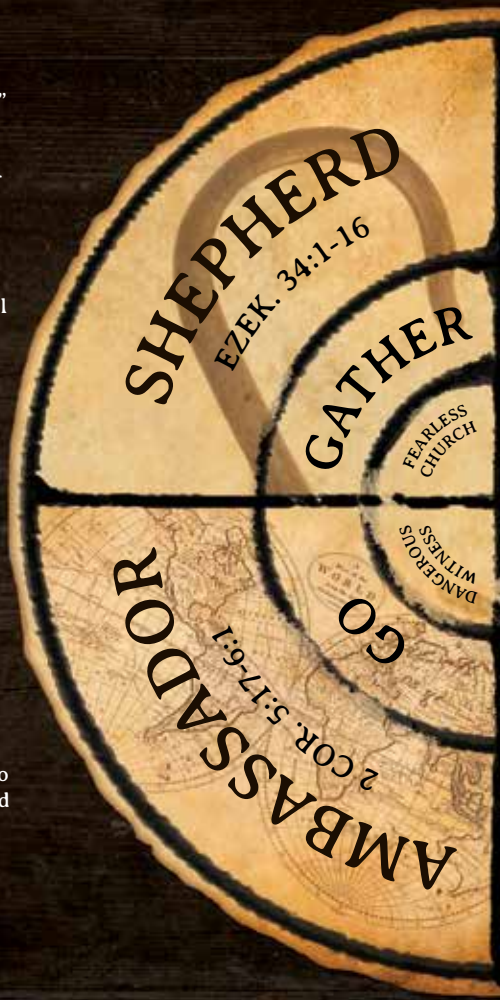
We have a leadership path that will challenge and equip you to grow as an E-Group leader. We call this path “Lead Steps.” In Lead Steps we provide ongoing training through four key leader metaphors. These metaphors connect with our 4G values and align with the church’s vision statement. The following diagram provides the four primary metaphors we use as the basis for your leadership development.

## Shepherd

We cannot be a “Fearless Church” without gathering together. To effectively gather together we need to understand the metaphor of a Shepherd. We take Ezekiel 34:1-16 as a blueprint on how leaders can effectively shepherd their groups. The symbol of a shepherd’s staff stands as a visual reminder of this role.

## Ambassador

A “Dangerous Witness” is not one that talks of Jesus within comfortable circles. We are not called to hold on to the good news that we know and live, but to go out in the world. 2 Corinthians 5:17-6:1 reminds us we are Ambassadors for Christ. Leaders are Ambassadors for their groups by moving them in to action and to “Go” in to the world around them with the good news of Christ.







## Trainer

“Christ Followers” are people who are growing in Christ individually and together. As a leader, a primary role is to train your group members on how to grow effectively in their walk. 1 Timothy 4:7-8 guides us in this role.

## Manager

Demonstrating “Ridiculous Love” involves ridiculous giving. This type of giving is both of a spiritual giftedness through service and of a life on life process. Leaders often are repairing or preparing people for the work God has for them to do. The image of a fishing net represents the mending type of work a leader does within a small group. Ephesians 4:11-16 paints clear pictures of Christ followers maturing in their faith by learning to serve and love others in a ridiculous way.

## Types of 4G Groups

We stated earlier that the 4G's provide the foundation for every group at Eastview. Often group leaders wonder why their group doesn't display all of the 4G's in balance. A healthy group is one that harmonizes and accentuates each G as needed.

As a leader, we encourage you to look for ways to accentuate the 4G's in a harmonious way. In different seasons your group may need to look at giving more than growing. Your group may naturally gravitate to gathering together in fellowship, but could use the push to be more outwardly focused. The point is to know which of the 4G's your group naturally lends itself to and then accentuate with the others.

## Types of 4G Groups (Cont.)

What “type” of group do you have? All groups display a number of the 4G values but a number of groups naturally gravitate to a primary value.

- **Gather** groups tend to fellowship easily and often. Group time is primarily social. As a leader, look for ways to shepherd your group while accentuating opportunities to grow spiritually.
- **Grow** groups tend to dive deeply in to study and desire to attain knowledge of the Bible and God. Training your group on how to grow effectively in their walk is key. Keep an eye on how to prepare the group to give of their talents in service.
- **Give** groups tend to serve and use gifts of service often within the group or within the church. Managing your group well means looking for ways to prepare or repair the group for service. As your group serves be mindful of how the group can also share Christ within acts of service.
- **Go** groups tend to have an evangelistic and externally focused approach toward serving the greater community. As your group seems to gravitate toward sharing the “Good News” of Christ, be mindful of how you can shepherd and train your group towards continuing to connect with each other and grow in Christ.

