

## PLANNING BEYOND WEEK-TO-WEEK | FOR GROUP LEADERS

It is a good idea to map out a schedule for your group for 1-6 months. Each group is different and will have various obstacles to work through to keep their group meeting consistently.

### Set Goals

Start by setting goals, guidelines, and expectations about the various elements that will affect your group. For example, can kids come? Will there be a babysitter? No gossip, starting on time, snack rotation, set up, clean up, etc. You can edit the Small Group Covenant to make it more relevant to your group, then review and have all group members sign the Small Group Covenant. Send a digital copy of the signed covenant to all group members.

### Have a Calendar Meeting

Sit down with a calendar and have all members provide their unavailable dates so you can choose dates everyone can meet on a regular basis. Make sure to talk about holidays and how they will affect your group meetings. Consistency is the main key to successful groups.

### Fellowship

It is good to plan a fellowship activity date every 6 weeks (ish) to keep your group fresh and renewed. On this date you will not do your regular study, but will enjoy fellowship time. There are many ideas that have been successful with other groups, but you can be creative. Some examples are: potluck, progressive dinner, BBQ, camping, movies, bowling, miniature golf, game night, etc.

### Outreach

Plan for missions or outreach every couple of months. You can find serving opportunities on our website under "Make a Difference" and then "REACH," or by going to [gracechurchco.com/reach](http://gracechurchco.com/reach).

### Studies

Plan your studies. Talk with the group and choose study material / review it to determine how many weeks it will take to get through. In our experience, it usually takes longer than we think, so plan a few extra weeks. Take a week break between your studies to have fellowship with your group members. Planning ahead helps your members keep their group time reserved and also helps them plan for any material expenses, as they may want to buy books or study guides for an upcoming study.

Having a goal and a schedule to stay on usually gives people motivation to come. Knowing what studies are coming up also motivates them to be faithful. Give group members input on the material choice. If you use Study Gateway, pick out a few studies you are interested in and watch the trailers as a group. Then vote on which studies the group wants to do. Remember, there is a variety of ways to study. You can go deeper into the sermons, attend a Christian Education classes as a group, there are video studies, and book studies. Some groups like to do weekly homework, while others prefer to just show up and have everyone learn together. Do what works well for your group.