



Discover Fellowship



The Training Center

The Training Center is a ministry of Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas. The Training Center is the tangible expression of one of the three guiding metaphors that best describes the vision and mission of Fellowship; namely, that Fellowship is a “greenhouse,” a “training center,” and a “launching pad.” The necessary link between the greenhouse and launching pad is the Training Center where people are prepared and equipped for leadership in life and ministry.



CORE TRAINING

Core Training is a training track of ten training experiences for everyone at Fellowship. These ten trainings are meant to provide a starting point for engaging life at Fellowship and growing into a prepared and equipped spiritual leader. Whether you are new to Fellowship or have been around for decades, The Training Center is the place to start growing and developing.

BIBLE AND THEOLOGY

Panorama of the Bible

We Believe or Our Faith

Personal Bible Study

MISSION AND MINISTRY

Perspectives/GO Primer (coming 2019)

Leadership Lab

Great Commission: Evangelism & Discipleship (coming 2020)

LIFE AND GROWTH

Align Your Finances with the Heart of God

Re I Frame Family: Marriage and Parenting

Great Commandment: Worship, Prayer, and Spiritual Growth (coming 2021)

DISCOVER

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THANK YOU for embarking on a journey to discover more about Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas. We pray that during this series of large gatherings and small group meetings you will gain a clear understanding of the purpose of the church and specifically, Fellowship's role within the Kingdom of God. While all evangelical churches are under the authority of Jesus Christ (the head of the Church), each local expression of the Church is distinct in philosophy and practice.

Discover Fellowship helps to point out some of our own uniqueness and answers the questions, "Who is Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas?" and "What is the Biblical basis for Fellowship's style of ministry?" Making a commitment to join a church family is a big decision and shouldn't be taken lightly. In choosing a church home, you should consider the following:

- Is Jesus exalted above all?
- Is God's Word faithfully taught and lived out by the church leadership and its people?
- Will I be challenged to grow spiritually and develop in my knowledge, skill, character, and vision?
- Do the people and leadership exhibit a love for God and others (as instructed by Jesus in the Great Commandment—Matt 22:36-40)?
- Will I be equipped and released for Great Commission ministry (Matt 28:18-20)?

The Discover process will help you answer the important question, "Should I join Fellowship Bible Church of

Northwest Arkansas?" We hope and trust that the information presented in Discover Fellowship will help you prayerfully make this decision. And if the answer is "yes," then we take our responsibility to assist you in your spiritual journey very seriously. We want to help you become a fully devoted follower of Christ and realize the joy of being the person that God has called you to be.

PROCESS

Discover Fellowship has two components. We begin with three large gatherings that establish the foundation of who we are as a church. We will highlight some of the distinctives that make us unique as a church. That said, we are not the only way to approach church ministry; we are "a" way and are not in competition with any of the Lord's churches. In fact, we pray for and depend on each Biblically based expression of Christ's Church to reach Northwest Arkansas and the world. It is, however, in the large gatherings that you will hear of our unique history, vision and mission, ministry principles, and philosophy in great detail. In the second component of Discover Fellowship, you will live out one of our foundational values, small group ministry. For six sessions, we will participate in small groups and experience Biblical community. The focus of the small group time is two-fold. First, we hope to create an understanding of some key principles that promote spiritual growth in your life. This process is grounded in Fellowship's membership covenant. Second, we give everyone the opportunity to share their story. Knowing one another well is a natural part of being a family. Our stories create the building blocks for such a relationship.

If we can help you beyond Discover Fellowship, please don't hesitate to ask. We hope you enjoy your journey.

GOD BLESS,
The Elders of
Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas

INTRODUCTION



Large Gatherings

LARGE GATHERINGS

Our Story

WHERE WE CAME FROM: OUR STORY

Late in the fall of 1983, seven different families met to consider a question that many were asking. The question addressed was simple, yet also complex: *“Was there a need in the Northwest Arkansas area for a new church with a distinct emphasis and approach to ministry?”* After discussion and prayer, the families were unanimous; there definitely was a need for such a church. On December 8, 1983, the seven couples met and committed to spend seven days in prayer concerning two questions. *First, were they willing to become part of a new church? Second, would they be willing to sacrificially give of their time, resources, and skills to help the church get started?*

The following Sunday, the families came together and voted unanimously to plant a church that would become Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas. The seven couples first met in the home of Jim and Anne Arkins for worship, teaching, and sharing. Although the church was soon incorporated, it continued to meet privately. Public ministry to the community was to be delayed several months until the proper foundations were laid. Effective February 1, 1984, the first pastor (Dr. Robert Cupp) began part-time ministry with the new church. Beginning February 5, 1984 the church family met each Sunday in the Benton County Public Services Building.

When Fellowship officially opened to the public on Sunday, May 27, 1984, the core of the church had grown to seventeen families and now met each week in the facilities of the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Bentonville. Fellowship was engaged in ministry through small groups that met in homes and corporate worship on Sunday mornings.

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For three years (1984-1987), Fellowship Bible Church met in the rented facilities of the Seventh Day Adventist Church. In June of 1987, the growing congregation moved to Oakdale Junior High in Rogers. For four years (1987-1991), this school was the Sunday home of Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas. Many pioneers would arrive early to transform the Jr. High school into a church gathering place for the morning. Sound equipment, portable cribs, and children's ministry supplies were set up and taken down each week. During this time, additional staff were added and the church began to take on a decidedly "regional" feel. In 1990 Fellowship initiated a building project on 27 acres of land purchased south of Rogers on Pleasant Grove Road. On June 16, 1991, the young church held its first service in the new facility. Since that time, Fellowship has expanded the current campus on several occasions to accommodate rapid growth.

Fellowship implemented the multi-congregational approach to ministry in September of 1998 with the addition of our Saturday Night congregation (now called "Fellowship Mosaic"). In May of 2016 Fellowship implemented the multi-campus approach with the addition of our Fayetteville campus (Fellowship Fayetteville). Fellowship has experienced the blessing of God and enjoyed remarkable growth since its inception in 1983. It is our heart's desire to continue down the path established by those first families of Fellowship to fulfill God's purpose for our lives and to make a difference for Christ in Northwest Arkansas and the world.

WHO WE ARE: OUR VISION & OUR MISSION

Our Ultimate Objective is to glorify God.

Our Vision ...

To change the heart and soul of Northwest Arkansas and the world.

Our Mission ...

To produce and release spiritual leaders who know and express the authentic Christ to Northwest Arkansas and the world.

OUR CHURCH STRUCTURE

Fellowship is a multi-congregational church, Elder-governed and led, staff-managed, and people-driven. All congregations share one vision and mission, identical core beliefs and values, financial resources and facilities, and one strategic plan and process. All congregations are supported by Central Operations Support Ministries and The Training Center.

Currently, Fellowship has four congregations and two ministry divisions:

- Fellowship Sunday Morning
 - Fellowship Mosaic
 - Celebrate Recovery
 - Fellowship Fayetteville
-
- The Training Center
 - Central Operations Support Ministries
 1. Finance and Resource Development
 2. Counseling and Care
 3. Human Resources
 4. Buildings and Grounds
 5. Media Resourcing
 6. Information Technology
 7. Connections

OUR STORY

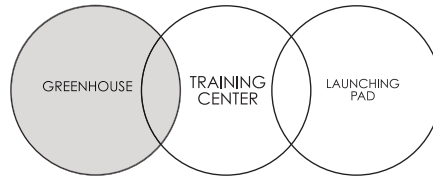
LARGE GATHERINGS

OUR STORY

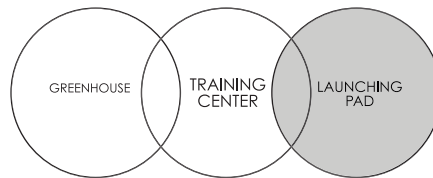
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THREE GUIDING METAPHORS

There are three guiding metaphors that best describe the vision and mission of Fellowship: we are a “greenhouse,” a “training center,” and a “launching pad.”

