



## Gathering One: Group Dynamics

### Part 1: Getting to Know You

Spend the opening portion of your first meeting getting to know the members of your group. There are any number of icebreaker activities that you could choose from.

We have even provided you with an “icebreaker ball” – which you can toss around the room and have people answer the questions to help you go further than just learning the names of the people in your group.

### Part 2: PCC Groups

**Pendleton Christian Church exists to help our neighbors find and follow Jesus.**

Our PCC Groups exist as an extension of this vision. We want these groups to be places where our neighbors are always welcome, and the opportunity to discover more about faith in Jesus is always available.

**Our Core beliefs are:**

*We believe ...*

- Growing people change. (*Discipleship*)
- We can't do life alone. (*Connection/Community*)
- We can't out-give God. (*Giving/Stewardship*)
- Saved people serve people. (*Service*)
- Found people find people. (*Evangelism*)

Each of these beliefs are connected in one way or another to our PCC groups – but perhaps the greatest connection is found in the belief:

**“We can't do life alone.”**

We all know how difficult life can be. No matter who you are, what you believe, or where you come from life can be challenging.

There are many scientific studies that have proven that living in isolation is actually harmful to our health.

It's as if God has hard-wired us for community. Relationships are built into our DNA.

We are told in that during creation, God saw what he made and it was “good”.

There was light and it was good. There was the land and sea and it was good. There were plants and trees and all kinds of fruit and they were good. Day and night – good. Flying creatures, walking creatures and crawling creatures – all good.

Then we read this in Genesis 1:26 & 27

Then God said, *“Let us make man in our image, in our likeness ...*

So God created Adam and placed him in the garden ... but there was something different about this part of God’s creation:

Genesis 2:18 – *“The Lord God said, “It is **not good** for man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”*

The only thing that was not good – in the original creation was that man was alone.

**God created us for community. We all need relationships.**

In the wisdom literature of Proverbs we are told that,

*“As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.” (Proverbs 27:17)*

God’s strategic design is that through community and through relationships we would become more like Him. Because God himself is made up of relationships – remember “Let US make man in OUR image, in OUR likeness.

Father, Son & Holy Spirit the perfect example of connection and community.

We need each other – we need these relationships to navigate life and help each other follow Jesus to the best of our ability.

The early church understood how important this was, we are told that “they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayer.” (Acts 2)

Even the author of Hebrews implores us to make sure we do not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but to encourage one another regularly (Hebrews 10:25)

If we want to follow Jesus well, if we want to reach our neighbors and help them do the same – then a PCC group is a wonderful place to grow in connection and community.

## Part 3: Common Courtesies

PCC Groups are all about living out three main ideas: connecting in relationships, growing spiritually and caring for others.

*(Go around the room and have each person read one expectation. Agreeing to these ideas will help everyone get the most out of the PCC Group experience.)*

***(Helpful hint: It is good idea to review these common courtesies when new people join the group and/or you begin a new study)***

## **We agree to the following expectations:**

**SHOW UP:** I'll prioritize the scheduled PCC Group meeting and someone know in advance if I'm going to miss the meeting.

**SHOW RESPECT:** I'll accept everyone without judgement. I'll listen well and refrain from giving quick answers, simple fixes or engaging in side conversations.

**BE SELF-AWARE:** I'll stretch myself to be as open and honest as I can with my perspectives and experiences. I understand that some of us speak often and some remain quiet, so I'll be aware of not dominating the discussion or always leaving the weight of it to others.

**TAKE OWNERSHIP:** I'll do my part to help create a great group by sharing roles within the group and challenging everyone to grow. Participation from everyone will determine the success of the group overall.

**FACE CONFLICT:** Community can be very messy and conflicts may emerge. I'll offer grace to others and will seek solutions to disagreements rather than leaving the group. I realize that God might use conflict in my spiritual formation in some way I don't currently understand. Matthew 18:15-20 gives us a clear method for resolving conflict with other believers. It's important that we all commit to following this example when issues come up between members of this group.

**KEEP IT CONFIDENTIAL:** I'll vigorously respect confidentiality. What I hear and say in the group stays in the group (unless a person is a danger to themselves, others or they are engaged in illegal activity\*).

## **Part 4: Make Decisions**

Here are some decisions that your group needs to make as you go forward:

- Where & When will you meet?
- What study material will you gather around?

## **Part 5: Prayer**