

A group of people are sitting on a dark blanket on a grassy area, likely a park or waterfront, during a golden sunset. In the background, a city skyline with several tall buildings is visible against the bright orange and yellow sky. A body of water is also visible, with a small white sailboat in the distance. The overall mood is warm and relaxed. A large, bold, red text 'ARE YOU' is overlaid on the top half of the image, and a white text 'small group discussion guide' is overlaid on the bottom half. A thick red vertical bar is on the right edge of the image.

ARE YOU

small group discussion guide

USING THIS BOOKLET

Are you connecting? Are you growing? Are you serving? Are you sharing? Over the course of the next four weeks, we are going to be addressing these four critical questions. These four questions are vital questions for us to consider on our journey with Jesus. This booklet is designed to help widen your perspective and give you clear next steps for each of these questions.

As you meet, begin each session with prayer; acknowledging God that you are setting this time to learn more about Him and His plan for your lives. Ask God to reveal His truth and promises as you journey and develop your relationships with Him. Each session begins with a question that you are more than welcome to use to get the conversation rolling or you can come up with your own. After that, read the designated Scripture, watch the video teaching and follow through with the Digging Deeper section. Then as a group consider together the Next Steps section and think for yourself what your next step will be, maybe even come up with your own next steps!

At the end of your time together, finish with a prayer. Simply thanking God for the time together and for the ability to learn more about Him. Open up for prayer requests and add to your prayer whatever else God may be placing on your heart. Remember silence is okay, there is no hurry when praying! Hopefully this discussion guide will help you understand what it means to live a life that honours God, all for Jesus by connecting, growing, serving and sharing!

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”

- Acts 2:42-47

****Please note all materials including video teachings and discussion guides are now available through our FAC Experience App under the ‘Resources’ tab.***



TO BEGIN

To get things started, let's go around the group and answer these questions:

What made you decide to get connected into a Small Group? Besides the church community, what other communities are you connected to?

DIGGING DEEPER

Honouring God means developing relationships and connecting with people. We are continually learning to connect with others wherever God has us. Here at First Alliance Church, we desire to see everyone have a personal connection with God and a vital connection with others.

- What stood out to you the most from this past weekend service?

Together, open your Bibles and read from Matthew 9:9-13 then watch Session 1.

As followers of Jesus, we desire to learn to live, walk, and talk like Jesus did. He is our greatest example of how we are to live out our lives on a daily basis. In this session we are asking ourselves the question “Are you connecting?” God longs to connect with you through a relationship with Jesus Christ! He also wants you to be connected and in relationship with other people. As a church community grows we must be intentional about connecting with smaller groups of people in relationship.

- Why do you think it is important to connect?
- Do you find it hard or easy to connect with others? What are some of your fears when you think about connecting?
- What does it mean to be a member of the body of Christ? If you aren’t already, what’s stopping you from becoming a member of the body?

In Matthew 9, Jesus invites Matthew, a tax collector, to come and follow him. We serve a God that is full of grace, and so much so that He reaches out to the broken-hearted, the sinner, the sick, the feeble, and the downtrodden. He reaches out to you and me. Remember Jesus is our example here, so what can we learn from him? The answer is simple, people matter. The people who are hurting, the people who are sinners (you and I), and the people who need hope matter to God. We all matter to God.

- Who in your life do you think God has brought along your path to share His hope?

Jesus reaches out to those who know that they don’t have it all together. Jesus has called the sinner, not the righteous. Those who think they have it all together are missing out on the extravagant grace that God offers us.

Learning to connect can be difficult for some of us. To start connecting, you must be willing to share the exciting things and the hard things happening in your life. The key is to be open and honest. Every day ask

yourself how you can connect with people and share God's love with the people in your life. Who knows who God might bring along your path?

- What are some simple ways to connect with people at church? In your community?

There are many ways to get connected at FAC and in the community.

What's your next step to connect?