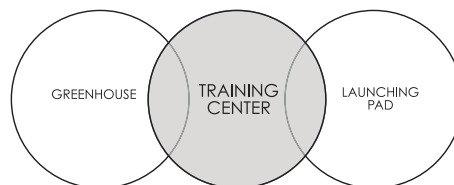


The starting point is the “greenhouse” where birth, growth, healing, and flourishing occur. Fellowship seeks to see life-change in each person that participates in our ministries. The “greenhouse” is geared for new life daily in Christ.



The ending point is the “launching pad” where each person is released to passionately pursue God’s will for their life—to personally embrace a bigger mission, a higher calling, and greater ministry opportunities. Fellowship seeks to fulfill our calling to release spiritual leaders into Northwest Arkansas and the world. We want to be the hands and feet of Christ in a world that desperately needs Him.

The Training Center



The Training Center is a ministry of Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas. The Training Center focuses on developing emerging leaders, partnerships with like-minded churches and non-profit organizations, global outreach, and church planting. The Training Center is funded by contributions from Fellowship's operating budget and from the Fellowship Foundation.

OUR LEADERSHIP

We are governed and led by a Board of Elders. Fellowship practices "elder rule" in our governance strategy. The Scriptures teach that elders (or overseers or shepherds) are responsible for the health and direction of the church. Our church is not run by any one individual, a select few staff people, or by the proxy of the whole. We are led by our Elder Board through the ministry of the Directional Leader. Elders are nominated by the church body and prayerfully selected by the existing Elder Board. The spiritual qualifications for elders are found in I Timothy 3:1-16 and Titus 1:5-9. The church is to recognize those who are spiritually qualified for church leadership. These individuals are then to minister to the church by godly service and rule. Our staff and community group leaders perform the function of carrying out the functional parameters and policies of the Elder Board.

What is the role of an elder? The Bible gives guidelines concerning the functional responsibility of the office of elder.

Biblical Parameters of Elder Leadership

1. To oversee or rule well

I Thessalonians 5:12; I Timothy 3:1; I Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:17

The first function of an elder is to direct the affairs of the church (cf. I Tim 5:17—NIV). In a mutual-ministry approach, the shared responsibility of elder rule will minimize individual weaknesses and maximize strengths. Therefore, the proper administration of the church rests with the

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elders. The Elder Board may choose to delegate their responsibilities to the church staff, but the authority for the leadership of the church remains with the overseers.

2. To shepherd the flock of God

Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:2

A major function of elders is to shepherd the church. "Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care ..." (I Peter 5:2a—NIV). The imagery of shepherding suggests tender care, protection, and feeding. These principles lie at the heart of the shepherd-minister who would serve as an elder. They form a Biblical framework for effective ministry.

3. To be an example

I Peter 5:3-5; Hebrews 13:7

In emphasizing this point, the writer of Hebrews noted the function in this way: "Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith." (Heb 13:7—NIV). Elders cannot lead further into spiritual things than they have personally gone. Each elder within God's church must have the attitude of the Apostle Paul. "Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ" (I Cor 11:1—NASB).

4. To guard right doctrine

I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9

A critical ingredient to effective overseeing is the elder's command of Scripture. He is to be one who is "holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict." (Titus 1:9—NASB). Doctrinal purity is a prerequisite to spiritual health and vitality. Elders are charged with the task of maintaining the church on solid, Biblical ground.

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5. **To confront and initiate discipline when necessary**
Matthew 18:15-20; Galatians 6:1-2; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; see also I Thessalonians 5:12

If the tasks of careful oversight and doctrinal purity are taken seriously, then a proper administration of church discipline will naturally follow. Spiritual discipline is never easy, but it is commanded.

The elders must assume their responsibility for the care of the church. It is no wonder, then, that the local body of believers is encouraged in the following way: "Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you." (Heb 13:17—NASB)

6. **To minister to the sick (or weak) and needy**
James 5:14-15; I Timothy 5:3-16; compare also God's concern for the needy in Psalm 12:5; 69:33; et al.; see also "hospitable" in I Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:8

A part of the elders' responsibility is to shepherd those in need. While there is debate as to whether the "sick" of James 5 are physically sick or spiritually weak (perhaps both), one definite principle is sure. The elders are to evidence their concern for those who are in need by faithful prayer. For certain, an elder's ministry reaches out to those in need.

7. **To appoint and commission leadership**
I Timothy 5:22; I Timothy 4:14; compare with Ephesians 4:11-12ff

As elders oversee and shepherd the church, they will, of necessity, be equipping the saints for the work of the ministry. Not only do elders care for the administrative organization of the church, but they are responsible for the raising up of new leadership as well. Such an ongoing task requires the utmost spiritual discernment and care.

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Functional Parameters of Elder Leadership at Fellowship

1. Sustain the Mission
2. Extend the Vision
3. Establish Yearly Staff Parameters and Goals
4. Evaluate and Approve the Staff Ministry Plan
5. Ensure the Resources
6. Oversee the Health of Staff and Congregation
7. Define the Operating Principles
8. Evaluate the Role and Ministry of the Directional Leader

OUR STAFF

Fellowship embraces the concept of team staffing. We use these teams to facilitate and manage ministry. The staff team, under the leadership of the Elder Board and Directional Leader (who also serves as an elder), exists to serve the greater team of our lay leaders. The staff team is here to equip and enable lay leaders to do ministry (Eph 4:11-12). Our desire is to produce and release spiritual leaders.

The staff team concept also keeps Fellowship from becoming a personality-driven church. This is Christ's church and we are here to serve Him. We often say around Fellowship, "we want our name nowhere and our fingerprints everywhere." This is not only true of our church, but also of our staff. Our staff ministers are to be humble servants.

QUESTIONS

In this large gathering, you will be given the opportunity to ask questions about Fellowship. As you "discover" more about our church (your church), please be prepared to ask those questions.

Our Philosophy

FOUR FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF OUR PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY

1. The Priesthood of Every Believer

At the heart of Fellowship's philosophy of ministry is the conviction that God has called every believer into ministry. As followers of Jesus, we are called to be His hands and feet in this world. We are His ambassadors in our homes, church, neighborhoods, offices, communities, and world (2 Cor 5:20). We desire therefore for all of Fellowship's people to mature in their relationship with Christ, be trained for ministry, and then be released into a ministry that fits their God given gifts and passions. Fellowship is not a staff-driven ministry. Our staff exists to equip our leaders to do ministry.

A couple of key passages for our church on this philosophy are as follows:

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers,¹² to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up...

—Ephesians 4:11-12 (NIV)

The next day Moses took his seat to serve as judge for the people, and they stood around him from morning till evening.¹⁴ When his father-in-law saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he said, "What is this you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge, while all these people stand around you from morning till evening?"¹⁵ Moses answered him, "Because the people come to me to seek God's will.¹⁶ Whenever they have a dispute, it is brought to me, and I decide between the parties and inform them of God's decrees and laws."

¹⁷Moses' father-in-law replied, "What you are doing is

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not good.¹⁸ You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone.¹⁹ Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people's representative before God and bring their disputes to him.²⁰ Teach them the decrees and laws, and show them the way to live and the duties they are to perform.²¹ But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens.²² Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you.²³ If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied."

—Exodus 18:13-23 (NIV)

Implications for this belief in the priesthood of every believer are numerous, but a few important ones are as follows:

- "Every member" ministry. We expect (this includes you!) all of our people to engage in ministry.
- Our staff is an equipping staff. We are here to prepare God's people for ministry.
- We are not personality-driven... there is no rock star at Fellowship. We are a ministry team. Jesus gets the glory and all get their hands dirty.
- The influence of Christ is multiplied. It just makes sense that releasing more spiritual leaders will further extend the touch of Christ.

