

Read this page before using the Guide in your Group.

Community Group Leaders,

As we hone our membership process this year, we are trying to do better about equipping you to do the things you *need to do* to lead others well in their process of thinking about and committing themselves to Membership at Redeemer's. Here are the highlights of what you need to know before you use this guide:

1. We want every Community Group to use this guide in their gathering of the week January 7-13. It is your way of making your group a space that will point people towards deliberate thoughtfulness on what it means to be All In at Redeemer's. We thank you for postponing any other studies or plans you had for this week. This guide is written to take about 1 hour and 15 minutes.
2. You are not being asked to process any Membership cards or commitments this year. You can expect to get a list of your CG members who have made the covenant of Membership at Redeemer's in February. We hope that this helps you identify if there are people in your group that you can encourage towards this step in their walk with Christ.
3. As a Community Group Leader, you have confirmed an expectation that *you* will commit yourself to membership in this local body of believers in order to set the biblical example of one who would serve as a ministry leader (deacon) of this church.
4. Membership recommitment in January is for former members to rededicate their covenant. It is not for first-time pledges of membership. Anyone wishing to do this should be pointed to our Membership Class which will begin February 2018.

Thank you for leading your group through this session. You've been prayed for by our Elders and Staff.

How to use this guide

Everything in this guide can be read aloud. *Questions are in blue.* Please have others read the **Bible passages** listed, and you may read the **black text** aloud or have someone else read those passages aloud.



A message to our church (that's you!)

Membership at Redeemer's as of January 1 is zero.

This month, however, we hope to see hundreds of people reaffirm a commitment to allow God to powerfully use their life for the sake of His Kingdom. And just as covenants were made throughout Scripture between men and God, the Elders at Redeemer's are asking everyone who has been committed to this local body to weigh thoughtfully and sincerely if we will bring all our resources and passions and desires to the table, and reaffirm a covenant with Christ.

We want once more to purposefully agree to dedicate this year of our Membership with this church, Redeemer's Fellowship, to being effective as the Church, the bride of Christ, sent into the world with the mission of showing God's love by our example, of committing to Community together, and of reaching every ear with the Gospel: Jesus saves.

Tonight we want to dedicate our time as a Community Group to survey the purpose of the Church, and to ask if we are willing to be All In with what God wants to do in 2018 through our church, Redeemer's Fellowship.

We will not be processing any Membership cards here in this group tonight or this month; that will be yours to do as an individual. But we will devote ourselves together to be thoughtful of our roles in Christ's Kingdom tonight, will pray together, and continually encourage one another to do all that Christ has commanded us, joyfully and not with groaning, as that would be of no advantage to us.

Modern Parables

(These stories and names are made up as an illustrative tool.)

Stewart became a Christian five years ago when he was baptized after attending Redeemer's for 6 months. He always lives at the edge of his income, has had 3 raises at his job in those 5 years, and every December he gives \$50 to the church. "Grace giving" he says, means he's supposed to give whatever he's ok with. Stewart drops his kids off for class when he attends every other weekend. He asks them if they enjoyed their class, but has never inquired what they learned about Jesus. He checked a box on a card once about serving as a greeter but has never returned the call he got from the church office. Stewart isn't interested in becoming a member of this church because he's not in a Community Group, which seems to be one of the requirements for him to join.

Where would Redeemer's be in 5 years if every member was like Stewart?

How effective would our church be for the Gospel?

Amy became a Christian two years ago at a retreat. The next year she baptized her husband Jeff who came to faith by Amy showing him weekly what she was reading in her Bible daily. They soon figured out how to carve out 2% of their tight budget and set it aside to give weekly to the church as an offering of worship, and are planning how they could afford to make it 4% next year. "Grace giving," they've decided, should be their best effort to respond sacrificially to the fact that God sacrificed His own Son in order to give them Grace. They joined a Community Group 6 months ago and started serving in the nursery because their friends had a baby in there. Amy asked the girls in her Community Group to pray weekly for her because she was thinking about quitting her job as a teacher, but is now wondering if that can be her best relational platform to be an effective ambassador for the Gospel of Christ.

Where would Redeemer's be in 5 years if every member was like Amy?

How effective would our church be for the Gospel?

Being the Church

Read Acts 2:44-47

Describe the commitment level of the members of this first Church. What did their encounter with Christ change about their lives?

Read 2 Timothy 2:4

How is the life of a Stewart or an Amy portraying this passage to a world who is watching them represent Christ?

Read 2 Cor 5:20

What does it mean for every member of the Church to be an ambassador of Christ?

Read Romans 12:5

*What happens when the church become a people who merely **attend** a weekend service alone, rather than **tending** to the business of our heavenly Father together?*

Where would Redeemer's be in 5 years if every member was committed in the same way as you are committed, in your faith, your offerings, your service, your relationships?

Membership won't make you committed to Christ the King. But hopefully your commitment to Christ points you towards a reverence for His Bride, the Church, and a desire to belong to a local body of believers in the same way that every Christian in the New Testament did.

Tonight, let's close in prayer for the Church's effectiveness in this world, one of the most prominent themes of prayer in the New Testament. I'll ask four different people to each pray for one of these things now:

1. That Christ's global church will be faithful to the Gospel.
2. That our Community Group will exemplify God's love for one another.
3. That we as individuals will honor Christ fully in our role in our local church.
4. That God will continually direct our Elders at Redeemer's.