Each of these types have great characteristics, but can also have limitations. Again, the goal is harmony between all four.

How are you accentuating the 4G’s in your group?

For further exploration, check out the “Assessing Your Group” questions found later in this section.

# Ongoing Leadership Development

We provide a number of leadership development opportunities ranging from trainings to personal renewal times. The goal is to prepare you for ongoing small group leadership while looking to refresh and renew your Christ-following life. Here are a few high level examples:

1. **EQUIP** - *annual leadership conference designed to equip you for the long haul of small group leadership. This annual event is a must for all leaders.*
2. **LEADER MEETING FOR ALL CHURCH STUDIES** - *this is a time for all E-Group leaders to gather together to celebrate and align for an all church study.*

**\*\*We desire for all Hosts/Leaders to attend EQUIP and the Leader Meeting annually.\*\***

Other leadership development opportunities include:

1. **REFRESH** - *a retreat designed to renew your spiritual walk.*
2. **FIRST TUESDAYS** - *monthly leader gatherings designed to connect leaders and provide topical training.*
3. **GUIDES** - *seasoned small group leaders who are "go to" people for coaching and mentoring.*
4. **Personal Touches** - *anytime, one on one interaction with the small group staff.*
5. **"Little Manual for Servant Leadership"** - *a small group study on serving/leading within the church.*

# E-Group Axioms

Along with the 4G's we have a number of truths that are important to the health and growth of E-Groups. We call these our "E-Group Axioms." Here are a few that will be helpful for as you think about leading your small group:

1. **Values Trump Vehicles** – *Variety in the approach to group life is critical with hundreds of groups impacting thousands of people. At the same time, unity of purpose (values) is critical. Alignment with the vision of our church matters. We gather (a fearless church), grow (of Christ followers), give (whose ridiculous love) and go (and dangerous witness). This kind of alignment with values and variety in vehicles is "irresistible."*
2. **Direct Rather than Dominate** – *We encourage leaders to be a spoke in the wheel of the small group discussion rather than the hub. This means to find ways to involve all group members in the discussion. You function best as a leader when you equip members to use their gifts and take ownership in the group.*
3. **Celebrate What We Value** – *We encourage leaders to positively reinforce moments or conversations that demonstrate Biblical community. Remind the group of the growth that has happened by often referring to specific growth moments.*
4. **Multiply the Impact of Key Leaders** – *Look for leaders (we call them apprentice leaders or co-leaders) that are emerging in your group and then find ways to give them more responsibilities. Effective leaders will find ways to grow and launch new leaders.*
5. **Facilitate the Group, Disciple the Individual** – *This is one of our favorite axioms. The leader's first responsibility is to establish a safe group environment and then to empower others for service within the group. The next responsibility is to disciple individuals "in between the meetings" who desire to grow more deeply. A leader may also pair up other group members for this discipline to occur.*

## Developing Co-Leaders

Healthy E-Groups develop leaders from within their group. It's one of our axioms for a reason! The art of developing and equipping leaders within your group allows for your group to grow in multiple veins. Anyone can be a co-leader; anyone willing to develop their Biblical leadership gifts and who is open to being used by God. There are many ways to develop co-leaders, here are a few suggestions:

- *Communicate with your group about the desire to equip new leaders from within your group.*
- *Spend time meeting together outside the small group gatherings.*
- *Pray and consider what God is doing.*
- *Delegate a portion of the small group experience to individual(s).*
- *Consult your small group guide on best practices for leader development.*
- *Use the small group resources available online or talk with your guide and the Small Group Staff.*

# Adding New Group Members

Healthy groups gather, grow, give, and go; meaning they look outward around them to meet needs and see who needs to be connected in groups. The natural tendency is for groups to grow close to each other and not add anyone new. However, a healthy group is one that adds new members at regular intervals. As a leader, you need to determine when, not if, you should add to your group. An invitation to attend a small group gathering can be much less intimidating than an invitation to attend a Sunday service. There are a number of ways to do this:

1. **Leader Invitation** – *Leaders invite individuals or couples to the group.*
2. **Open Chair** - *Visually provide an empty chair at each meeting to symbolize a need to invite new people to the group.*
3. **Organic Growth** - *Ask each member to identify and invite 1-2 people within their sphere of influence who are not connected in a group.*
4. **All church study Meet and Greet** - *Your group can add new members during an all church study.*
4. **Attend a Connections Event** - *Invite 1-2 members of your group and attend a connections event to add new members.*
5. **Host a party** - *As a group, plan a party and invite neighbors and friends to attend. This could be a way to demonstrate what group life looks like.*
6. *There are other ways to add group members. Consult your guide or contact the Small Group Staff for more ideas.*

We all have circles of influence where people are an invite away from entering in to Biblical community. So regardless of how, the important thing is that your group regularly pursues and invites new members to your group.

