

Growth Group Guidelines

Fulfill Our Mission – Our mission at Shoreline Community Church is to help as many people as possible become totally committed to Jesus Christ. We want to continue to support this overall mission with our Growth Group ministry through:

- **Community and Friendship** – Growth Groups provide a forum to connect at a deeper level and grow in relationship with people in an intimate community
- **Learning and Growth Through Curriculum** – Growth Groups offer a chance to study material that will help them grow spiritually in a safe environment
- **Accountability and Challenge** – Growth Groups open participant to a level of relational closeness that allows for loving correction in areas of our lives that need growth.
- **Service in Community** – Growth Groups offer the ability to leverage common time and energy together to serve our community in ways we could never do alone

Study God's Word - To grow healthy and God-honoring lives by studying and discussing the Bible and biblical concepts together (*see Shoreline's mission and core beliefs at our website <http://shorelinechurch.org/about-shoreline/>*). The resources we use must have their foundation in Scripture, match up with our core beliefs, and be edifying to the members of the growth group.

Be Diligent in Prayer – We ask every growth group to make prayer a central part of their time together by beginning and ending their meetings in prayer. This allows for groups to start their meetings by focusing on God and to end with a time of reflection, thanksgiving, and support.

Be Dedicated to Consistent Participation – The only way growth groups can be consistently beneficial is for the participants to be committed to regular attendance and participation. By building a healthy and mutually supportive growth group community, we can promote this happening naturally and enable people to join in as they feel led.

Keep Information Confidential – For the growth groups to be a safe place to grow and learn together, the information that is shared must be kept strictly confidential and within the group. When people share their lives with others and are looking for mutual support, we must honor this and not violate their trust by sharing this information with other outside of the group.

Stay Focused on Relevant Topics – We ask our members to center the discussion on the material prepared and decided on by the group. Though some deviation is to be expected, we ask members to avoid potentially divisive sharing such as sharing one's strong views about partisan politics and other "hot button" issues that are not within the curriculum. There are a wide breadth of people that call Shoreline their church home and we do not want to alienate others by taking rigid stances on things that are outside the scope of our material or core beliefs.

Be Courteous to Members and Leaders – We ask our members to make group meetings a priority, to RSVP promptly to group event invitations, and to notify hosts if you discover your participation will be changing. This also includes arriving on time and creating an environment where people can feel supported and loved by listening without passing judgment and refraining from simply answering with quick answers or simple fixes.