



## GATHER & REFRESH

10 TO 15 MINUTES

The first 10 to 15 minutes, when latecomers are still arriving, is a good time to casually gather and set the tone for a hospitable meeting.

Sharing a rotation of light refreshments – especially something sweet to drink – may help your group participants shift into “community mode.” There’s a social comfort that comes with having something in your hands to do when the conversation gets slow.



## CONNECT - SHARING

15 TO 30 MINUTES

Once the meeting starts, most groups spend a little time sharing announcements and updating one another on what has been going on in their lives. We don’t insist that everyone shares, but we also must be sure that no one dominates this time so that everyone at least gets a chance!

As your group jells, this part of the gathering may grow in emphasis and move to a deeper level.



## REFLECT - STUDY & DISCUSSION

45 MINUTES

This part of the meeting is dedicated to the study, discussion, and application of the previous week’s sermon. Group members should come having watched the focal sermon (in person or online) and having reviewed the discussion questions for the week.

This section will typically conclude with one or more questions when the larger group will break out into smaller (gender-specific) groups for discussion (save at least 10 minutes for that).



## PROTECT - PRAYER

15 TO 30 MINUTES

Prayer is the way we cover one another with divine protection. Groups may choose to remain in their sub-divided (gender-specific) groups, or they can come back together to pray for one another.

We recommend using sentence prayers (one person prays for just one request at a time) to enable folks who are new or introverted to feel more comfortable being a part of the prayer time.

## DISMISS

**YOU MAY ALSO CONSIDER...** A brief time of **worship** might be a nice addition if your group is up for it, though that’s not an essential element.

Also, while this is the typical flow that we want to drive groups toward in their regular gatherings, *it’s OK to occasionally digress* and follow the Spirit’s leading into focus on special situations that may arise in the life of the group or church.