## Launching New Groups

There is a time in the E-Group lifespan in which a group has raised up new leaders and God has placed on the group to launch and start a new group. Often times a group grows to a “big group” size (anywhere from 14 – 25) in number and there is a necessity to do something to keep the momentum and growth moving forward. Launching a new group takes a lot of prayer and careful planning but it is an amazing example of group growth. Here are a few ways a new group can be launched:

1. **Organic Multiplication** – *Co-Leader(s) takes half the group.*
2. **New Leader Launch** – *Co-Leader(s) leaves the current group to start a new group.*
3. **Current Leader Launch** – *Current Leader(s) give the group to the co-leader(s) and starts a new group.*
4. There are other ways this can happen as well.

When reaching the point of launching, be sure to consult with the Small Group Staff. Then watch how God multiplies His impact!



# Assessing Your Group

As your group spends time together and shows signs of growth, it is important for the leader to assess where the group is heading. Consider some of the following questions when assessing the place/health of your group.

## Gather

- *Do members actively participate in group discussion?*
- *Do members know about each other's life stories?*
- *How often do members interact between the meetings?*
- *Do members walk through significant life events with one another?*
- *How do I shepherd the group?*

## Grow

- *Do members consider group meeting and Bible study as synonymous?*
- *Is the group energized by learning/applying Biblical principles?*
- *Do members eagerly share how they are applying things they are learning?*
- *Have members experienced noticeable areas of transformation?*
- *How am I effectually training group members to grow in Christ?*

## Assessing Your Group (Cont.)

### Give

- *Do members understand the spiritual gifts they've received?*
- *Have members been given the opportunity to express these gifts in the group/church?*
- *Do the members apply financial stewardship in their lives?*
- *Does participating in service opportunities energize the group?*
- *How am I preparing group members for service or repairing them from past situations so they can serve again?*

### Go

- *Does the group regularly pray for the lost?*
- *Are members confident in their ability to articulate the Gospel?*
- *Is the group interested in missions?*
- *Is your group ready to launch out and start new groups?*
- *How am I spurring group members to share their Christ story with others?*

For more assessment questions on your group health, and for suggestions on how to accentuate different values of the 4G's, refer to the Assessing Your Group resource online.

*E-Group Leader*  
**Resources**

# Small Group Staff Contact

As mentioned before, we are here to equip you! Please take us up on the offer to walk alongside of you. Invite us to your group, take a lunch with us, and spend some time asking leadership and spiritual type questions. We pray for your growth and for the growth of the group. We want to make sure you are equipped for the challenge. Please contact the Small Group Staff for more information.

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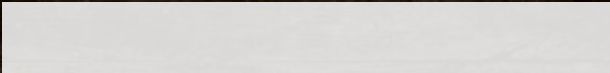
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Easview Funeral Coordinator  
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As a reminder, if you've been paired with a Guide, they are your go to person.

Your Guide is:



# How to Handle Tough Situations

Conflict is a natural part of group growth. As your group continues to meet and get comfortable with each other conflict will arise. This is a good thing! Really, it is. Many members may not have seen conflict handled in a Biblical or healthy fashion before so now is the time to demonstrate how this works. Remember the following:

1. Pray! There is nothing that God cannot help us with. Praying first even if it's a quick prayer in the moment will show a remarkable difference in how a leader responds.
2. If possible a one-on-one connection and a face-to-face meeting or phone conversation is always better than an email.
3. Ask yourself "Is this a group issue or an individual issue?" If it's individual, have an individual meeting. If it's a group issue, then use group time to bring up the issue.
4. Utilize your Guide and/or the Small Group Staff as support.
5. Communicate whatever and everything that seems appropriate. The group is watching and wants to know how things will be handled. When appropriate, communicate what is happening and the decisions that have been made. Also when appropriate, involve group members in the solution process (use caution on this one).
6. You may need to call for backup. We all run into some situations that we can't handle or shouldn't try to navigate. That is OK. Don't hesitate to call for help. Contact your guide or the small group staff.

# Member Care and Continuum

There are times in group life when individuals or couples may need extra care outside of an E-Group for a difficult or ongoing situation. You are not expected to know or handle everything! We have a continuum of member care that provides necessary and significant support for group members. Your role as a leader is to come alongside the individual or couple in your group and help them navigate the proper care. Your group remains a vital element for success in the difficult times your group members face.