At the church:

- Join a Small Group through Grouplink - Sunday October 2nd 6-8 PM – Contact: Janelle @ jemery@faccalgary.com
- Serve as a Small Group Leader or Coach – Contact: Grant @ gsylvester@faccalgary.com
- Men@first Small Groups – Contact: Grant @ gsylvester@faccalgary.com
- Women2women weekly Tuesday's Bible Study – Contact Hilarie @ hforkheim@faccalgary.com

At FAC we desire to have church wide involvement in our communities. As we think about our neighbourhoods and communities and how to reach them, we cant ignore the fact that our Small Groups are spread all over the areas we want to engage with. The big question is how do we do this? Here are some ideas to get involved:

In the community:

- ✓ Prayer walks – Take one of your evenings and go for a walk in your neighbourhood. You will be amazed at how God will reveal needs through this process.
- ✓ Know your neighbours - Start having chats with the people living around us.
- ✓ React to the needs around you - Maybe you have an elderly couple on your street. Shovel their walk, mow their grass, etc.

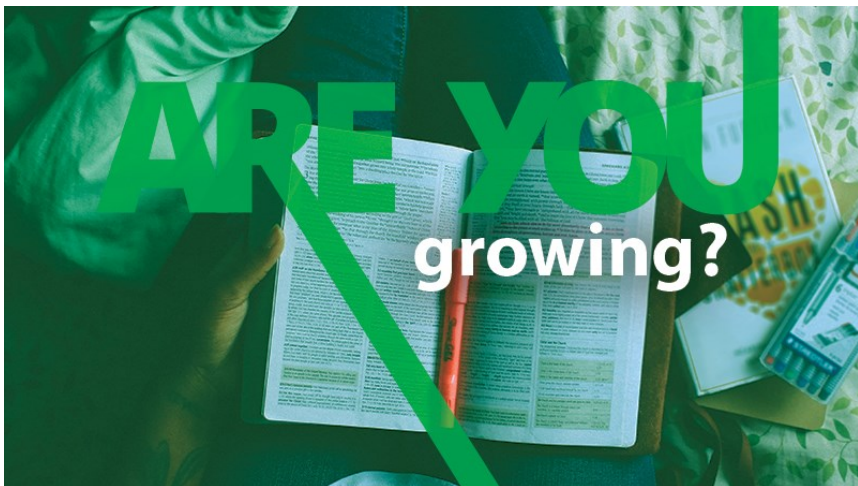
- ✓ Involve your groups in larger projects – We partner with numerous organizations that are always looking for help. Maybe your group can work a dinner at the Seed or stage an apartment at the Sonshine Center. There are endless opportunities.
- ✓ Community Events – How about a block party? Get a couple of barbecues in your garage and invite neighbours along. Most areas have community centers and have events there like movies in the park, stampede breakfasts, etc. see if your group can be involved by volunteering somehow. It's a great way to meet the people in your area.

These are just a few examples of how to engage but it is more fun if we can come up with other ideas on our own. Just find the gaps and fill them and then pray for other opportunities. If you need any support or have an idea for your Small Group but need help, please feel free to connect with AI our Community Impact Pastor at ahall@faccalgary.com

- What will be your next step?

PRAISE & PRAYER POINTS

Spend some time praying for each other's prayer requests and share what God is doing in your life.



TO BEGIN

To get things started, let's go around the group and answer this question:

Where is your favorite place to be alone and ponder life and the things of God?

DIGGING DEEPER

As followers of Jesus, we are continually growing to become like him and helping others to do so as well. In this session we are asking ourselves the question "Are you growing?" If we are to become like Jesus, then growing in our knowledge and understanding of him is vital. Here at FAC, Grow is important to us because we want to know who Jesus is so we can become like Him. This is a journey that will never end!

- What stood out to you the most from this past weekend service?
- Why do you think it's important to continue grow?

As a group, watch Session 2 then read these verses below several times over, stopping after each word or phrase. After you have done this, share your thoughts within your group.

“You must grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. All glory to him, both now and forever! Amen.” – 2 Peter 3:18

“Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.” – Romans 12:2

- How do these verses apply to your life? What will you do about it?
- What behaviours and customs of this world do you copy? What has been the most difficult thing for you to change? What do you think God is calling you to change right now?

God’s desire is that you would come to know Him and become like Him in character. At FAC we are committed to helping you grow in your understanding of God and deepening your relationship with Him.

- How are you growing? What is the one area in which you would like to grow?

There are two practical and simple ways to grow as a follower of Jesus, and that’s through reading the Word of God and through praying. Spending time in the Word of God will not only challenge you as a person, but change you as well. The more you read the Word of God and spend time in prayer the more your life, your attitudes, and your outlook on life will transform.

- How can you make reading the Bible a part of your everyday life?