2. Form and Function

Our philosophy of ministry calls for us to distinguish between ministry functions and ministry forms.

Function—a Biblical responsibility assigned to the church by the Lord. Ultimately there are six functions the Lord calls the church to fulfill:

Functions of the Church:

- Exalting (Worship)—Psalm 95:1-7
- Evangelizing (Outreach)—Acts 1:8
- Establishing (Discipleship)—Matthew 28:18-20
- Equipping (Training)—Ephesians 4:11-16
- Encouraging (Fellowship)—Hebrews 10:24-25
- Empowering (Service)—Mark 10:45

These are non-negotiable and to ignore or fail in any one of these is to fall short of the mission the church has been called to fulfill. The way in which we accomplish these functions will vary over time and circumstances.

Form—the manner in which the function is accomplished.

When Fellowship planted our church, we had the opportunity to sit down with a blank page and ask the question: “What is the best way (form) to accomplish the functions of the church?” We were not bound by tradition or history. We created the ministry from scratch. This is still a value today. Our ministry teams are regularly at the drawing board trying to figure out the best way to fulfill our Biblical mandates as a church.

Many churches, ministries, and individuals have struggled distinguishing between form and function. The problem comes when we become so attached to a particular form of ministry that we begin to consider it a function. For instance, “Sunday school” is a form of ministry used to fulfill the function of “discipleship.” For Fellowship, we do not have “Sunday school” classes. Does this mean we are not a Biblical church? No, it means we accomplish the function of discipleship using a different form of ministry (small groups and mentoring). Pews, hymnals, choir robes, pipe organs, Sunday night services, altar calls, confirmation classes, and community groups are all “forms” of ministry and should be evaluated and brought under careful review. These are flexible while the functions are static. The following passage shows the distinction between the two:

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Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible.

²⁰ *To the Jews I became (form) like a Jew, to win (function) the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law.* ²¹ *To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law.* ²² *To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means (forms) I might save (function) some.* ²³ *I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.* —I Corinthians 9:19-23 (NIV)

The following chart may help in understanding the difference:

FUNCTION	FORM
Timeless	Timely
Static.....	Flexible
Unchanging	Changeable
Non-Negotiable.....	Negotiable
Mission	Method

A few implications emerge from this principle:

- Our forms of ministry may be different from your background. Departure from traditional form does not mean departure from Biblical standards.
- Forms are not necessarily right or wrong. Biblical functions can be accomplished effectively in many different manners. There may not be a “right” way to do it, but many different ways to fulfill a Biblical mandate.
- Since our forms are negotiable, the Fellowship body of believers should EXPECT CHANGE. We want to maintain that creative spirit that is looking to work out Biblical functions in culturally-relevant ways.

3. Essential Elements of Ministry: Truth, Relationships, and Accountability

In each aspect of our ministry at Fellowship, we look for three essential elements to be present. Without these three ingredients, the ministry risks losing its effectiveness and Biblical fidelity. The three elements are:

- **Truth**—Christian ministry is based on the Scriptures. Biblical truth is essential for any ministry to communicate Christ. (John 8:32)
- **Relationships**—Christian ministry calls us to love one another. (1 Thess 2:8)
- **Accountability**—Christian ministry challenges us to faithfulness and reliability. It urges us to live a life worthy of Christ. (Prov 27:17)

What would the church be like without one of these key elements? Let's do some math:

Truth + Relationships - Accountability =
Country Club Church

Truth + Accountability - Relationships =
Legalistic Church

Accountability + Relationships - Truth =
Cult

4. Fellowship Is a Decentralized Ministry

Fellowship's ministry is not centered on our campus. God has provided beautiful facilities that we utilize for our corporate worship services each weekend, but most of our ministry is done away from the campus. Homes, restaurants, break rooms, gyms, office buildings, playgrounds, parks, coffee shops, and many other places become our ministry locations each week. We gather on the weekends to worship and be refreshed by the Lord, and then we head out into our mission field to live out

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our faith. Our adult community groups, student ministry cell groups, men's groups, and college and singles groups are all held away from our campus. We have always said that a non-believer is much more likely to come to a home than to a church.

You could say that this philosophy is rooted in being an incarnational church instead of an attractional church. We are not centered on weekly events that are designed to draw or attract people to the church campus. Our desire is to equip the people of Fellowship to be the very presence of Christ in every neighborhood, office complex, and schoolhouse in Northwest Arkansas. Practically speaking, we gather together on the church campuses once a week. We are then freed up to embody Christ in our communities throughout the rest of the week.

- **Centralized Ministry (Attractional)**

Key question: What can we do/offer to get people to come to our church?

- **Decentralized Ministry (Incarnational)**

Key question: What can we do to enable people to live out their faith in their homes and communities?

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Our Gatherings

CHURCH MINISTRY

Fellowship is structured to be a Celebration/Cell church.
At our core, this is who we are.



CELEBRATION

By celebration, we refer to the corporate worship gathering. We gather the church to worship the Lord and hear from His Word. It is a rallying point for the people of Fellowship which encourages and inspires so that we can go out and express our faith during the week.

Worship defined: Worship is seeing God for who He really is and then giving a proper response.

Worship is not confined to music. Worship is responding to the Lord. Sometimes we respond by singing and sometimes by obedience or making an offering. There are many ways to worship.

Worship is personal. Our time alone with the Lord is an act of worship. (Psalm 46:10)

Worship is corporate. Our time together with the Lord each weekend is worship. (Psalm 100)

Worship is a lifestyle. The way we live, work, spend, and serve is worship. (Romans 12:1-2)

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WHAT STYLE OF WORSHIP DOES FELLOWSHIP EMBRACE?

Often when someone is describing a local church's style of worship, their description turns quickly to style of music. Musical style has been an issue many churches have faced over the years. At Fellowship, we don't focus on any one particular style of worship music in our corporate gatherings. We appreciate and utilize traditional styles as well as the most current trends in music. We have a very broad body of believers that are diverse in age and tastes. The following captures some of our desired thinking on this subject:

BALANCED THINKING ON WORSHIP ISSUES:

Preference Appreciation
We appreciate all styles of music without demanding our preference all of the time.

Freedom Responsibility
We express ourselves to God freely without distracting those around us.

Passionate Authentic
We passionately worship God without the motivation of impressing others.

Excellence Genuine
We pursue excellence in our services while maintaining a genuine pursuit of glorifying Christ.

CELL

By cell, we refer to the small groups that develop within our faith family. A small group is a more intimate gathering where truth, relationships, and accountability are worked out on a regular basis. These take the form of adult community groups, singles groups, student groups (called Cell Groups), children's groups, recovery groups, men's groups, women's groups... etc. Fellowship is not a church with small groups. We are a church of small groups. This is the way we make our large church

small. This is how each person is known and cared for. The essence of small groups can be captured in three key words:

Belong—Healthy community offers a place to know others and to be known in a real, authentic way.

Grow—Healthy community offers a place where we feed our souls with the Word of God and are nourished by love and acceptance from others.

Serve—Healthy community is the place where we are able to serve one another, our neighbors, and perhaps even people we will never meet—all in the name of Jesus Christ.

The strategy of our small groups ministry is called R3 and it involves three concepts:

- **REACH** is the first “R” of the R3 vision and includes the concept of evangelism. We want to share Christ with those who do not know Him.
- **REPRODUCE** is the second “R” of the R3 vision for leadership and indicates the process of discipleship by which Christ is reproduced in another person.
- **RELEASE** is the final “R” of R3. It is focused on releasing people into ministry. Once we have REACHED them with the great news of the Gospel, and REPRODUCED Christ in them by the power of the Holy Spirit working, we are ready to RELEASE them to ministry.

We desire to see the R3 strategy worked out through our small group ministries at Fellowship. So there you have it—CELEBRATION/CELL. At our core, this is who we are. A passage that puts the Celebration/Cell philosophy together is found in Acts 2:42-47 (NIV):

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They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

FAMILY

Another important ministry that comes alongside our Celebration/Cell philosophy is our Family ministry. Fellowship has always been a church that wants to support, encourage, and equip families.

