



# Prince of Peace Church

## Sample Template for Community Groups

### 1. Greeting & Introductions (5 minutes)

- a. Welcome: Begin by warmly welcoming everyone, especially new members. Introduce yourself and allow new members to introduce themselves.
- b. Opening Prayer: A brief prayer asking for God's blessing on your time together.

### 2. Sharing Life Together (15-25 minutes)

- a. Updates & Check-ins: Allow members to share significant life events from the past week—joys, challenges, or burdens. Keep this time encouraging and judgment-free.
- b. Community Care: Discuss how the group can support one another practically (e.g., meals for someone recovering from surgery, help with childcare, etc.).

### 3. Scripture Study & Sermon Discussion (30-40 minutes)

- a. Read the Passage: Read aloud the passage(s) from Sunday's sermon together (choose 1-2 translations to bring clarity).
- b. Guided Discussion: Use the sermon discussion questions to reflect deeply on the text.

### 4. Prayer Time (10-20 minutes)

- a. Share prayer requests (personal, familial, for the church/community, etc.). Write them down for follow-up during the week.
- b. If the group is large you may break into smaller pairs or triads for deeper, personal prayer.
- c. Close with a blessing, such as, "*May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and evermore. Amen.*"

### Additional Best Practices for Healthy Groups

- Start and End on Time: Respect everyone's schedules.
- Confidentiality: Remind members that what's shared in the group stays in the group.
- Encourage Participation: Create a space where everyone feels heard and valued.
- Rotate Roles: Share responsibilities for hosting, leading discussion, or providing snacks.



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## 1st Sunday After Epiphany - January 11, 2026

### “Standing in Jesus’ Way”

**Scriptures for Reference** Matthew 3:1-17

#### **Questions for Discussion**

- 1) **Observation & Tension:** In verse 14, John the Baptist—who has dedicated his entire life to preparing the way for the Messiah—suddenly tries to stop Jesus from being baptized. What do you think John was feeling or thinking in that moment that made him want to prevent the very person he was waiting for?
- 2) **Expectations vs. God’s Action:** The sermon highlights that John likely expected the Messiah to immediately bring justice, end exile, and establish a "utopian society." How does Jesus’ choice to stand in line with sinners for baptism disrupt those "fix the world now" expectations?
- 3) **Christological Insight:** Jesus tells John that His baptism is necessary to "fulfill all righteousness." If Jesus had no sin to repent of, what does His submission to baptism reveal about His identity and His mission to identify with us in our brokenness?
- 4) **Theological Depth:** The sermon notes that while we view baptism as a "washing," Jesus likely saw it as the "waves of our sin" crashing over Him. How does this shift your understanding of "righteousness"—moving it from a checklist of good deeds to a radical act of obedience and sacrifice?
- 5) **Gospel Connection:** Read verse 17 alongside the sermon’s point about the Cross. How does the Father’s public declaration of "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" sustain Jesus as He moves toward the rejection and suffering of the crucifixion?
- 6) **Personal Reflection & Surrender:** We often look for the "right leader" or the right political platform to fix society’s problems. Where are you currently tempted to rush past the "heart work" Jesus wants to do in you in order to focus on fixing the external problems "out there"?
- 7) **Hope & Formation:** Using the example of William Wilberforce, the sermon suggests that the Kingdom of God breaks through only after personal surrender. How does it change your perspective on your own struggles to know that Jesus isn't just a means to a better life, but a Savior who began His ministry by stooping to our level?