



**Village Bible Church**

Aurora | Campus Español | Indian Creek | Sugar Grove





At Village Bible Church, small groups are a critical part of our ministry - they are not just "another thing;" they are our **main channel for discipleship & care** for each person who is a part of our family.

We realize that our spiritual needs cannot be met through simply a once a week large group worship service and Adult Bible Fellowship class every Sunday morning. That's a great start, but small groups help take us to the next level - to genuine community.



Small Groups are the best place to connect if you want to grow in your relationship with Jesus. A small group will help you develop significant relationships with others who can encourage and challenge you to consistently apply the truths of God's Word to each area of your life. They are gifts of God given so that we might "exhort one another every day, as long as it is called 'today,' that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin" (Hebrews 3:12-13).

Small Groups meet once a week and range in size from 8-15 people. They are normally two hours and include time for Bible discussion, accountability, and prayer, as well as informal times to build relationships with others in the group.

God wants every follower of Jesus to be continually growing as we worship Christ, walk with Christ, and work for Christ. Each Village Small Group is committed to both mutual ministry and multiplication.

***Hebrews 10:25 tells us to meet together "so you may encourage each other even more..."***

# Small Group Core Values

**Community:** God is relational, so He created us to live in relationship with Him and each other.

- Authentic community involves sharing life together and connecting on many levels with others in our group.
- Healing best occurs within the context of community and relationships. It's vital to see ourselves through the eyes of others, share our stories, and ultimately find freedom from the secrets and lies that enslave our souls.



**Bible Study:** Gain a deeper knowledge of God's Word

- *Interactive:* God gave the Bible as our instruction manual for life. We need to deepen our understanding of God's Word. People learn and remember more as they wrestle with truth and learn from others. Bible discovery and group interaction enhance growth!
- *Sermon Based:* In effort to focus our study efforts and to 'master' sections and themes of scripture, our small groups are normally tied to the Sunday morning sermons, which provides opportunity to take a passage of scripture and study it individually, discuss it with others and then experience it being taught from the pulpit.

**Experiential Growth:** Beyond solely reading, studying, and dissecting the Bible, being a disciple of Christ involves reunifying knowledge with experience. We do this by taking questions to God, opening a dialog with our hearts, and utilizing other ways to listen to God speak (other people, nature, circumstances). Experiential growth is always grounded in the Bible as God's primary revelation and our ultimate truth-source.

**Power of God:** Processes and strategies will be ineffective unless we invite and embrace the presence and power of God. In order to experience community and growth, Jesus needs to be the centerpiece of our group experiences and the Holy Spirit must be at work.

**Mutual Ministry:** Each member of the group is looking for ways to minister to the other members of the group, helping to meet each other's needs.

**Multiplication:** All groups should also be prayerfully considering a way to extend the ministry of their Small Group through Multiplication. Multiplication means eventually forming two or more groups so that others who are not yet in Small Groups can continue to find places to connect with a Small Group.

**Shepherding:** Small groups are the main channel for shepherding within our church. An elder is partnered with each of the small group leaders who together work to shepherd the people in the group and its "extended family".



# Small Group Covenant

This covenant is reviewed and signed at the beginning of each quarter by all groups. Groups that are continuing, still review the covenant during the first meeting of each quarter.

Session Dates \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.  
Leader \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (C) \_\_\_\_\_  
Host \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (C) \_\_\_\_\_

This covenant will help us discuss and clarify our goals, expectations, and commitments as a group. Since healthy groups thrive on trust and participation, a clear covenant is an important starting point toward a successful group experience.

## Small Groups: Our Basic Purpose

Small groups exist to promote the development of significant Christian relationships centered around the study of God's Word (see Hebrews 10:24-25; Romans 8:29).

### Sharing

Each week, we will take time to share what is happening in our lives. At first, this sharing will include some planned "sharing questions." After the first few weeks, it will become more informal and personal as our group feels safer and more comfortable.

### Study

Each week, we'll study a portion of God's Word that relates to the sermon series. Our goal is to learn how to apply and live out our Christianity in our day-to-day experiences and relationships.

### Support

Each week, we'll learn how to take care of one another as Christ commanded (see John 15:9-13). This care will take many forms, such as praying, listening, meeting needs, encouraging and even challenging one another as needed.

## Marks of a Healthy Group

For our group to be healthy, we need to

- **Prioritize:** While we are in this group, we will give the group meetings priority in my schedule and will also arrive on time.
- **Participate:** Everyone is encouraged to participate and no one dominates.
- **Show Respect:** Everyone is given the right to his or her own opinions, and all questions are encouraged and respected.
- **Maintain Confidentiality:** Anything that is said in our meetings is never repeated outside the meeting without permission.
- **Show Care and Support:** Permission is given to call upon each other at any time, especially in times of crisis. The group will provide care for every member.