Mission: To help families own the spiritual development of the next generation.

- **Marriage**—We offer pre-marital counseling, wedding services, marriage studies, marriage counseling, divorce recovery, and more. (Gen 2:24)
- **Parenting Partnership**—We believe that parents are to be the primary spiritual influence in their children's lives. Evangelism and discipleship are to primarily occur in the home. The church is here to support our parents and partner with them in the spiritual development of their children. (Deut 6:4-8)
- **Children's Ministry**—Our church believes that kids matter to God. Our children's ministry is passionate about kids knowing and experiencing God. The children's ministry team wants to partner with parents in raising up the next generation of spiritual leaders. The team endeavors to provide a safe, fun, loving, and life changing ministry to our children each week. The children's ministry offers a Celebration/Cell model of ministry each Sunday morning in alignment with our adult worship services. Camps, retreats, and other opportunities to participate are provided each

year. (Early Childhood: birth to 4yrs/Elementary: K - 6th grade)

- **Student Ministry**—Our student ministry believes that students can be world-changing followers of Christ. Our students attend their own worship service each Sunday. Cell groups are also offered in each town for each grade and gender. Camps, retreats, discipleship groups, internships, mission trips, and service opportunities are all a part of this ministry.

CHURCH DOCTRINE

For the full Doctrinal Statement, please see Appendix A.

Core Beliefs—We believe in the:

- Authority of the Scriptures
- Triune Godhead (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)
- Full deity and full humanity of Christ
- Substitutionary atonement of Christ
- Salvation by grace, through faith alone, in Christ alone
- Virgin birth of Christ, His visible and bodily resurrection, and His visible and bodily return
- Priesthood of the believer (every member ministry)

CORE VALUES

Because we value truth, the Bible is our anchor and compass.

Because we value relationships, we love, evangelize, disciple, and serve together in the name of Jesus Christ.

Because we value accountability, we entrust our lives, attitudes, and actions to God and one another.

Because we value the Gospel, Jesus Christ is central to everything we do.

Because we value generosity, we live selflessly through stewardship of time, talent, and treasure.

Because we value life-change, we celebrate the transforming power of Christ.

Because we value team, we serve effectively and efficiently through collaboration and cooperation with others.

OUR GATHERINGS

LARGE GATHERINGS

OUR GATHERINGS

LARGE GATHERINGS

CHURCH PRACTICE

Baptism—We believe the Scriptures command every believer to be baptized after their conversion to Christ as an outward sign of their inward life change. Fellowship practices full immersion baptism.

** more information about baptism is available on our website or in brochures available in the Worship Center Foyer.*

Communion—The Lord's Supper is available each week in our prayer room, in Community Worship at our NWA campus, and is observed regularly (about every 6 weeks) in the adult celebrations in the Worship Center.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

In order to become a member of Fellowship Bible Church, we ask that each person fulfill the following expectations:

- **Believe.** The Scriptures identify the members of the Body of Christ as those who have responded to the grace of God through faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Salvation comes to those who repent from sin and place their faith in Christ's death on the Cross for the forgiveness of their sins.
- **Complete Discover Fellowship.** Participate in and complete the Discover Fellowship experience.
- **Share your story.** All persons are asked to share their stories of how they came to personally know our Lord. This will be done verbally in our small groups as well as in written form in the membership papers.
- **Complete the membership papers.** Our membership papers officially request membership into our family of faith.
- **Commit.** Make every effort to live out the expectations of our Membership Covenant (found in Appendix C).



Small Groups

1

SMALL GROUPS

Lordship

SESSION ONE

Lordship

God wants the whole person and He will not rest till He gets us in entirety. No part of the man will do.

—A.W. Tozer

That's why Jesus lived and died and then lived again: so that He could be our Master across the entire range of life and death, and free us from the petty tyrannies of each other.

—The Apostle Paul in Romans 14:9 (The Message)

INTRODUCTION

Are you a “take charge” person or are you more of a follower? Has that changed over the years? Share with the group whether you prefer to lead or follow.

The topic of Small Group Session One is Lordship. That’s not a word that we use in everyday conversation, but it means “complete power or rule.”

OUR GOD

We serve a God who is holy. God’s holiness means that He is completely perfect and separate from sin. Theologian Wayne Grudem states that this perfection means, “...that God completely possesses all excellent qualities and lacks no part of any qualities that would be desirable for Him.” Consequently, holiness becomes our requirement for how we are to now live our life. God’s words in Leviticus remind us of this, “... **You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy**” (Lev 19:2b).

God is also sovereign. God’s sovereignty means He is in control and is regulating all the affairs in Heaven and on Earth – past, present, and future. Paul reminds us of this fact: “**For from him and through him and to him are all things**” (Rom 11:36a). Man is the created, but God is the Creator and is infinitely all-knowing and all-powerful.

That is why Matthew boasts, “...**with God all things are possible**” (Matt 19:26).

OUR RESPONSE

We serve a God who is perfect in every way and is powerful enough to carry out His will and regulate the affairs of our lives in a perfect way. Because God is perfect and all-powerful, our response is to make Him the Lord of our lives. This means that we respond with trust and obedience to Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. When we live obediently, we are recognizing His Lordship in our lives. We are saying to God, “You have the absolute right to reign and rule in our lives.”

Proverbs 3:1-8

My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments, ² for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you. ³ Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. ⁴ So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man. ⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. ⁷ Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. ⁸ It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones.

1. What are some of the ways that Proverbs 3:1-8 says we are to trust in God?
2. What are some of the benefits of trusting God that you see described in this passage?

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SMALL GROUPS

Lordship

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SMALL GROUPS

Lordship

John 14:15-24

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, ¹⁷ even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. ¹⁸ "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹ Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him." ²² Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?" ²³ Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. ²⁴ Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me."

1. What does it mean to "keep my commandments"?
2. What is the relationship between love, the commands of Christ, and keeping those commands?
3. According to this passage, what is the role of the Holy Spirit in our relationship with God?

Read aloud Luke 9:23

And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."

1. What does it mean to:

deny yourself?

take up your cross?

follow Jesus?

Discuss what each of these practically means in your day to day life.

Read aloud Romans 12:1-2

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

1. What are some practical ways that we present our bodies as living sacrifices?

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SMALL GROUPS

Lordship

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SMALL GROUPS

Lordship

2. What does the transformation of our mind have to do with lordship?
3. We are all ruled by something. The question is, by what are we ruled? What are some things that compete with God for our worship, our trust, and our obedience?
4. What are some areas of life in which I need to learn to trust Jesus more? In what area of my life do I need to be more obedient?
5. What holds me back or distracts me from allowing Jesus to be completely Lord over me?

Each week we will look at how the sessions in Discover Fellowship relate to the Membership Covenant that is signed by everyone wishing to become a member of Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas. While all of the Christian life is related to the Lordship of Christ and our grateful obedience to his commands, three points of the covenant stand out as examples of allowing God to reign and rule in our lives. Those three points are integrity, family, and following the authority of the Elders.

MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

Integrity:

To pursue a holy and pure life, representing Christ in a worthy manner—(1 Pet 1:15).

Family:

To faithfully pursue God's design for singlehood, marriage, and/or parenting as revealed in the Scriptures and explained in Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas' Doctrinal Statement—(Matt 19:4-6; Exod 20:12, 14; 1 Cor 7:25-38).

Follow:

To submit to the authority of the Elder's leadership of Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas —(Heb 13:17).

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SMALL GROUPS

Lordship

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SMALL GROUPS

Lordship

Notes

SESSION TWO

Community

Even in the perfect, sinless environment of Eden, God said "It is not good for man to be alone." We are created for community, fashioned for fellowship, and formed for a family, and none of us can fulfill God's purposes by ourselves.

