



crosswinds church

L.I.F.E. GROUPS



Many people want Crosswinds to continue being a community of rich and caring personal relationships even while we continue to grow in number.

L.I.F.E. Groups is a vision to help that happen. We certainly don't have everything figured out, but we have a dream of seeing many energized "little churches" within the growing Crosswinds congregation. Each one would be a small-scale reflection of the mission, vision and values that make Crosswinds unique. L.I.F.E. Groups are starting at Crosswinds one-by-one until everyone at Crosswinds is included. When you're invited into a group please give it a try, and in the process help us to learn what can make L.I.F.E. Groups work best!

Please read on to learn more....

what most of us want.

The Fellowship of the Believers

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. 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, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

— Acts 2:42-47

At its very beginning, the Christian church was an intriguing and very desirable small group. Acts 2 describes how this "Fellowship of the Believers" was launched forward at Pentecost with a vision for what God was doing through them. It's hard to read Acts 2:42-47 without feeling a little envious of their rich experiences together. In fact, this group was so attractive that every day there were new people coming to know Jesus as Savior and joining the group!

It's hard to envision replicating that experience among Christian friends today – especially in large churches and among people who face the pressures of daily life in North America. But that doesn't mean we give up! Imagine belonging among a small group of Christian friends who truly care for each other and enrich each other's lives in the most important ways. This is the aim of L.I.F.E. Groups at Crosswinds.

Please read on....

What is a L.I.F.E. Group?

Simply described, L.I.F.E. Groups are made up of 6-12 adults who meet a couple times each month (family members included). These people focus on getting to know each other deeply by setting time aside to be together in ways that work for the group.

How do L.I.F.E. Groups work?

L.I.F.E. Groups need to be workable for the people who are part of the group. That means each group will have much freedom to decide when and where it meets, what they do, and how they do it. Four elements that should be part of every L.I.F.E. Group are:

- L** - Learning about God's plans and purposes for his people through Bible studies and book or sermon discussions.
- I** - Intercession in prayer to God and active care for one another to achieve God's plan for the wellbeing of his people.
- F** - Friendship through meals, recreation and hobbies.
- E** - Evangelism that brings previously uncommitted people into new life with God and into caring community with God's people.

No group is expected to give equal emphasis to each of these elements, but all groups must consider the value that at least a small sampling from each element adds to the group. It is as important to know why a certain element isn't emphasized as it is to know why others are emphasized.



When do L.I.F.E. Groups meet?

L.I.F.E. Groups meet at least twice per month on a schedule and at a location that's determined by the group. Meeting at least this frequently is proven to be essential to growing and keeping strong relationships. A minimum twice-per-month meeting schedule should be kept even when participants are busy and only part of the group can attend.

Who leads a L.I.F.E. Group?

Each L.I.F.E. Group is led by a small, multi-cultural team of people from Crosswinds Community Church who have received basic training in small group leadership and interpersonal care-giving. Each leader has personal abilities and interests that influence the character of group they lead. All groups identify "apprentice leaders" who participate in the group and are being prepared to lead a new L.I.F.E. Group at a future time.

What support do L.I.F.E. Group leaders receive?

Crosswinds' Small Group Ministry Coordinator is available to all L.I.F.E. Group leaders to help work through challenges that arise, and to make leaders aware of learning opportunities that they might find helpful. The Coordinator will check in with each leader occasionally and might sometimes offer opportunities for leaders from different groups to meet and share ideas.

What happens when a L.I.F.E. Group grows?

L.I.F.E. Groups should grow, especially because they have an evangelism element. Adding an "open chair" when the group gathers is a good way to be reminded that there's always another person who should be there and may simply need an invitation. Since L.I.F.E. Groups are made of 12 or fewer participants, growth leads to multiplication – one large group becomes two or more smaller groups. Often a deep network of friendships makes this difficult, yet the sacrifice is necessary so that more people can benefit from the kind of close, caring relationship a group this size provides.

How are L.I.F.E. Groups formed?

Crosswinds' Small Group Coordinator, with the help of other church leaders will organize the congregation into L.I.F.E. Groups. Factors that will be considered include geographic proximity, multi-cultural variety, pre-existing friendships, and shared interests. It will be impossible to put everyone in their perfectly customized L.I.F.E. Group, so we ask everyone to stretch a little to make their group the best it can be!

What if I still have questions?

Contact information for people who are coordinating this ministry is on the back page of this brochure. Make a call. They're eager to hear from you!



**SHIRLEY
VANDEN BERGE**

Small Group Ministry
Coordinator

616-748-1202
strawberryvb@sbcglobal.net



NANCE GEZON

Assistant Small Group
Ministry Coordinator

616-850-8627
nancegezon@yahoo.com

Crosswinds Community Church

PO Box 8427
Holland, MI 49422

616-399-7662

crosswindsc@gmail.com
www.crosswindsc.com