



# GOSPEL CIRCLE

HOST GUIDE

CALVARY CHURCH

# GOSPEL CIRCLE HOST GUIDE

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## GOSPEL CIRCLES

Gospel Circles are designed to help people grow in their relationship with God and with others. We believe life change occurs as Christians experience community with people who share a commitment to growing in grace. The early church in the book of Acts modeled a true sense of community.

Acts 2:42-47 (TLB) – “They joined with the other believers in regular attendance at the apostles' teaching sessions and at the Communion services and prayer meetings. A deep sense of awe was on them all, and the apostles did many miracles. And all the believers met together constantly and shared everything with each other, selling their possessions and dividing with those in need. They worshiped together regularly at the Temple each day, met in small groups in homes for Communion, and shared their meals with great joy and thankfulness, praising God. The whole city was favorable to them, and each day God added to them all who were being saved.”

Christians learned, prayed, served, worshipped, and shared meals together. They met in small groups in homes and experienced true community that transformed their lives. As a Gospel Circle Host, you have the opportunity to create a similar environment that fosters transformation in people's lives at Calvary Church.

## CALVARY'S MISSION

We exist to declare and demonstrate the Gospel to everyone, every day, everywhere.

## **OUR VALUES**

1. Grace
2. Vision
3. Local Church
4. Diversity
5. Generosity
6. Belonging
7. Fun
8. Multi-locational
9. Excellence
10. Creative

## **CULTURE GUIDE**

Scan the QR Code below to view Calvary's Culture Guide.



## **GOSPEL CIRCLE HOST QUALIFICATIONS + EXPECTATIONS**

- Have a personal and growing relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Embrace the Bible as the authoritative truth for your life.
- Have the time and emotional capacity to host a group.
- Participate in leadership development opportunities provided by Calvary Church.
- Implement the 4 essential Gospel Circle Host practices.

## 4 ESSENTIAL GOSPEL CIRCLE HOST PRACTICES

### 1. Engage

Gospel Circles engage by the host facilitating social connection, involving conversation, and establishing meaningful touch points through asking about attendee's week and starting with icebreakers.

### 2. Explain

Gospel Circle is a time where the goodness of God can be explained through the provided pre-recorded message that is played at every meeting. We believe faith comes by hearing the Gospel explained, taught, and shared.

### 3. Encourage

Gospel Circles are encouraging because the Gospel is Good News and the byproduct of hearing good news is being encouraged! After hearing the teaching of the Gospel, every Gospel Circle has a time of encouraging one another in the Good News that was taught.

### 4. Empower

Gospel Circles provide tools to help empower hosts with resources to share. Helpful information can be found on the Calvary app regarding generosity, baptism, Grace Walk, Gospel Institute, and more.

## CALENDAR, MEETINGS + AGENDA

### 1. Annual Calendar

The annual Gospel Circle calendar includes three Gospel Circle host training sessions to go along with the three seasons: **Spring, Summer, and Fall**. The annual calendar is as follows:

Spring Season: February – April (8 weeks)

- Host Training: January

Summer Season: May - July (8 weeks)

- Host Training: May

Fall Season: September – November (8 weeks)

- Host Training: September

## 2. Gospel Circle Times

Gospel Circles meet:

- A minimum of twice per month
- Any day of the week (Elders, please exclude Monday evening)
- Any time of the day
- Not during Calvary Church gatherings

## 3. Gospel Circle Agenda

Group meetings should be approximately 1.5 hours in length and include the following:

- Engage (20 - 30 minutes)
- Explain with Gospel Teaching (7 - 10 minutes)
- Encourage with Gospel discussion, prayer, + fellowship (30 -40 minutes)
- Empower (10 minutes)

\*Ice-breakers and Conversation Starters are included with this material.

## CHILDCARE

For safety and security, Gospel Circle hosts that welcome children will be subject to background checks. Details will be provided in a separate communication.

Hosts are encouraged to secure their own childcare for Gospel Circles at their home. Childcare should be provided by a trusted sitter that you or someone in your group knows. Calvary Church

is not responsible or liable for childcare. A Hosts should select their sitter carefully and wisely.

## **GROUND RULES**

To avoid common struggles in smaller environments, we have established the following ground rules for Gospel Circles:

- Curriculum - All hosts must use curriculum provided by Calvary Church.
- Outside Speakers - Because the focus of Gospel Circles is the Good News message taught regularly at Calvary Church, we ask that outside speakers not be invited to teach or lecture at a meeting.
- Alcohol - Because we do not want to cause anyone to stumble or to be offended, alcohol is not to be served at any Gospel Circles.
- Sales & Networking - Gospel Circles are not meant to be a place for sales, business networking, or to promote products or services. All sales efforts are off limits.