—Rick Warren

INTRODUCTION

From Fellowship NWA's very beginnings, small groups have been a core value. As the church grew from a single community group into a larger body of believers, the original vision of small groups of believers gathering in a home to share a meal, open God's Word, and process truth and life in the context of authentic, Christ-centered relationships has remained a central part of the Fellowship Bible Church experience.

The Biblical evidence for community (or fellowship) as a function of the church is found throughout scripture. In the very first chapter of the Bible, God says, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness" (Genesis 1:26). We can make two important observations from that verse. The first is that God refers to Himself using the plural pronouns "us" and "our." This is the first hint of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity that we find in scripture. God is three; God is one. The doctrine of the Trinity is complex and is covered in greater detail in Appendix A, within our Doctrinal Statement. It tells us that God, as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, has eternally existed in community within Himself. The second big observation we can make is that we are made in God's likeness. This means that just as God exists in community, we are created to exist in community.

Moving to the New Testament, we see that Jesus modeled living in community as He engaged in small group ministry. In Mark 3, Jesus had become so popular that He told the disciples to prepare a boat

2

SMALL GROUPS

Community

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SMALL GROUPS

Community

for Him because the crowds were pressing Him. But Jesus knew that the best way to reach the crowds was to disciple a few, and in Mark 3 we see these words recorded: "And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him." (Mark 3:13). Just as Jesus had existed for all of eternity in community with the Father and the Spirit, He gathered people into a small community of faith.

At Fellowship, we make it a high priority for people to experience Christ-centered community. We believe that there are three essential ingredients in healthy community: BELONG, GROW, and SERVE. Take some time to reflect and prayerfully consider the following questions which will be discussed during your time together.

Have you ever felt like you were part of a group or a team? What was it like? What made it special? Share with the group.

BELONG

Read Hebrews 10:24-25:

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

1. What does it mean to stir one another to love and good works?
2. How does meeting together help to stir one another?

3. Why do you think encouraging one another is a key part of gathering together?

GROW

Read Colossians 2:6-8:

⁶ Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, ⁷ rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. ⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.

1. What does it mean to “walk in” Christ?
2. How can you be “rooted, built up, and established”?
3. What are some things that growing in Christ will protect a believer from?

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SMALL GROUPS

Community

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SMALL GROUPS

Community

SERVE

Read Mark 10:42-45:

And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. ⁴³ But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

1. Who is someone you consider a servant leader?
What makes that person a servant leader?
2. How could you be a servant leader?
3. How does a small group provide an opportunity to serve?

Which of the three essential elements of small groups is most attractive to you?

The Apostle Paul instructs his disciple Timothy to "...flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart." —2 Timothy 2:22.

1. Why do you think he gave these instructions to Timothy?

2. What are some reasons this exhortation is best carried out in small groups?

The New Testament contains over 50 commands that we are to carry out toward “one another.” Choose a few of the following “one another” commands and discuss how they can best be carried out in a small community of believers:

Galatians 6:2

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

James 5:16

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed.

1 Peter 4:9

Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.

Ephesians 4:2

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

Hebrews 3:13

But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

2

SMALL GROUPS

Community

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SMALL GROUPS

Community

1 Peter 3:8

Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble.

1 John 4:11-12

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

What are some places outside of church that people are looking for community? Will these places offer them a chance to belong, grow, and serve? Why or why not?

How could a community group or other small group be an effective tool for evangelism?

How could a community group on your street change the spiritual temperature of your neighborhood?

This lesson has attempted to demonstrate how community, as expressed through small groups, accomplishes two of our Membership Covenant points: Participation and Care. It is our prayer that members of Fellowship accept the challenge of living life in Biblical community.

MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

Participation:

To trust and support the mission, vision, strategies, and philosophy of Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas through active and consistent involvement.
—(Phil 1:3-5)

Care:

To take responsibility for personally meeting the needs of others within the church, the community, and the world.—(2 Cor 1:4)

2

SMALL GROUPS

Community

3

SMALL GROUPS

Growth

SESSION THREE

Growth

God wants us to grow up, to know the whole truth and tell it in love.

—The Apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:15 (The Message)

You have to do your own growing no matter how tall your grandfather was.

—Abraham Lincoln

INTRODUCTION

When you plant a vegetable garden or a flower bed, what do you expect? You expect vegetable plants to produce vegetables and flowering plants to produce flowers! You expect them to grow. What about your investment account? It's not a guarantee, unfortunately, but when you invest, you expect your money to grow. Same goes with a new puppy; you expect it to grow into an adult dog. If something is healthy, then we expect it to grow and mature.

What about our Christian lives? Jesus told Nicodemus that to enter into a relationship with Him was to be born again (John 3:1-8). Obviously what you have after a birth is a newborn baby. So it is with a new believer; we have an infant in Christ. In fact, Peter writing to the early church compared them to "newborn infants" and advised them to "long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation."

Fellowship is committed to helping people grow spiritually. In fact, our members commit themselves to seek spiritual growth throughout their lives. In this lesson we will look at what spiritual growth is and how we can pursue it.

How have you grown or changed in the last year? The last five years? Share with the group.

In the letters that Peter wrote to the early churches he talked a lot about spiritual growth. It was a topic that was very important to him. Peter gives a detailed description of what spiritual growth is in his second letter. **Look at 2 Peter 1:3-8:**

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, ⁴ by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. ⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, ⁶ and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, ⁷ and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. ⁸ For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. In the passage above, what are the provisions that make spiritual growth possible? What results of spiritual growth are listed in verses 5-8?
2. According to verse 8, why is it important that these qualities “are yours and are increasing” in your life?

3

SMALL GROUPS

Growth

3

SMALL GROUPS

Growth

3. Which of these qualities are increasing in your life right now? Which of these qualities do you sense need to increase?

Before something can grow, it must be alive.

Look at 1 John 5:11-12:

And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

Based on these verses, what would you say is the first thing that must happen for someone to grow spiritually?

The writer to the Hebrews used the metaphor of spiritual milk in Hebrews 5:12-14:

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, ¹³for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

The writer to the Hebrews says that we should not stay on milk! We, like a child, should progress to solid food.

1. What does this passage say “trains” our powers of discernment (verse 14)?

2. In your experience, what is spiritual milk and what is solid food? Which do you desire at this stage in your spiritual life and why?

So, if we are all in agreement that God expects us to grow spiritually, and we all want to grow, the big question that remains is “HOW?” The answer to that question is surprisingly simple. There are three basic spiritual practices (also called “disciplines”) that are key to your growth. Think of these three habits as eating, breathing, and exercising.

By eating, we mean regular intake of God’s Word, the Bible. **Look together at 2 Timothy 3:16-17:**

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,¹⁷ that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

1. How does scripture equip you for every good work?
2. What are some ways that you have seen the profitability of God’s Word in your own life?

3

SMALL GROUPS

Growth

3

SMALL GROUPS

Growth

After eating comes breathing, which refers to prayer and confession of sin. When we “breathe” spiritually, we exhale confession and agree with the Lord that He has forgiven our sin. **Review 1 John 1:9:**

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

We “inhale” the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit, just as we are commanded in Ephesians 5:18 which says, “*be filled with the Spirit.*”

Look together at the promises of 1 John 5:14-15 and James 5:16.

And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. ¹⁵ And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him. —1 John 5:14-15

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. —James 5:16

1. How is spiritual breathing similar to physical breathing?
2. How does confession of sin restore our fellowship with God? With others?

The third spiritual practice that leads to growth is exercise, which is when we work out our spiritual muscles by serving. Service takes on many forms and God has gifted His people, the Church, with various gifts to carry out the tasks He has assigned for us (Ephesians 4:1-16). As Paul wrote the Church at Colossae in Colossians 1:10:

...walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

1. How is serving related to walking in a manner worthy of the Lord?

One of the values of a small group is the ability to process challenging issues together, in order to ascertain the best ideas or solutions. Take some time to discuss answers to the following questions:

1. These three habits are presented in order: studying the Word, prayer, and service. Why do you think they are in this order?
2. How are they connected to one another?
3. What are some good ideas for maintaining a consistent practice for each of these three habits?

