

Christ the King Parish

CONNECT GROUPS

Small Faith-Sharing Groups



Connect, Grow, Pray and Serve!

Connect is a wonderful opportunity to learn about other parishioners' faith journey and to share your own. I have found the faith talks to be inspirational and leave me with something to think about. Connect is a great way to gather with fellow parishioners in a relaxed environment. *Marybeth*

Our Connect group is great. So many like-minded people from all different backgrounds and the opportunity to really talk to one another about topics that we may not regularly think about. So glad for the opportunity. *Chuck*



Christ the King Parish Mission

Christ the King Parish is committed to proclaiming the Life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus and forming missionary disciples who will transform our world.

Our greatest hope is for each person to experience a transformational encounter with Jesus. To this end, we have committed to a Plan for Renewal.

LAST UPDATE: April 17, 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | <u>Page</u> |
|---|-------------|
| Parish Vision for Connect Groups ----- | 3 |
| Connect Group Coordinators – Qualifications, Role ----- | 3 |
| Connect Group Leaders – Qualifications, Role ----- | 3 |
| Connect Group Guidelines | |
| Basic Meeting Guidelines ----- | 3 |
| Group Membership Guidelines ----- | 4 |
| Member Expectations ----- | 4 |
| Meeting Resources and Content ----- | 4 |
| Sample Forms <i>(Optional Use- adjust or omit for your own group)</i> | |
| FAITH TALK GUIDELINES ----- | 5 |
| MEETING ROLES ----- | 6 |
| MEETING SCHEDULE ----- | 7 |
| SIGN UP SHEET ----- | 8 |

The Most current info can also be found on the Christ the King NH website:
[Connect — Christ the King Parish \(christthekingnh.org\)](http://christthekingnh.org)

Parish Vision for Connect Groups

Our parish vision for Connect groups is that they are small and mid-sized faith communities where each member is known, loved, and cared for in a personal way. They are led by active parishioners and will include anyone interested in exploring the Christian way of life. They commit to meeting regularly, seeking to grow in faith, staying connected with our parish, and striving to love each other well. Our parish will provide a framework for the meeting, share engaging resources for discussions and study, and help interested individuals connect with a group. The main Pillars for Connect Groups are: **Connect, Grow, Pray and Serve**

Connect Group Coordinators – Qualifications, Role

One or two individuals will serve as Connect Group Coordinators. The coordinator(s) help to form systems and policies for fruitful groups. The coordinator(s) will track, train, and communicate with leaders and their groups. They will coordinate launches, as well as maintain ongoing Connect Groups and facilitate access to parish resources, approving new resources as needed. They will be supported by the Coordinators of Fellowship. This role would require up to ten hours each month.

Connect Group Leaders – Qualifications, Role

Each group will have up to Leaders. In addition to being a disciple of Jesus, Connect leaders will be:

- Registered member of our parish and active in their faith life.
- Uphold the teachings of the Catholic church and the parish's mission, and vision.
- Open to instruction and correction (coachable)
- Willing to be guided by parish Connect Group Coordinator and parish leadership.
- Abide by the Connect Group 'Basic Guidelines'.
- Willing to recruit and welcome members for the group.
- Willing to share leadership duties as appropriate to raise up other Connect Leaders.

Connect Group Guidelines- Connect, Grow, Pray and Serve

Forming and leading a Connect Group is not a complicated process. It requires someone to lead by inviting or welcoming six - twelve people who have a desire to grow in their faith together. The main pillars of a Connect Group are to **Connect, Grow, Pray and Serve**. Getting together will include time to connect by catching up on each other's lives, to grow by studying God's Word and his teachings, and to pray together.

The group leaders and members will decide:

- when to meet (1 or 2 time per month)
- how to meet (in-person or online)
- How long to meet (1 – 2 hours)
- IF food will be included as part of the meetings
- The content of your meetings and faith study topics (videos, books, podcasts, faith talks etc.).

Leaders are responsible for communicating, organizing the regular gathering, and staying in contact with the members in the days between the gatherings.

Each group will adapt to members' needs and preferences. This may mean that, over time, groups will form, merge, change, take short breaks and regroup. The key point is to meet the "basic requirements" while supporting the spiritual and fellowship needs of the group members.

Basic Meeting Guidelines

- Meeting at least 8 months of the year, a minimum of once per month
- Uphold the teachings of the Catholic church and the parish's mission, and vision.
- Guided by parish Connect Group Coordinator and parish leadership.
- Agree to use resources approved by the parish (resources to be provided)
- Moving the members toward meeting the Pillars of "Connect, Grow, Pray & Serve".

Group Membership Guidelines

Members will include anyone interested in exploring the Christian way of life. Groups are open to everyone including those who have not been through the Alpha course. We encourage people to attend Alpha, as it can help provide a good foundation to build upon. Connect Groups are open to any religious affiliation.

Why Join a Connect Group?

Life-giving fellowship leads to deeper discipleship. Being part of a small group banded together for worship, learning, and fellowship! The purpose is to have a place for people to grow in their Christian journey through fellowship and discipleship and to have a place where they can be known and loved.