## **COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **What is a Gospel Circle Host?**

A Gospel Circle host is not necessarily a teacher, leader, or professor. A Gospel Circle host is someone who “hosts” people in their community to hear and discuss Gospel truths in a safe environment. A host is anyone with a welcoming heart that has been impacted by the Good News.

### **Do I have to teach?**

Hosts do not have to teach. That is why we provide all of the teaching for our hosts. Hosts do have to facilitate conversations by asking the questions that Calvary provides and build relationship.

### **Is there training?**

Yes! Every season we hold a live training where you will be equipped with the information you need to get started building your Gospel Circle.

If you are unable to attend the live training, there will be a follow up training online.

### **When can my group meet?**

Your group can meet at any time morning, afternoon, or evening outside of Sunday. We ask all of our Gospel Circle hosts and members to participate in a Sunday Experience.

### **Where can my group meet?**

Gospel Circles meet in homes, apartments, lofts, condos, workplace environments, offices, club houses, coffee shops, or any spaces that are safe, welcoming, and suitable for a Gospel Circle.

### **What will our Gospel Circles study?**

All of our Gospel Circles study teachings in line with the Gospel New Covenant teachings provided by Calvary Church.

## What about food?

Food may be served at the host's discretion. If a host chooses to serve food, we advise serving appetizers, desserts, or prepackaged snacks.

If you choose to do so, be sure to share this responsibility with Gospel Circle members.

## How many people should I sign-up for my group?

This is completely up to you! You can meet with 1 person or up to 15. We want to make sure the circle is intimate and safe.

## What about childcare?

If childcare is desired at a Gospel Circle, hosts are responsible for completing a background check and/or finding trusted childcare for their group.

## **GOSPEL CIRCLE SIGN-UPS**

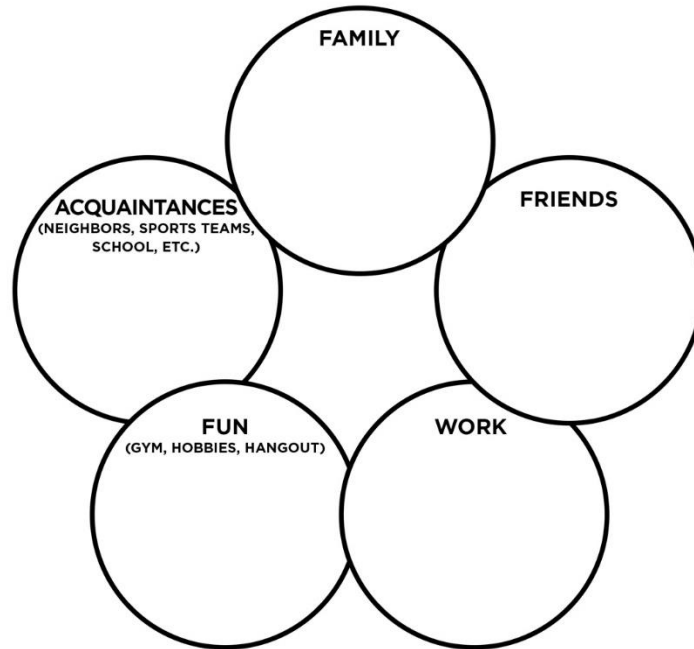
As a Gospel Circle Host, you are responsible for inviting people to join your Gospel Circle. Personal invitation is the most effective way to fill a Gospel Circle. To assist with personal invitations, use the "Circles of Life and Lists of Life" document included with this material.

## **CIRCLE OF LIFE + LISTS OF LIFE**

Use the "Circles of Life" and "Lists of Life" to brainstorm a list of people that you could invite to your Gospel Circle. Once you complete your list, begin calling each person and extending an

invitation to join your group. Follow-up with each person until they confirm "Yes" or "No".

## CIRCLES OF LIFE



## LISTS OF LIFE

EMAIL LIST	CELL PHONE LIST	SOCIAL MEDIA LIST	CHRISTMAS CARD LIST
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

## HOW TO EXCEL AS A GOSPEL CIRCLE HOST

### PRACTICE #1: FACILITATE ENGAGING MEETINGS

#### 1. Prepare

Prepare yourself, the discussion, the agenda, and the room environment.