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SMALL GROUPS

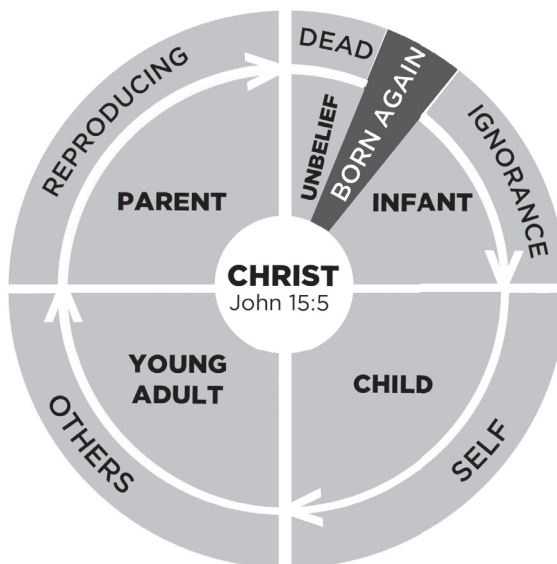
Growth

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SMALL GROUPS

Growth

Look at the figure below, showing the stages of spiritual development.



Take some time for honest self-assessment.

1. Where are you on this diagram?
2. Where do you want to be?
3. What are some things you need to commit to the Lord to do to move to the next quadrant on this diagram?

4. How can your group help you in the growth journey?

If you are comfortable sharing with the group, discuss what you feel the Lord is impressing on your heart when it comes to spiritual growth. Fellowship asks members to commit to a lifelong pursuit of spiritual growth. This is reflected in our Membership Covenant under “Maturity” where we are challenged to follow after Jesus and live obediently to the Bible.

MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

Maturity:

To endeavor to be a maturing disciple of Christ, continually pursuing spiritual growth. —(Col 2:6-7)

3

SMALL GROUPS

Growth

4

SMALL GROUPS

Mission

SESSION FOUR

Mission

As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.
—Jesus in John 17:18

Our mission flows from and participates in the mission of God.
—Christopher J.H. Wright

INTRODUCTION

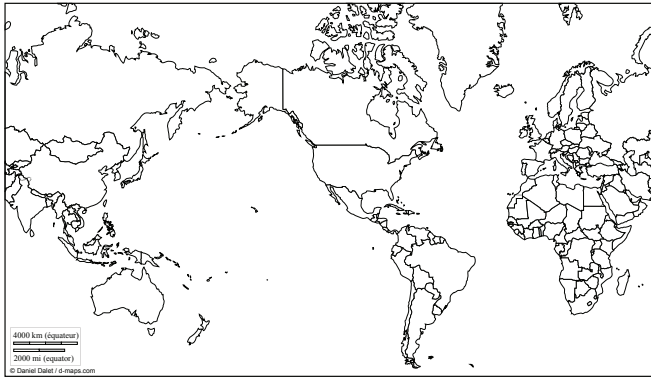
Rick Warren, in his book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, rightly stated, “You were made for mission.” The question that everyone asks is, “What is my mission?” Unfortunately, we have at times attempted to answer this question with two basic misunderstandings. First, we have answered without understanding God’s overall mission. Second, we have answered with a “self-centered” focus.

Regarding the first misunderstanding, it is clear from scripture what God’s mission is all about. From beginning to end, from the Old Testament to the New Testament, God is working to draw people to Himself. Scripture calls this reconciliation, which is God’s removal of opposition and the restoration of fellowship between God and mankind. This effort led to Jesus’ saving work on the Cross whereby Jesus took on all sin and became the way of reconciliation. God wants all of His own to experience this act of redemption and He has kindly allowed His people to participate in this effort.

The second misunderstanding has created equal confusion as well. It is not unusual for Christians to stop short of embracing the mission because we believe that a relationship with Christ is focused on ourselves and not on God and His mission.

Our mindset in the west is all too individualistic and we tend to not always think about others around us or around the world. Don’t believe me? Look at the map

and notice where the United States is located. Right in the center! Ironically, in order to do that, one has to divide Europe and Asia in half. Pastor David Platt addresses this very thing: “Somewhere along the way we had missed what is radical about our faith and replaced it with what is comfortable. We were settling for a Christianity that revolves around catering to ourselves when the central message of Christianity is actually about abandoning ourselves.”



Christopher J.H. Wright provides a helpful definition of mission when he writes, “Fundamentally, our mission (if it is biblically informed and validated) means our committed participation as God’s people, at God’s invitation and command, in God’s own mission within the history of God’s world for the redemption of God’s creation”—(*The Mission of God*). We glorify God when we obediently participate in His mission.

We see this theme of God’s mission in Jesus’ final command to His followers to “make disciples” (Matt 28:19). Fellowship seriously embraces this idea as we seek to establish and equip the Body of Christ to be trained and released to live for Christ. Fellowship’s mission statement, “to produce and release spiritual leaders who know and express the authentic Christ to Northwest Arkansas and the world” is nothing less than a restatement of The Great Commission found in Matthew 28.

4

SMALL GROUPS

Mission

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SMALL GROUPS

Mission

Why is it important for an organization to know their mission and purpose? What about an individual?

Dallas Willard said, "The gospel means that this universe is a perfectly safe place for you to be." What does that statement mean to you? How does it relate to the mission of the church?

Read Matthew 28:18-20 and answer the questions that follow:

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ 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, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

1. What are some examples of people being given authority today?
2. What claim does Jesus make in verse 18? Why is this significant to us?

3. Of the four things we are commanded to do in verse 19, what observations can you make regarding their meaning?

4. What is the promise that Jesus makes in verse 20? Why is this significant to us?

John 17 contains Jesus' priestly prayer for His disciples as He readies to depart and leave them behind. **Read John 17:13–21** and answer the questions that follow:

But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. ¹⁴ I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸ As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. ²⁰ "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

4

SMALL GROUPS

Mission

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SMALL GROUPS

Mission

1. In verses 14-16, how does Jesus describe the disciples' relationship with the world? What does this mean in practical terms?
2. What does Jesus now in turn do with His disciples? For what purpose?
3. What does Jesus say He does for His disciples? Why does He say He does these things?

At Fellowship, we believe that each follower of Jesus is called to be a spiritual leader. Spiritual leadership can be described in the simple terms REACH, REPRODUCE, and RELEASE. We refer to this as R3 Leadership. The whole idea of "reach" is evangelism, whereby we "reach" others for Christ. Wherever we go, whomever we encounter, we seek to intentionally proclaim and demonstrate Jesus for the purpose of bringing them to a saving encounter with Jesus, the Redeemer. (For further study on the Gospel, review 1 Corinthians 15:1-8.)

Review Acts 1:8 together:

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

What is Jesus commanding us to do? To what are we commanded to be “witnesses”? What is significant about the geographical references given?

Just as Jesus had modeled discipleship with His twelve men, Paul demonstrated how to disciple someone with the young man, Timothy.

Read 2 Timothy 2:1-2:

“You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, ² and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

1. In this passage, how many generations of disciples are referenced by Paul? Why is this significant?
2. What is Paul’s charge to Timothy? What is the charge to the “faithful man”?

The final element of spiritual leadership is the idea of being “released”—to engage in a Holy Spirit empowered ministry of discipleship. The specifics of your ministry are based on multiple factors in your life. Your passions, location, spheres of influence, job, and spiritual giftedness all factor into how you participate in God’s mission through The Great Commission.

4

SMALL GROUPS

Mission

4

SMALL GROUPS

Mission

Read 2 Corinthians 5:18-21:

"All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

1. Why is it significant that we are called to be ambassadors? How does this relate to God's mission?
2. How can small groups fit into this idea of Great Commission ministry?
3. Who does God invite to be a part of the Great Commission? Why is this important?