Member Expectations

- Be present at meetings, attending most of the meetings.
- Contribute to meetings including faith sharing, prayer, food, facilitation of meetings.
- Thru faith sharing talks, be willing to witness to the way(s) God is working in your life. Not everyone will be comfortable with this right away. However, after participating in the group, it is hoped that every member will feel safe in sharing something.
- Confidentiality (what is shared in the group, stays with the group)

Meeting Resources and Content

- Members can use a variety of content to grow and share their faith. These can include the following:
 - Faith Talks by members (see 'Faith Talk Guidelines below) –a good way for members to get to know each other.
 - Resources approved by the parish can be found on the parish website:
 - Word on Fire/FORMED: [Connect — Christ the King Parish \(christthekingnh.org\)](http://christthekingnh.org)

Connect Group - FAITH TALK GUIDELINES

(Optional) Use- adjust or omit for your own group)

- Faith talks are 5 - 10 minutes.
- If your first time sharing, share a little about your background life growing up, etc.
 - Talks can be about a time that God moved in your life, or key moments that have defined your faith. Other suggestions: a book/movie that helped you understand God/Faith/Church in a new way, a pilgrimage you took, how you overcame the challenges of praying, how God seems to be using you in the world around you or in the lives of others, how God is leading you in fulfilling your purpose in life, ways you practice being aware of God's presence around you, the gifts of the Holy spirit in your life, etc.
- Prepare one or two questions to pose to the Group for discussion after your talk. These questions should help others consider their own personal reflections on what was shared. A small group discussion will follow based on your talk and questions to ponder relating to your talk.
- Visual aids are fine but not necessary.
- It is encouraged that you practice and time your talk at least once prior to the meeting.

Connect Group - MEETING ROLES

(Optional Use- adjust or omit for your own group)

Greeter – one or two people to greet guests as they arrive in the meeting area, welcome.

MC – Welcome, introducing and thanking the Faith Talk speaker, and, with the timekeeper's help, directing the flow of the night. You will work closely with the Timekeeper.

Timekeeper – please follow timekeeper's chart. Basically, you will need to get everyone's attention at the beginning of the session; then a gentle wave if the person delivering the Faith Talk exceeds 10 minutes; and again, to give members notice that discussion ends in 5 min. You will work closely with the MC.

Group Grace - one person to lead the blessing before meal.

Potluck –Bringing in a potluck entrée for a future Connect Group get together.

Dessert – Dessert for each Connect Group get together.

Faith Talk – 10 minutes or less, Possible topics: how God has moved in your life or someone you know to bring you to this point, book, or movie review which you felt was inspirational. End with 1 or 2 questions for the group to discuss.

Gospel Reader - one person to read the Gospel for the Sunday following our Connect get together.

Ending Prayer – one person to lead ending prayer.

Clean Up –Sweep, wipe countertops and tables, and put chairs back into position, remove trash.

House Hosting – Hosting the Connect Group in your home? Keep it simple, nothing fancy.

Connect Group - SAMPLE MEETING SCHEDULE - #1

(Optional Use- adjust or omit for your own group)

- 6:15 Arrive
- 6:30 Welcome, Announcements, Grace, Meal time
- 7:00 Faith Talk speaker
- 7:15 Small group discussion
- 7:45 Prayer intentions, Announcements, questions, comments
Reminder for next Connect time and place
- 8:00 members to sign-up to volunteer for next connect
Depart

Connect Group - SAMPLE MEETING SCHEDULE #2

- 6:15 Arrive
- 6:30 Welcome, Announcements, Grace, Meal time
- 7:00 Faith Talk speaker
- 7:15 Small group discussion
- 7:45 Prayer intentions shared
Announcements, questions, comments
Reminder for next Connect time and place
- 8:00 members to sign-up to volunteer for next connect
Depart
- 6:00 Welcome, Announcements & Group Grace
After grace, announce time for Food and Social time.
- 6:50 Timekeeper will check to make sure MC is ready to introduce our Faith
Talk speaker,
Introduce speaker.
- 7:00 Announce - Dessert Time immediately after faith talk, then
Announce - Discussion Time Begins
- 7:30 Timekeeper will remind each table that discussion time is to end in 5
minutes and will let them know when 5 minutes is up, then
- 7:35 Timekeeper will check with MC, then will ring bell for MC to make the
following announcements

- Announce Gospel Reading
- Announce Closing Prayer
- Ask for prayer requests from everyone.

Thank you to all who contributed to the meeting.

7:50 Ask members to make announcements, questions, comments
Announce music time

8:00 After music – Last Announcements and reminder for next Connect time
and place
Ask members to visit the sign-up sheet to volunteer for next connect

Connect GROUP- SAMPLE SIGN UP SHEET

(Optional) Use- adjust or omit for your own group)

| Volunteers Needed | Date |
|--|--------------------|
| Host – _____ LOCATION/ADDRESS: _____ _____ | _____ _____ |

| | |
|--|--|
| Greeters – 1 vol. needed to greet guests, hand out name tags & collect name tags at end of get together | |
| Timekeeper – follow timekeeper schedule | |
| MC – follow /read itinerary, introduce Faith Talk | |
| Group Grace – prepare grace | |

| Potluck | Your Name | Type of Food |
|---|-------------------|--------------|
| 3 volunteers - prepare enough for 4-6 servings | 1. Protein | |
| | 2. Protein | |
| | 3. Salad | |
| | | |
| | | |

| | |
|---|--|
| Faith Talk or Book Discussion – 1 vol. needed (see guidelines) | |
|---|--|

| | | |
|---|----|--|
| Dessert – two volunteers needed – prepare enough for 4-6 servings | 1. | |
| | 2. | |

| | |
|--|--|
| Gospel Reader – read next Sunday's gospel | |
|--|--|

| | |
|---|--|
| Ending Prayer – thanksgiving & prayer requests | |
|---|--|

| | | |
|---|----|--|
| Clean Up – two volunteers to clean up trash, wipe tables and put everything back to its proper place | 1. | |
| | 2. | |