



LOVE+HOPE

How to Encourage One Another



What's next for Alpha Groups?

At Grace Gathering, in partnership with other churches, we want everyone in Greater Fort Wayne to have multiple opportunities to hear, see, and respond to the gospel. Part of *seeing* the gospel is experiencing the good news in the context of everyday-life-community with others.

Since launching Alpha groups, we've had 700 people—from Grace Gathering, New Life, and those not previously connected to our churches—engage in community! We've seen multiple people come to faith, leaders step up and invest in groups, people adapt to using technology in new ways, and our church all going on the same journey together.

Many groups are realizing that God has done some amazing things in their group, and they'd actually like to keep meeting together. In fact, we're encouraging all groups to consider continuing on. Here's a few FAQs that might help you pray about what's next.

What could our Alpha group look like going forward?

Long-term, our staff and elders are seeking the Lord on what the Scattered Church could look like as a core experience of what it means to be a part of the Grace Gathering family. In the short term, however, we want to continue to resource our existing groups through our next series called "Love and Hope: How to Encourage One Another." We'll take the weeks of June 28 through September 6 to walk through 1 Thessalonians together.

Each week, the person sharing the Sunday teaching will record a 5-7 minute video that will give a brief recap of the sermon and practical ways to live out the message together. That video will be available on our website at gracegathering.com/groups and on our app where you can download and watch it with your group. You'll also have access to some simple discussion questions to help guide the conversation.

Essentially, though the videos will be much shorter than Alpha, your evenings together could look exactly the same as they have the past ten weeks. Here's an example schedule:

10 min.	Welcome time
15 min.	Ice Breaker or Relational time (i.e. Sweets and Sours, a game, etc.)
7 min.	Watch the video
20 min.	Discussion
10 min.	Prayer and closing

What should our group consider in this next season?

Each group may look quite different, but the important thing is that we continue to prioritize one another on a regular basis.

A few things you'll want to consider:

Will we continue to meet weekly? Or do we want to try something different over the summer like every other week or 3 out of 4 weeks? Groups may alter their schedule a bit over the summer months.

Will we meet in-person, online, or a combination of both? Many groups may include people who are from out of town or who aren't yet comfortable meeting in someone else's home. We encourage everyone who chooses to meet in a home to consider having a laptop set up in the corner of the room for those who want to continue joining the group from Zoom.

Who will we invite to join us? Most Alpha groups have involved people who wouldn't consider themselves Christian but who are open to faith in Jesus. Of course everyone who has been in Alpha is welcome to continue meeting wherever they are at in their faith journey. In fact, this could be another great opportunity to invite new people into your group to experience Christian community. Are there people in your life you want to invite to meet your group?

What will my experience be as a group leader?

Leading a group is an important role, and leader huddles are the primary way we support our group leaders. Huddles provide the space to discern what God is saying to you and your group and what you'll do next, as well as offering important and ongoing accountability and encouragement from your huddle leader and other group leaders. They also help site leaders track what God is doing throughout our church.

Every group leader will continue to have access to this vital aspect of church community. Connect with your huddle leader to see what your schedule will look like going forward, as some huddles may adjust their meeting time or frequency.

How does our group intersect with who we are as a church?

Our church has been called by God to prioritize community with one another in ways that go against our surrounding culture. It's how we're formed to be like Jesus, how we experience family together, and it's a witness to the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven to those around us.

With great expectation, we're thrilled to see how God uses the opportunity before us. May he grow our desire for him, our love for one another, and our hope to see our city transformed by the gospel.

For videos and resources, visit gracegathering.com/groups.