Member Care is a variety of supportive ministries that care for the emotional and spiritual well-being of the people that call Eastview their church home. These ministries are intended to help people stay connected to the transforming love of Jesus, even in the midst of challenging life circumstances. Take a look at the Member Care Continuum below. You will find that each step of care becomes more intimate and precise in order to meet more specific needs.

## Member Care Continuum:



## Member Care and Continuum (Cont.)

1. **Sunday Morning Worship** - *Gathering together for worship, teaching, praying, taking communion, and celebrating baptisms all provide a corporate feeling of unity in our faith as well as motivation and encouragement from the Word to persevere in love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:23-25). Each member brings to the Body of Christ a gift that serves a need within our church body (Ephesians 4:11-16) so that we can become mature and full of love. We work together and share what we have so that no one is in need (Acts 2:4-47).*
2. **E-Groups** - *These smaller gatherings are the primary environment for life change and spiritual growth. E-Groups give people an opportunity to be known and to spur each other to grow as Christ-followers. E-Groups are also the primary place where "Ridiculous love" is demonstrated and where the majority of member care needs are met. Examples can include hospital visits, meals after surgery or a new addition, support through major life transitions, etc. When a member has a need that is larger than the group's ability to meet it, the leader helps connect members to other or additional supports in the church. This connection can be done through networking resources such as The Table or through the small group staff.*
3. **Care Groups** - *Care Groups are supportive small groups that are designed to provide emotional and spiritual growth to individuals who are walking through a specific life circumstance. It is during these times that individuals have an opportunity to turn to God and others for specific support and healing. Care Groups are designed for a season of life and are communities where healing can begin. Every care group leader has personally experienced the issues that group is designed to address. Often individuals attend care groups in conjunction to an E-Group. Sometimes individuals step out of an E-Group and in to a Care Group for a season in order to address specific life situations. Contact [caregroups@eastviewcc.org](mailto:caregroups@eastviewcc.org) for more information.*

## Member Care and Continuum (Cont.)

4. *Care Partners - Sometimes a group setting is not the right fit for a season. Care Partners are trained in listening and asking good questions as they “come alongside” individuals going through a tough season in life (Romans 12:15-16). They are not counselors or experts, but have a patient and caring heart for those who are alone in their struggles. Care Partners gently steer people to what is next, one step at a time. Contact [careconnection@eastviewcc.org](mailto:careconnection@eastviewcc.org) for more information.*
5. *Marriage Mentors - Whether preparing couples for marriage or encouraging currently married couples, Eastview has a team of mentor couples who take couples through feedback from a relationship assessment called Prepare-Enrich. To see if mentoring is the right fit for you, contact Sara at [sthompson@eastviewcc.org](mailto:sthompson@eastviewcc.org).*
6. *Professional Counselors - Counselors are trained in understanding human dynamics at a deep level and help people heal from emotional and mental pain. Referrals to professional Christian counselors can be obtained by contacting Sara Thompson, [sthompson@eastviewcc.org](mailto:sthompson@eastviewcc.org)*



# Tips for Teaching God's Word

A word from J.K. Jones Jr.

The initial and supreme ingredients to teaching God's Word are humility of heart and dependency upon the Holy Spirit to illuminate, convict, guide, and teach the Word (John 14-16). There is no room for arrogance and pride. These two ingredients presuppose that the teacher is genuinely living out the Jesus-following life. Pray, pray, and pray like everything depended upon it, because it does!

Study like crazy (Ezra 7:10). Here are several key principles in approaching the study of the Biblical passage you are going to teach:

1. **Consider the context of your passage** – *Explore the immediate literary context, the larger context, and the book's context.*
2. **Understand the words in the passage** – *Words change their meaning, so it is vital to grasp what the vocabulary meant when it was used in that day – good word studies become absolutely essential.*
3. **Understand the grammar in the passage** – *Verbs and their tenses matter; pronouns, conjunctions, etc. matter – knowing the forms of words and their relationships with one another is huge.*
4. **Understand the author's intended meaning** – *What was the author's purpose and plan? Is there an identifiable structure to the book? How does my passage fit into that purpose, plan, structure, etc?*
5. **Understand the background** – *What is the historical, geographical, and cultural background?*
6. **Interpret Scripture by Scripture** – *What is the canonical context? Since the Bible, by its very nature does not contradict itself – what does it say as a whole about my passage? What are the parallel passages?*

## Tips for Teaching God's Word (Cont.)

Once you have studied your passage thoroughly shape it into one “Big Idea” or “Dominant Thought.” The clearest evidence that you are prepared to teach is unity of thought. Nothing is ready to teach until you can put what you want to say in a clear and contemporary sentence that says what the passage says.