The Scripture is full of truth. Learn to apply Scripture to your personal life on a daily basis and watch transformation happen!

Just as reading the Word of God is important as you grow in your faith, so is praying! When you pray, most people like to find a quiet place where they can be still each day and spend time with God.

- What does praying mean to you? Do you pray? If you do, what does that look like?

Praying isn't always about us and our needs. Jesus has commanded us to love others more than we love ourselves! Learn to stop and pray for others as needs arise.

- How can you make prayer a part of your everyday life?

There are many ways to grow at FAC. Over the next few minutes, share what next steps you are going to take to grow. If you have any questions feel free to connect with Heather at

hbrown@faccalgary.com.

What's your next step to grow?

CLASSES & COURSES

Alpha

Sept. 29 – Dec. 1, 2016
Thursday - Harvest ABCDE
6:30 - 9:00 PM

Growing Stronger in Your Faith

Sept. 22 – Nov. 24, 2016
Thursday – Grade 5/6 Room
6:45 - 8:30 PM

Discovering What the Future Holds

Sept. 22 – Nov. 24, 2016
Thursday - Meeting Place 1
7:00 – 9:00 PM

Financial Peace

Sept. 29 – Nov. 24, 2016
Thursday - 255AB
7:00 – 9:00 PM

Precept Ministries

Afternoon
Sept. 14 – Nov. 30, 2016
Wednesday - Meeting Place 2
12:30 - 3:15pm

Evening

Sept. 14 – Nov. 30, 2016
Wednesday - Meeting Place 2
6:45 - 8:15 PM

PRAYER @ FAC

Prayer Retreat

Oct. 8, 2016
Saturday at FAC
8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

Prayer Gatherings

Sundays @ 1:30 PM - Gym

Wednesday Evening Prayer

Wednesdays throughout the year
Prayer Centre – 7 PM

SUPPORT & RECOVERY

Celebrate Recovery

Tuesday Year Round - Room
255AB
7:00 – 9:00 PM

DivorceCare

Sept. 22 – Dec. 8, 2016
Thursday's - Grade 5/6 Room
6:30 - 8:30 PM

Grief Support

Sept. 7 – Oct. 19, 2016
Wednesday's - Meeting Place 1
7:00 – 9:00 PM

Resolving Everyday Conflict

Sept. 29 – Dec. 1, 2016
Thursday - Room 247AB
7:00 – 9:00 PM

Widows' Connection

Sept. 17, Oct. 15, Nov. 19
Saturday - Meeting Place 1
1:00 – 3:00 PM

PRAISE & PRAYER POINTS

Spend some time praying for each other's prayer requests and share what God is doing in your life.



TO BEGIN

To get things started, let's go around the group and answer this question:

When you think of the word servant, what comes to mind?

DIGGING DEEPER

Honouring God means we become the hands and feet of Jesus in our world. We are to be salt and light wherever we go. In this session we are asking ourselves the question "Are you serving?" Here are some more questions to ponder as we go through this session: Where do you serve at FAC? Where do you serve in our world?

- What stood out to you the most from this past weekend service?

As a group, watch Session 3 then read these verses below several times over, stopping after each word or phrase. After you have done this, share your thoughts within your group.

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If

anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.” 1 Peter 4:10-11

“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago.” Ephesians 2:10

A servant’s role is to think more about others than about themselves. In our society, the term servant seems restricting and weak. However, Jesus came into this world and would forever change how we would look at the word servant. We can experience freedom when we understand that fulfillment and purpose comes not from indulging oneself but having the opportunity to serve others.

Why do we serve? You were created to serve God. You have a purpose in this life. God has shaped you for ministry. God always equips us with what we need and He has given each of us a unique SHAPE to serve Him. This acronym stands for our Spiritual gifts, our Heart, our Abilities, our Personality, and our Experiences (SHAPE).

- What comes to your mind when you think about your SHAPE?
- How can you use your SHAPE to serve God?

You are called to serve God. Any time you use your God-given abilities to help others, you are fulfilling your calling. Don’t sit on the sidelines any longer. Take an active part in serving people both inside and outside the walls of the church. There is no small service to God; it all matters to Him.

- What God-given ability or personal experience can you offer to the church?
- What is holding you back from accepting God’s call to serve Him?

