

# First Night Agenda & Guide

## MAKE YOUR FIRST NIGHT GREAT

(for leaders to use in preparation for their first meeting)

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### Goals of the First Meeting

- Rekindle relationships and meet new members
- Clarify your group's direction / expectations / commitments using the covenant
- Briefly discuss the upcoming sermon topic (if there is time)
- Pray for the building of relationships and spiritual growth of the group

### Items Needed for the First Meeting

- Gather items needed for dessert or dinner, if you choose to have either at the first meeting
- Neighborhood Group Agreements – small ones to handout and a large one for everyone to sign
- Name tags (leader or host should write them out ahead of time)

### Contact Your Group in Advance

- Contact host if different from leader to get instructions regarding parking, children, pets, etc
  - Contact all members one week before the first meeting to remind them about the group meeting and to confirm the location and time of your group, as well as what to bring for dinner/dessert (if applicable)
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## 3 ESSENTIAL PARTS OF YOUR EVENING AGENDA

### #1 –Welcome, mingle, and talk while you eat

★ *Leadership tip – Studies show that the first 7 seconds a person spends in a room can make or break the remainder of their experience in that room.*

- People are greeted when they arrive
- Drinks are available when people arrive
- Upbeat music is playing
- House is cleaned, phone is turned off if possible
- Be intentional and make sure everyone is engaged and talking (look for those introverts!)

### #2 –Think through the uniqueness of your first group discussion

★ *Leadership tip – Let people know your meeting is going to start in about 5 minutes.*

Why is it unique? Getting to know each other (Sharing) and setting expectations (Agreement)

a) Sharing - The purpose of this time is to get to know one another casually (new groups) or reacquaint with each other (continuing groups)

- Gather together and welcome everyone to the group.

- Getting to Know You - Start the conversation by introducing yourself, where do you call home, what are you doing in the Fairfax area and how long have you been going to Fairfax Community Church.
- Ask others to follow your lead until everyone is able to share.
- Ask how many have experienced a similar group?

Three things to share tonight:

- Talk about Neighborhood Groups (we will give info here). What groups are/What they are not? Why they are neighborhood based? (love neighbors)
- Talk about why you said yes to say yes to being a leader.
- Talk about what it means to be in a neighborhood group and what we together are committing to for the next 10 weeks.

Note to returning leaders – feel free to adapt the sharing time based on the number of new members. All groups are encouraged to do some of the “getting to know you” questions

b) The Agreement – Set the expectations and vision

- Everything rises and falls on how this is communicated
- Distribute the Agreement
- Go over the Agreement (see Leader’s Guide)
- Make plans for a social gathering

c) Prayer

New Groups...(and even continuing groups with new people)

The first week, have either you or the host close in a brief prayer

In Week 2, introduce the concept of “Topical Prayer” (from leader training):

- We would like for everyone to participate, but understand not everyone is comfortable with praying out loud.
- Brief, one topic at a time
- Pray as many times as you want
- Indicate who is opening AND closing

If you are a continuing group with no new people, feel free to continue what you were doing for prayer before!

#3 – Ending Your Time Together Well

★ *Leadership tip – Never underestimate the significance of the time after the meeting. It is key to connect with people and find out more what people are all about.*

- Ending on time is important - make sure to finish up a few minutes early to have time for mingling and lingering.