



Fearless Family of Churches

Cultivate | Ridge Point | Third Coast

Following **Jesus** and Fearlessly Making Him Known

Thriving Together: Community After Lockdown

The last couple of months have been very challenging for many of us. We have been forced to rethink big and small details about our lives, details we don't often think about and that we perhaps take for granted.

As Life Groups, we have had to rethink what doing life means in the absence of physical gathering. I am glad to report that not only have our groups remained together, but they have also stepped out to serve our community in new ways.

Lockdown measures are now easing, and we can now restart physical Life Group meetings. But we do so with the realization that this pandemic has changed us. While we have a new appreciation for spending time with each other, we also realize that not all of us are at the same comfort level with physical meetings. Loving one another also means receiving each other's joys and eagerness, but also their worries and concerns.

The last several months have made us sensitive to how close we can get to each other. We now get nervous when people are within six feet from us. We treat anything coming from outside our homes with suspicion. We are encouraged to wear face coverings to protect ourselves and others. Some of these changes are uncomfortable, yet these are the reality of the times in which we live.

Therefore, as we get together again, and as you plan to host your Life Group, here are some considerations (and decisions) your group should make:

- **Meeting:** We recommend that you re-engage at your regular schedule. But you will need to decide whether to designate one home for your meetings or keep rotating homes. You may want to retain your online attendance for those who are not comfortable engaging immediately and those who are more at risk.

- Childcare: Will you offer childcare for your Life Group? Some parents may be uncomfortable having their children in close proximity to others. We recommend that you not offer childcare at the moment.
- Food: Sharing a meal is a critical part of group meetings. However, how you share meals may need to change for the time being. You may want to consider takeout or not having food at all.
- Sitting: Do you have room for people to spread out? If your living room is too tight you, you may consider meeting outside in the yard (if the weather allows). Remember some people may want to wear masks and others may not. Is everyone comfortable with this?
- Cleaning: You may want to deep clean the spaces you will use before and after group time. Providing water, soap and hand sanitizers is advisable. You may also want to designate a rest room for use and provide hand sanitizers and disinfectant wipes there as well.

Now, we realize this is a lot think about, and honestly, you may not have to work through all of these. But having this conversation as a group will help build confidence that we are re-engaging safely. Ultimately, scripture is our guide:

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:24-25)

Our goal is to slowly move towards being together in one place again because we thrive spiritually when we meet together and encourage one another.

Blessings