- **Be Accountable:** We agree to let the members of our group hold us accountable to commitments we make in whatever loving ways we decide upon. Unsolicited advice giving is not permitted.
- **Fill the Empty Chair:** Our group will work together to fill the empty chair – either someone in the church who is not in a small group or an unchurched person or couple.
- **Be Mission Minded:** We agree as a group to reach out and invite others to join us and to work toward multiplication of our group to form new groups.
- **Minister:** We will encourage one another to serve God within the church and also to get outside the walls of the church to serve in a way that impacts the world around us.

## Guidelines and Covenant

1. **Dates** We'll meet on \_\_\_\_\_ nights for \_\_\_\_\_ weeks.  
Our final meeting of the quarter will be on \_\_\_\_\_.

2. **Time** We'll arrive between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in order to begin the meeting at \_\_\_\_\_.  
We'll spend approximately \_\_\_\_\_ minutes in singing (optional), \_\_\_\_\_ minutes in study/discussion, and \_\_\_\_\_ minutes in prayer/sharing.

3. **Study** Each week, we'll study the same topic(s) covered in the sermon series.

4. **Prayer** Our group will be praying each week for one another and specific missions requests.

### 5. Homework & Attendance

Joining a small group requires a commitment to attend each week and to do the homework ahead of time. Obviously allowances are made for sickness, vacation, work conflicts and other special events – but not much more! *This commitment is the key to a healthy group.*

Most weeks, the homework will require about thirty minutes to adequately prepare for the group study and discussion.

If I am unable to come to a meeting, I will contact the small group leader to let him know.

### 6. Refreshments

I have signed up to bring snack on the following nights:

_____	_____
_____	_____

### 7. Social(s)

### 8. Service Project(s)

# 2014 Calendar



# VILLAGE BIBLE CHURCH

## September

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
14 No Study	15 No Study	16 No Study	17 No Study	18 No Study	19 No Study	20 No Study
21 Study#1 (9 Marks)	22 Study#1 (9 Marks)	23 Study#1 (9 Marks)	24 Study#1 (9 Marks)	25 Study#1 (9 Marks)	26 Study#1 (9 Marks)	27 Study#1 (9 Marks)
28 Study#2 (9 Marks)	29 Study#2 (9 Marks)	30 Study#2 (9 Marks)				

## October

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 Study#2 (9 Marks)	2 Study#2 (9 Marks)	3 Study#2 (9 Marks)	4 Study#2 (9 Marks)
5 Game Night	6 Game Night	7 Game Night	8 Game Night	9 Game Night	10 Game Night	11 Game Night
12 Study#3 (9 Marks)	13 Study#3 (9 Marks)	14 Study#3 (9 Marks)	15 Study#3 (9 Marks)	16 Study#3 (9 Marks)	17 Study#3 (9 Marks)	18 Study#3 (9 Marks)
19 Study#4 (9 Marks)	20 Study#4 (9 Marks)	21 Study#4 (9 Marks)	22 Study#4 (9 Marks)	23 Study#4 (9 Marks)	24 Study#4 (9 Marks)	25 Study#4 (9 Marks)
26 Prayer Mtg	27 Prayer Mtg	28 Prayer Mtg	29 Prayer Mtg	30 Prayer Mtg	31 Prayer Mtg	

## November

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 Prayer Mtg
2 Study#5 (9 Marks)	3 Study#5 (9 Marks)	4 Study#5 (9 Marks)	5 Study#5 (9 Marks)	6 Study#5 (9 Marks)	7 Study#5 (9 Marks)	8 Study#5 (9 Marks)
9 Study#6 (9 Marks)	10 Study#6 (9 Marks)	11 Study#6 (9 Marks)	12 Study#6 (9 Marks)	13 Study#6 (9 Marks)	14 Study#6 (9 Marks)	15 Study#6 (9 Marks)
16 Missions Night	17 Missions Night	18 Missions Night	19 Missions Night	20 Missions Night	21 Missions Night	22 Missions Night
23 Thanksgiving No SG	24 Thanksgiving No SG	25 Thanksgiving No SG	26 Thanksgiving No SG	27 Thanksgiving No SG	28 Thanksgiving No SG	29 Thanksgiving No SG





## *Prayer Requests*

[illegible]

## *Prayer Requests*

[illegible]

## *Prayer Requests*

[illegible]

## *Prayer Requests*

[illegible]



## *Prayer Requests*

[illegible]

## *Prayer Requests*

[illegible]

## *Prayer Requests*

[illegible]

## *Prayer Requests*

[illegible]



## *Prayer Requests*

[illegible]

## *Prayer Requests*

[illegible]



## Study #1

### A Vision for Healthy Churches

---

#### Ice Breaker:

1. If you had an opportunity to move to a new area or city, which would you choose to call home?

#### Discussion Starter:

2. Imagine that you just moved to a new town and you're looking for a new church.

What would be at the top of your list of the most important things you look for in a church?