This is a huge challenge! Every teaching should be ruthlessly focused. It is the difference between a raft on a stagnant Illinois pond and a kayak on the white water of the Colorado River. What we want is a message that moves along and takes the listener on the same Biblical journey. The Dominant Thought or Big Idea is the teaching in a nutshell. Therefore, this sentence should be clear (subject, verb, and object); correct (says what the passage is saying); concise (not cluttered); and as already mentioned contemporary (builds a bridge between the ancient text and the contemporary setting and has lots of “so what?” in it).

For more teaching tips and tips on how to study the Word of God from J.K. Jones, refer to our online resources.

# E-Group Curriculum and Resources

1. **Study Pathways** - *There are thousands of small group resources available for study today, but not all of them are significant for your group. In an effort to help you wisely navigate possible studies, we have developed a recommended "CURRICULUM PATHWAY." This is simply a three year guideline for growing your group while addressing a holistic approach to the Christ following life. This pathway utilizes a harmony of the 4G's. Please familiarize yourself with the pathway and contact the small group staff with any questions you have. <http://www.eastviewchurch.net/ministries/small-groups/leadership-resources/study-pathways/>*
2. **Sermon Based Small Group Study** - *Follow along with the weekly sermon series in your small group by utilizing the sermon based study guide. These studies are written by a writing team consisting of fellow small group leaders. They are available online the Thursday before the Sunday sermon, and copies are in the bookstore every Sunday. <http://www.eastviewchurch.net/ministries/small-groups/leadership-resources/sermon-based-small-group-studies/>*
3. **Right Now Media** - *Everyone at Eastview has unlimited, free access to our online church video library. Think of this as a "Netflix" for Eastview with all kinds of videos centered around specific studies (including ECC curriculum). All of this can be streamed from virtually anywhere that has an internet link. <http://www.eastviewchurch.net/ministries/small-groups/leadership-resources/rightnow-media/>*
4. **DVD and Curriculum Library** - *There is a large library of small group studies in our office that you can reserve for your group. There is a \$30 refundable deposit for studies that are checked out from this library.*

## E-Group Curriculum and Resources (Cont.)

5. *Harvest Bookstore - Small group studies are available for purchase at the bookstore and can also be special ordered. Leaders receive a discounted price on all small group curriculum purchased in the bookstore. You can work with the bookstore for all of your study resource needs.*
6. *The Table - The Table is an interactive, online community specifically for small group leaders designed to provide support, connection, and opportunities for leaders and their groups. Sign up for The Table at: <https://eastview.table.org/account/login>*
7. *Website - Reference the website for further leadership documents and resources.  
[www.eastviewchurch.net/ministries/smallgroups](http://www.eastviewchurch.net/ministries/smallgroups)*

# E-Group Covenant

The purpose of this group covenant is to outline expectations for our sessions together. This group will strive to provide its members a place where each participant can experience authentic Biblical community and intentional spiritual growth. Please consider and commit to the following values:

*Biblical Teaching • Committed Participation*  
*Confidential Conversations • Encouraging Community • Honest Dialogue*  
*Prayerful Support • Priority Planning • Sacrificial Serving*  
*Increasing Influence • Irresistible Impact*

## E-Group Guidelines

The group will meet on (day of the week):

The time this group will meet is:

This group will meet : *Weekly or Bi-weekly (Circle One)*

The group will meet for  consecutive meetings from:  to

I covenant together with the other members of this group to honor this agreement. (Group members sign below)

We encourage you to introduce the covenant within the first two weeks of the study.

# E-Groups 411

We do not expect you to do everything on your own; nor should you. One of the ways to quickly create ownership in your group is to empower others to take various responsibilities for group life. Use this document to help “spread the wealth.”

**Date**

**Week 1** (date) \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 2** (date) \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 3** (date) \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 4** (date) \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 5** (date) \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 6** (date) \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Location

Time/Group Duration

Our group will meet on the following day and time for the next six weeks:

*Day:*

*Time:*

*Group Host:*

<b>Snack / Drink Provider</b> <i>Including Plates / Cups / Napkins</i>	<b>Childcare Location</b> <i>With Kid Snacks</i>	<b>Give Coordinator</b>	<b>Go Coordinator</b>

A fearless church of Christ followers whose *ridiculous*  
love and *dangerous* witness are irresistible

*Groups*