4. Who is on your heart for Heaven? Are there barriers that keep you from sharing your faith with someone else? If so, what are they? How can they be removed?

5. Paul was investing in Timothy. Who is your Timothy? Do you have someone in mind that you can intentionally spend time with for the purpose of growing him/her in Christ?

6. Are you making use of your gifts, time, and priorities to be released for ministry? If not, what is holding you back?

Pray for insight regarding how you can be part of God's mission. Seek guidance from a trusted or more mature Christian. Your Discover Fellowship leader is happy to help you find the answers to these questions. Members of Fellowship accept the challenge to play their part in fulfilling God's mission. This is reflected in the Membership Covenant point on "Ministry."

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Mission

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SMALL GROUPS

Mission

MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

Ministry:

To discover and utilize personal spiritual gifts in order to influence and serve others within the church, the community, and the world.—(Eph 4:11-12)

SESSION FIVE

Humility

Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less.
—C.S. Lewis

Pride must die in you, or nothing of heaven can live in you.
—Andrew Murray

INTRODUCTION

At Fellowship we talk a lot about leadership. Our mission statement says that we are to “produce and release spiritual leaders who know and express the authentic Christ to Northwest Arkansas and the world.” What kind of spiritual leader can express the authentic Christ? Only a humble servant-leader can authentically express Jesus Christ.

The theme of humility appears almost 100 times in the Bible. When we consider who we are in light of who God is, the result is humble worship. In the economy of Christ, the exalted are humbled, and the humble are exalted (Luke 14:11). As we encounter the topic of humility, service, and giving, allow the Lord to speak into your heart and mind about all of the subjects we have covered so far and how they are all undergirded by humility.

Who is the most humble person you have known? What was it about that person that makes them come to mind when you think of genuine humility?

Jesus knew the disciples had been arguing among themselves as they walked along the road. Once they arrived at their destination, He confronted them about it.

And they came to Capernaum. And when he was in the house he asked them, “What were you discussing on the way?”³⁴ But they kept silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest.

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SMALL GROUPS

Humility

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SMALL GROUPS

Humility

³⁵ And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all."—Mark 9:33-35

1. How does Jesus define greatness?
2. In what way would you say that Jesus' definition of greatness is different from the world's definition of greatness?

Paul encouraged the church at Philippi to have a certain attitude toward each other in Philippians 2:3-8:

Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

1. In what ways do Paul's encouragements run counter to the values of our culture?

2. How is Jesus an example of living humbly?

3. What does it mean to have the mind of Christ? What do verses 6-8 tell you about the attitude of Jesus?

Have someone in your group **read aloud John 13:3-8:**

Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, ⁴ rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. ⁵ Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. ⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" ⁷ Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." ⁸ Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me."

1. Take a moment and imagine Jesus Christ kneeling at your feet with a basin of water, ready to wash your feet. How does that make you feel?

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Humility

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Humility

Have someone else continue the account in John 13 reading verses 12-16:

When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you?"¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am.¹⁴ If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.¹⁶ Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.

2. What lesson did Jesus want the disciples to learn from this experience?

3. What are some ways we "wash feet" today? How can we practically follow Jesus' example of being a servant?

Besides service, another grace that a humble spirit allows us to enjoy is the grace of giving. Paul wrote this passage about the Macedonian church (which was very poor) and their generous gift to the Jerusalem church which had been hit hard by a famine.

Have someone **read 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 out loud:**

The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷ Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.

1. What does this passage tell you about giving? What does it tell you about generosity?
2. Why do you think humility is connected to generosity?
3. Is giving a heart issue or a checkbook issue? Explain your answer.

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Humility

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Humility

In 1 Peter 2:16, Peter writes "Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God."

1. What are some things we can do to live as servants of God?
2. How does the freedom we have in Christ allow us to happily live as servants of others? Why is "freedom" necessary for humility, serving, and giving?

James 2:15-16 speaks of the connection between service and giving:

If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that?

And Acts 20:35 says that Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

1. How are generosity and service tied to humility? Where is the Lord calling you to die to self and be more humble?

2. How is the Lord convicting you about your need to give? Is it in terms of your time, your talent, or your treasure?

Worship and giving flow from a humble heart that is grateful for what God has given in Jesus Christ. Humility corresponds with our Membership Covenant Point on “Support.”

MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

Support:

To support, through worshipful giving, the financial obligations and commitments of the church by practicing generosity and Biblical stewardship.
—(2 Cor 8:7)

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Humility

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SESSION SIX

Next

It's time to say goodbye, but I think goodbyes are sad and I'd much rather say hello. Hello to a new adventure.
—Ernie Harwell

We have reached the final step of our journey in Discover Fellowship. Our hope and prayer for people who participate in Discover Fellowship is that they grow in their faith and knowledge of Jesus Christ to His honor and glory. We want everyone to find their place to belong, grow, and serve in His Kingdom and in His church. Whether or not the Holy Spirit leads you to join Fellowship, we hope this experience has been edifying for you.

This final session of Discover Fellowship is designed to allow you to tie up any loose ends that remain from your previous five sessions of small group engagement. If anyone in your group has not shared his or her story yet, this is the time! If there was a topic you hoped to discuss or a question that never was satisfactorily answered, this is a great time to bring it up. If you are wondering about something, chances are others in your group are considering the same question, so don't be shy about asking.

WHAT'S NEXT?

As Discover Fellowship comes to a close, new opportunities await you. If you are planning to continue to call Fellowship your church home, we hope that you will participate in a small group. Your Discover Fellowship leader will have more information for you about plugging into community group, women's group, men's group, or another Fellowship small group opportunity that fits your needs. In many cases, a Discover Fellowship group will transition into a Fellowship Community Group, keeping most of the members together. If you are interested in that option with this group, please let your leader know.

Some will choose to join Fellowship. Now that you have completed Discover Fellowship, all that remains is for you to write down your story on your membership papers and sign the Member's Covenant. You can do this now or at any point in the future.

Some will choose not to join Fellowship but continue to attend. We would urge these folks to get into a small group and to continue to pray and seek the Lord's guidance about joining the church. Others will find that Fellowship is not the right fit for them. We would love to help you find a church that best suits your needs and allows you to fulfill God's plan for you.

CELEBRATE

Celebration is a spiritual discipline in which we recognize God's good gifts to us and respond with joy and gratitude. Communion is an act of obedience, celebration, and worship. We suggest finishing your Discover Fellowship experience by celebrating Communion. See Appendix D for a simple guide to celebrating Communion in a small group.

CONCLUSION

Much grace to you as you continue your own journey with Christ. We close with the words of the Apostle Paul:

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."—Romans 15:13 (NIV)

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APPENDIX A

Doctrinal Statement

THE SCRIPTURES...

We believe that the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments are verbally inspired of God, in whole and in part, error-free in the original writings and the supreme authority of faith and practice for the believer in Jesus Christ. We further believe that there is but one true interpretation of any Biblical passage and this is only found when one accurately applies the literal-grammatical-historical method of interpretation. (Psalm 119:160; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Hebrews 1:1-2, 4:12)

GOD...

We believe there is but one living and true God who is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable. We further believe that God is one in essence while existing in three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Though each person of the Godhead possesses precisely the same nature and attributes, each function differently in respect to God's purposes and dealings with man. (Deuteronomy 4:39; 6:4; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14)

THE FATHER...

The first person of the Trinity orders and directs all things according to His own purpose, pleasure, and grace. The Father is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption. He has decreed all things that come to pass for His own glory. He graciously involves Himself in the affairs of men, hears and answers prayer, and saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ. (2 Chronicles 29:11; Psalm 103:19; Matthew 6:9; John 5:19-24; Ephesians 1:2-6)

THE SON...

