

Love Church

Group Leader Guide

| “Helping people grow closer to Jesus and build community.”

1. Vision & Heart of Groups

We believe life change happens in the context of relationships. Groups are where people move from sitting in a row on Sunday to sitting in a circle — where they are known, loved, and encouraged to grow in their faith.

At **Love Church**, groups exist to help people:

- **Grow closer to Jesus.**
- **Build life-giving friendships.**
- **Live out their faith in everyday life.**

Every group is different, but every group has the same goal — creating a space where people can encounter God and each other in meaningful ways.

2. Our Free-Market Approach

We use a **free-market** model for groups. That means your group can be built around:

- **Bible Study** – Studying a book of the Bible or a biblical topic.
- **Sunday’s Message** – Discussing and applying what God is teaching us on Sundays.
- **An Approved Book or Curriculum** – Going through a resource that aligns with **Love Church’s** vision and values.
- **An Interest or Activity** – Sports, hobbies, fitness, food, or other activities that bring people together.

Groups should be fun and flow from the **overflow of your life** — not something you feel forced to lead. When you lead out of overflow, your passion and joy become contagious.

3. Seasonal Structure

Love Church Groups run on a **seasonal schedule** so there are clear start and end dates and fresh opportunities for people to join.

| **Seasons:**

- **Winter/Spring: January – April**

- **Summer: May – August**
- **Fall: September – December**

At the end of each season:

- Members can **stay in their current group or join a different one.**
- Leaders can choose to **continue leading or take a break.**
- New groups can launch and existing groups can refresh their focus.

This rhythm helps keep groups fresh, makes it easy for new people to jump in, and gives leaders built-in breaks for rest and preparation.

4. The Role of a Group Leader

As a group leader, you are:

- **A Shepherd** – You care for people spiritually and relationally.
- **A Connector** – You help people meet each other and form friendships.
- **A Guide** – You point people toward Jesus in conversations and life decisions.
- **A Multiplier** – You develop others to step into leadership in the future.

You do not need to be a Bible scholar or have all the answers. You simply need to love Jesus, love people, and create a safe place for them to grow.

5. Leading Your Group Well

Before Your Group Meets

- Pray for your group members by name.
- Prepare your topic, scripture, or activity.
- Communicate location, time, and any materials needed.
- Create a welcoming space — clean, comfortable, and ready for connection.

During Your Group

- Start on time and honor people's schedules.
- Welcome people as they arrive — introductions if new members are present.
- Share a scripture, question, or thought to get conversation started.
- Facilitate discussion — don't dominate it.
- Make space for prayer — share needs, pray together.
- Keep the focus on **growing closer to Jesus and building community.**

After Your Group

- Follow up with anyone who missed a week.
- Celebrate wins — answered prayers, breakthroughs, new friendships.
- Keep in touch during the week (text, call, or coffee meetups).

6. Group Guidelines

- Groups should always align with **Love Church's** vision, values, and beliefs.
- Keep conversations safe and respectful.
- Avoid gossip, divisive topics, or anything that could harm unity.
- Confidentiality matters — what's shared in the group stays in the group (unless it involves safety concerns).

Invite new people — groups are for connection and growth, not cliques.

7. How Groups Fit Into Discipleship at Love Church

Groups are one step in our larger discipleship path:

- **Sunday Gatherings** – Encounter God in worship and the Word.
- **Essentials Class** – Learn the vision, values, and mission of **Love Church**.
- **Serve Teams** – Use your gifts to make a difference.
- **Groups** – Build relationships and grow in your faith.

No matter the type of group, the goal is the same: **help people grow in Christ and in community.**

8. Support for Leaders

You are not leading alone. **Love Church** will:

- Provide training and coaching for group leaders.
- Approve and resource curriculum if needed.
- Help promote your group and connect people to it.
- Pray for you and your group members regularly.

9. The Win

The win for a **Love Church** group is when:

- People are growing in their relationship with Jesus.
- Friendships are being formed and strengthened.
- Members feel loved, valued, and seen.
- People are taking next steps in their faith because of your group.