Remember that serving is not optional; it is the very heart of the Christian life. We are to serve and to give. As followers of Jesus, our focus should shift to living a life of service. Those who serve will have a reward in this life and the life to come.

Read the entire verse several times, stopping after each word or phrase. After you have done this, share your thoughts within your group.

“Your attitude must be like my own, for I, the Messiah, did not come to be served, but to serve and to give My life.” Matthew 20:28

- In what way can you see yourself passionately serving others and loving it?
- How can you make the best use of what God has given you?

Each and every day you can use your gifts, talents, abilities, and resources to serve God! Every morning ask the Holy Spirit to guide you and show you opportunities to serve Him and the people around you. Serving starts with the having the mindset of loving God and loving people. It may take some time to figure out where to serve and that’s okay!

Trust that the Holy Spirit will show you who and where you can serve. It might be just a simple act of assistance. As followers of Jesus, serving needs to be a part of our everyday life at the church and in the community.

- What other opportunities can you think of where you can serve whether in your community or in the church?

There are many places both inside and outside the church to serve.

What’s your next step to serve? Here’s two areas at FAC that are great need.

- DiscoveryLand – Help serve our infants through Grade 4 – Contact: Cindy @ cduffin@faccalgary.com



TO BEGIN

To get things started, let's go around the group and answer this question:

Who first shared the Gospel with you?

DIGGING DEEPER

Honouring God means we share the good news of Jesus with the people around us. We have a message that needs to be shared. In this session we are asking ourselves the question "Are you sharing?" Here are some more questions to ponder as we go through this session: Who are you influencing for Jesus? Who are you talking to Jesus about?

- What stood out to you the most from this past weekend service?

Together, open your Bibles and read from Matthew 28:18-20 then watch Session 4.

In Matthew 28:16-20, we get the last push and the final drive of the

whole book. Jesus is giving his disciples the command to make more of what he has made of them, disciples. A disciple is a follower of Jesus. The central command here given by Jesus is to, “make disciples.” The process of making disciples contains three aspects, “go,” “baptizing,” and “teaching.” We are to GO! This requires activity, movement. You cannot share where you have not gone. After people receive Jesus Christ as their Saviour, the next step is baptism. This is a public confession of an inward transformation. The last and ongoing step is teaching. As Christians, it’s important for us as a community to be learning and growing in our walk with God.

When Jesus tells his disciples to make disciples of all nations, Jesus is describing an all-encompassing form of discipleship. Jesus broke through a variety of barriers. He invites all people to partake and become a disciple regardless of gender, religious, social, or economic barriers. He is calling everyone into a personal discipleship relationship with himself. The Great Commission looks outward because of the compelling mission to make disciples of all nations. This commission includes sharing the message of the Gospel and the teachings of Jesus to all the nations including people right here in Calgary.

- Is making disciples a priority in your life? How can you make it one?
- How has the Great Commission impacted your life?

Read the verse below several times, stopping after each word or phrase . After you have done this, share your thoughts within your group.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8

- How can we learn to rely on the Holy Spirit to lead and to guide us when sharing our faith?

Just as others have reached out and shared Jesus’ love with us, we

need to reach out and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with others. As followers of Jesus, we need to take time in our prayer life to think of someone who needs to hear the message of Jesus. Often times the Holy Spirit will place the names of people on our hearts to pray for. Ask God who you need to share the Gospel with? Take the initiative and step out of your comfort zone!

Right away, think about whom you can share the message of Jesus with.

As you go about your life, connect with other people who have similar hobbies or interests and invest in those relationships. We are to go out into our world telling people about the love of Jesus. A great place to start is where you're time is already invested.

If no one comes to mind right away, keep asking God to guide you and bring people along your path to share the Gospel with them! Let us never stop telling people about the Good New of Jesus Christ and what He has done for humanity! Simply obey, go out and share the good news!

- What do you think your part in the movement is? How are you living out your part in sharing the good news of Jesus Christ?

What's your next step to share?

Community Impact:

Pastor Al – ahall@facalgary.com

- Assist with Tool Team or Oil Change Days
- School breakfast programs
- Seasonal drives for food, toys, or other items
- Volunteer on one of our teams

Mosaic Ministries:

Pastor Pat - pworsley@facalgary.com

Pastor David - dkang@facalgary.com

- Conversational English with new Canadians



First Alliance

a christian & missionary alliance church

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