Watch Video @ [www.vimeo.com/33926000](http://www.vimeo.com/33926000) and fill in the blanks.

- Both the service and the congregation are important in \_\_\_\_\_ the significance of the church.
- As Christians, what we can be confident of is the \_\_\_\_\_ of the gospel.
- God is showing the fullness of His character through the local \_\_\_\_\_.
- There has been a \_\_\_\_\_ of church just to evangelism.
- A personal relationship with Jesus Christ can never be \_\_\_\_\_.

**At the 10:01 mark stop the video and answer the following questions:**

---

*Mark Dever shared that there are myriads of reasons people attend church and that each of these people have things they desire to receive from their time in church.*

3. Why do you come to church? How does your answer affect what you put into it? And what you get out of it?

**Watch Video till the 13:25 mark.**

---

- The most important aspect of a church is whether it \_\_\_\_\_ the gospel.
  - A healthy church \_\_\_\_\_ what God is like.
4. Read Isaiah 6:1-7. What does this passage reveal about God's character?

In the interview, Mark Dever said that a healthy church is one that reflects the character of God, and the way a church becomes healthier is by listening to and obeying God's word.

5. In what ways have you seen a church reflect the character of God? How did this reflection impact you?

---

Watch Video till the 22:06 mark.

---

- Expository preaching is \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ God's word to God's people.
6. This section of the interview focused in on the subject of preaching. In what ways has the preaching in your church impacted your life?

Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17

7. In view of these verses, how do you respond to someone who says preaching isn't important for the church and that we shouldn't focus so much on it?

Read 2 Timothy 4:1-5

8. What challenges will Timothy face in his preaching ministry?
9. How might these same things tempt preachers not to preach expositionally today?
10. Is this type of preaching and hearing happening today? If so, give some examples.

---

Watch Video to its conclusion.

---

- God's word has always \_\_\_\_\_ God's people.
- A church that realizes that God has spoken will make preaching \_\_\_\_\_.
- Church members should come \_\_\_\_\_.

11. Discuss some challenges that hinder people from listening well to sermons?

12. How do you listen to sermons? What are some helpful strategies to getting the most from a sermon?

Through personal study and the video interview we learned that the two most important aspects of a healthy church are those that reveal the character of God and bring the truth of God's word to his people.

13. In light of the statement above, what can the church do to fulfill this calling? In what ways are you as an individual called to make this reality true in the church?





## Study #2

### The Truths on which Churches Build

---

#### Ice Breaker:

1. What was the last book you read? What was it about? What caused you to read it?

#### Discussion Starter:

2. What are some reasons that non-Christians and Christians give for not wanting to read or study the Bible?

Watch Video @ [www. http://vimeo.com/33927716](http://vimeo.com/33927716) and fill in the blanks.

Watch the Video till 4:51 and discuss the following questions.

---

- Theology is the \_\_\_\_\_ of God.
  - The Bible tells us the truth about what \_\_\_\_\_ is like, what we are like, and most especially about Jesus Christ.
3. List some places where we practice theology on an everyday basis.
  4. What reasons does Mark Dever give for why theology matters? Can you think of any more?
  5. In what ways does the Bible help us when it comes to framing our theology?

Read Colossians 3:16-17

6. In what practical ways do we allow the message of scripture to dwell in us richly?
7. How will letting the scriptures "dwell in us" as a church impact the songs we sing, the prayers we pray, the sermons we preach and the fellowship we experience?

8. What happens to a church that fails to elevate and engage the scriptures as its final authority and guide to life?

---

### Watch Video till the 10:58 mark and discuss the following questions:

---

- The central message of the Bible is \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Have you ever viewed the Bible as one singular narrative about God and His redemptive and restorative plan for humanity? How does understanding the Bible in this panoramic way help us understand the individual parts?

---

### Watch Video till the 16:41 mark and discuss the following questions:

---

- Throughout history God has been sovereignly drawing the minds of His people to the \_\_\_\_\_ of the gospel.
  - Jesus is our example, but more importantly, He is our \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Every other religion is a religion of "do." Christianity is the religion of "\_\_\_\_\_."
10. In what way does Mark's example of the story of David and Goliath help us to see all of Scripture in the context of the gospel of Jesus? What might be some of the results of studying the Scriptures with that unifying theme in mind?
11. What happens to God's people if all we hear is teaching that focuses in on what would Jesus do, to the neglect of remembering what has Jesus done?

---

### Watch Video till the 22:51 mark and discuss the following questions:

---

- We like the idea of God \_\_\_\_\_ us something.
12. What are some challenges and corruptions to the gospel today? What impact might these have on churches?
13. How do we follow the Bible's example of making Jesus the central message and theme in our own lives?