#### 2. Hosts don't teach

Teaching is focused on lecturing. Hosting is facilitation-based, presenting questions.



### 3. Think about the provided question

Read the questions in advance and think about what that question means to you.

### 4. Reword a question

Reword any questions to generate better discussion.

### 5. Don't be afraid of silence and don't be the first to answer your questions

### 6. Don't be afraid to reel in the conversation

### 7. Prompts to deepen the conversation

- "Would someone who hasn't shared yet like to comment?"
- "Would someone like to share a personal example of how \_\_\_\_\_ happened in your life?"
- "That's a great thought. Would someone else like to comment on what Bill said?"
- "That's some great insight, Nancy. Does anyone have anything they'd like to add?"

### 8. Call the attendee by name

It is important to know the name of those attending your Gospel Circle. This makes them feel more comfortable to discuss and answer questions.

### 9. Keep the meeting to 1.5 hours or less

People should leave wanting more, not wanting out.

## **PRACTICE #2: CULTIVATE EARNEST COMPASSION**

### 1. Connect with every person in every meeting

**Ask attendees about their:**

- Family
- Occupation
- Recreation
- Dreams

### 2. Pray for the needs of the church and group attendees at the end of each Gospel Circle (the prayer time should be the highest priority)

Don't call on people to pray. Instead, ask "Who would like to pray for one of these needs?"

### 3. Celebrate Gospel Circle attendees' accomplishments

- Birthdays
- Anniversaries
- Graduations
- Promotions

### 4. Plan a fun group activity/activities

The quality of relationships outside of a Gospel Circle usually impacts the quality of discussion inside of group meetings. We encourage you to do life together!

### 5. Care for the needs of group attendees

- Prayer
- Hospital visits
- Meals after baby births or hospital stays
- Meals after a funeral

## **PRACTICE #3: REPLICATE A HOSTING CULTURE**

### 1. Ask the group to help with food or games

Conclude meetings potentially by making the food plan for the next meeting.

### 2. Delegate responsibilities to potential future Gospel Circle Hosts

- Emailing prayer requests following group meetings
- Completing the online reporting form
- Planning a fun group activity
- Organizing a group service project

### 3. Identify a potential Gospel Circle Host

- Exhibits spiritual growth
- Exhibits relational warmth

- Committed to Calvary Church's vision, mission, and message
- Shows initiative

4. Invite a potential Gospel Circle Host to facilitate the prayer time

5. Invite a potential Gospel Circle Host to facilitate the group discussion for a meeting

## **ICE BREAKERS + CONVERSATION STARTERS**

During your first meeting, be sure to have everyone introduce themselves. Sharing names, where they grew up, how they met their spouse, hobbies, where they work, etc. is a great way to get to know someone.

Below is a list of icebreakers and conversation starters that you can use in your Gospel Circles to get to know each other. To protect your time, it's usually best to only do one icebreaker in a meeting. Consider using these in meetings throughout the season.

1. If money were no problem, and you could choose one place in the world to travel for a week, where would that place be and why?
2. What's something you've won and how did you win it?
3. What's something your parents used to say to you as a child that you promised yourself, you'd

never say - but now you catch yourself saying all the time?

4. Who is the closest friend you've ever had? Describe that relationship.
5. What's something you should throw away, but can't? Explain.
6. How often do you get a haircut? Describe your worst haircut.
7. Who's the most famous person you have ever met? What famous person would you most like to meet?
8. What's the wackiest belief you held as a child?
9. One of my biggest pet peeves is \_\_\_\_\_.
10. What's the story behind the longest time you've gone without sleep?
11. What do you miss most about childhood?
12. What's the biggest lie you ever told?
13. If you could go to college (again), what would you study?
14. What day of your life would you most like to relive? Why?
15. I was voted "most likely to" \_\_\_\_\_ in high school.
16. My number two career choice would be \_\_\_\_\_.
17. What has been one of the greatest adventures you have ever been on?
18. What was the best (or most memorable) gift you ever received?
19. What is your favorite city? Why?
20. If your house were on fire, what three items (not people) would you try to save?
21. What was your first job and what do you remember most about it?
22. Of the things money can buy, what do you long for the most?
23. Describe a grade schoolteacher that made a big impression on you?
24. The most useless thing in my/our house is \_\_\_\_\_ but it's still there because \_\_\_\_\_.
25. When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up? What did your parents want you to be?