The second person of the Trinity is both the eternal Son of God and virgin-born Son of man. Jesus Christ,

fully God and fully man, surrendered nothing of His deity during His earthly life. Having led a sinless life, He satisfied the Father's justice concerning sin by His substitutionary death. We believe in His bodily resurrection, His physical ascension, and His visible return to earth to establish His earthly kingdom. (John 1:14-18; Acts 1:11; Romans 3:24-26; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 2:17-18; Revelation 20:11-15)

THE HOLY SPIRIT...

The third person of the Trinity executes the will of God in the world of men. It is the Holy Spirit who applies the salvation that Jesus Christ secured through His death on the Cross. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. It is the Holy Spirit who empowers the church to live a lifestyle pleasing to God, endowing it with special gifts which equip believers to accomplish distinct ministries, planned beforehand by God the Father. (John 3:1-8; 15-16; 16:4-15; 1 Corinthians 12; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 1:13-14; 5:18-21)

MAN...

We believe that man was directly created in the image of God to enjoy His fellowship and to fulfill God's will on earth. Man sinned by voluntary act of personal disobedience to the will of God; as a result, all men are spiritually dead and subject to the certainty of physical death. The fall of man was a non-repeatable historical fact; the effects of which are transmitted to all men, each of whom is born with a sinful nature and sins habitually in thought, word, and deed. (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7; 3:3-4; Romans 1:18-32; 3:10-23; Ephesians 2:1-3)

SALVATION...

We believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins as the only sufficient, substitutionary sacrifice. All who believe in Him are declared justified by the Father on the grounds of Jesus' death and resurrection. All who receive the Lord Jesus Christ by grace through faith have been regenerated by and baptized in the Holy Spirit. They



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become, thereby, the children of God, forever, and members of the one true Church, the universal Body of Christ. This salvation will result in righteous living and good works as the believer submits his life to the control of the Holy Spirit who directs the life of the believer in harmony with the Word of God. (John 1:12; 3:16; 5:24; 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:21-26; 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; Titus 3:4-7; Hebrews 10:10-12; 1 John 5:11-13)

THE CHURCH...

We believe that all who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit belong to the one true universal Church and are directed by the Scriptures to associate themselves in local, visible churches. The local church is the only scriptural representation of Christ's invisible Church and consists only of regenerated believers. The local church is autonomous in its government and recognizes its own members for the Biblical offices of elder and deacon. Two ordinances have been committed to the local church-Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The purpose of the church is to lead others to Christ, mature them in the faith, and equip them for personal ministry. (Matthew 16:13-28; 28:18-20; Acts 2:41-47; 4:1-16; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29; Ephesians 2:19-22; 4:11-13; Hebrews 10:23-25; 1 Peter 5:1-3)

MARRIAGE...

We believe that God has established marriage as a lifelong, exclusive relationship between one man and one woman and that all intimate sexual activity outside the marriage relationship, whether heterosexual, homosexual, or otherwise, is immoral and therefore sin (Genesis 2:24-25; Exodus 20:14, 17; Matthew 19:4-6, 9; Romans 1:18-31; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 15-20; Jude 7). Marriage ceremonies conducted on Fellowship Bible Church premises or by Fellowship Bible Church staff should represent the establishment of this covenant relationship.

We believe that God created the human race male and female, and all conduct with the intent to adopt a gender other than one's birth gender is immoral and therefore sin. (Genesis 1:27; Deuteronomy 22:5)

FUTURE...

We believe that prophetic scriptures teach the imminent return of Jesus Christ. (John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17) We believe the second coming of Christ will occur in a bodily, visible manner with great glory. (Acts 1:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:20-28; Revelation 20:1-4)

Adopted by the Elders of
Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas
January 23, 2016



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B

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APPENDIX B

Sharing Your Story

Your Most Powerful Tool for Sharing Christ

What is “your story”?

Your story is the retelling of when and how you trusted Jesus Christ. It is your most powerful tool for sharing Christ with people who do not know Him. No one can deny your personal experience. With a little preparation you can be ready to share your story—ready to share Christ!

1 Peter 3:15 says, *“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.”* Being able to share your story is a great way to obey this passage.

Paul’s Example

Your story should follow a basic outline. Paul shares his story in Acts 26, giving us a good outline we can follow with our own story.

Acts 26:4-11

Paul’s life before he trusted Christ

Acts 26:12-19

How Paul trusted Christ

Acts 26:20-23

How Paul’s life changed after trusting Christ

Developing your Story

Some things you should try to do as you prepare your story:

- Ask God to guide you as you prepare.
- Follow the Acts 26 outline:
 - My life before believing and receiving (trusting) Christ
 - How I came to know and trust Christ
 - How my life changed after trusting Christ
- Emphasize your life since trusting Christ if you accepted Christ as a child.
- Begin with a thought provoking or attention getting statement.
- Include enough detail to keep it interesting.
- Weave the Gospel into your story.
- Practice your story with a mature believer and get feedback, then practice it until it becomes natural.
- Smile! Remember, you are sharing “Good News!”

Some things you should avoid as you prepare your story:

- Don't use Christian jargon such as “saved,” “convicted,” or “born again” as these might confuse and alienate non-Christians.
- Don't emphasize how bad you were.
- Don't use superlatives like “glorious,” “best ever,” “wonderful.”
- Don't mention denominations or other groups even if you have good feelings about a specific ministry or church. Your listener might not share your opinion.
- Don't give the impression that the Christian life is a “bed of roses” or that you no longer have struggles.

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As you share your story, remember the ABC's of sharing your story:

Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you.

Be brief.

Center on **CHRIST**.

Remember, your story can be effective in any casual situation: over a meal, on the golf course, at the lake, at a ball game; anywhere you are having a conversation with a non-believer can be a great place to share your story. People are interested in your story and can identify with it. No matter what your past has been, your story is valuable! For more information on sharing your story or learning to effectively share Christ, contact:

Fellowship NWA—
communityministries@fellowshipnwa.org

Fellowship Fayetteville—
fayettevillecommunity@fellowshipnwa.org

APPENDIX C

Membership Covenant

- **Maturity**—To endeavor to be a maturing disciple of Christ, continually pursuing spiritual growth —(Col 2:6-7).
- **Ministry**—To discover and utilize personal spiritual gifts in order to influence and serve others within the church, the community, and the world—(Eph 4:11-12).
- **Care**—To take responsibility for personally meeting the needs of others within the church, the community, and the world—(2 Cor 1:4-5).
- **Integrity**—To pursue a holy and pure life, representing Christ in a worthy manner—(1 Pet 1:15).
- **Family**—To faithfully pursue God’s design for singlehood, marriage, and/or parenting as revealed in the Scriptures and explained in Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas’ Doctrinal Statement —(Matt 19:4-6; Exod 20:12, 14; 1 Cor 7:25-38).
- **Participation**—To trust and support the mission, vision, strategies, and philosophy of Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas through active and consistent involvement—(Phil 1:3-5).
- **Follow**—To submit to the authority of the Elders’ leadership of Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas—(Heb 13:17).
- **Support**—To support, through worshipful giving, the financial obligations and commitments of the church by practicing generosity and Biblical stewardship —(2 Cor 8:7).



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D

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Communion

PURPOSE (setting the tone)

Read Jesus' institution of the Lord's Supper in Matthew 26:17-30 (or Mark 14:22-25).

Read Paul's account in 1 Corinthians 11:17-31 where he describes one's attitude in taking Communion. Then pray for the preparation of your time together.

THE BREAD

Remind everyone of the significance of the bread, as it represents Jesus' slain body for the forgiveness of sins.

Read Isaiah 53:3-6 and 1 John 1:8-2:2. After some time for reflection, say to the group, "Take and eat," and allow everyone to eat the bread.

THE CUP

Remind everyone of the significance of the cup, as it represents the shed blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of sins. Invite them to "Take and drink."

REFLECTION

Take some time to pray together and express gratitude for what Jesus has done and will do in each of your lives.