

The Connection

Tools for connecting with God and Abundant Life Church




Abundant Life
Church

Connecting with God

There are many different ways to connect with God. Perhaps the two most basic ways are through: Reading the Bible, and prayer.

The Bible

The Bible is our best tool in understanding who God is, and hearing His desires for us.

“All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we’re wrong and teaches us to do what’s right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

One easy way to begin connecting with God through the Bible is by using:

- A Bible reading plan or devotional
- A journal

As you read the Bible along with a plan or devotional and come across a verse that has personal significance, raises a question, or offers a life lesson or challenge, record it on a new page in your journal.

A helpful tool for connecting with God through scripture is with the following process we call “SOAP:”

SCRIPTURE

Write down the key verse in its entirety in your journal.

OBSERVATION

Now write down what you observe or see happening in the verse. What are the facts and details in the verse? What is going on? Who is involved? What words or themes are important? What is the verse saying?

APPLICATION

Now write down what action, faith step, or new way of thinking the verse is calling you to take. How is this verse challenging you to respond?

PRAYER

Finally, write a prayer to God in response to this verse. This may look like a prayer praising God for his character and attributes. It may be a prayer confessing an area where you have been convicted or fall short. It may be a prayer for strength or courage to take a step of faith. It may be a prayer asking God to intervene in a situation.

Prayer

Prayer is our primary vehicle to communicate with God. It invites God’s power into our lives. Prayer is the natural result of a growing relationship with God. Talk to God throughout the day as part of your thinking and set aside time to talk things through with Him.

A helpful tool for prayer is the “ACTS” approach:

ADORATION:

“Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom.” Psalm 145:3

Begin your time of prayer by acknowledging who God is. You may start your prayer time by singing God a song of worship, or listening to a favorite worship song. You may read God a Psalm of praise from the book of Psalms. Or you may simply complete the following sentence, “God I worship you for...,” or “God you are...” This time of adoration will set the tone for the remainder of your prayer time.

CONFESSION:

“People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them they will receive mercy.” Proverbs 28:13

Confession allows us to come clean with ourselves and God and to acknowledge the areas that we have fallen short. In order for true confession to take place, it’s important to be honest and specific. Instead of acknowledging to God that “I am a sinner,” try to be honest and specific about the areas where you struggle. Your prayer might sound something like this, “Today I chose to do my own thing instead of listening to my spouse. I acted in my own self interest. I need your forgiveness for being selfish.” Or, “Today I had a short fuse and blew up at a co-worker. I did not demonstrate patience and belittled her at work. I need your forgiveness for expressing my anger in a way that did not honor you.”

Being specific when confessing in prayer allows you to experience freedom from guilt and gain a renewed strength to pray for help in this area of your life.

THANKSGIVING:

“Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.” 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Thanksgiving allows us an opportunity to reflect on all that God is doing in and through our lives. Sometimes we can take all our blessings for granted. Sometimes we may feel like nothing’s going right until we stop and really think about it. Take some time to reflect on the answered prayers, personal and spiritual growth, relational blessings and material provision and blessings you have experienced. Be specific as you express your thankfulness to God. You may fill in the following statement, “God thank you for....”

SUPPLICATION:

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” Philippians 4:6

Supplication is a big word that simply means requests. This is the time when we make requests to God. Many times we start here in our prayer times. But our prayers are much different when we spend time in adoration, confession and thanksgiving before making our requests. Frankly, it reminds us God is not a “vending machine” for our needs! The Bible says, that there is nothing too big or small for God to handle. God is concerned about all of the details of our lives. So bring all of the things that concern you before God. You may pray for your job, family, relationships, other people, circumstances, direction or wisdom and health. A great book to consider reading is “Too Busy Not to Pray,” by Bill Hybels.

Connecting with Abundant Life

There are a lot of ways to connect to what's going on at Abundant Life Church. Here are the most important:

Attend a weekend service.

The first and perhaps easiest step is to regularly attend one of our weekend services. In our weekend services, you have the opportunity to worship, to apply the Bible to your life, and to hear about upcoming opportunities to serve, connect and grow.

Serve in ministry.

It's easy to volunteer at Abundant Life. You get to meet others and help out in a meaningful way. It can be as simple as helping by shaking a few hands in the lobby, to participating in coffee service, to teaching or leading a small group. We'll help you pick a place to plug in and help out!

Share your story.

You may have just started attending Abundant Life, but if you like what you're experiencing, whether you are just exploring who God is, or you are a long time Christ-follower, you've got a story to share. By sharing, you have the opportunity to invite others to Abundant Life who may join you in getting connected.

Join a Lifegroup.

Our Lifegroups and other small groups are where you can truly connect with others at a more intimate level. We believe growth happens best in the context of relationships, and our small groups are the best place to develop new friends as you "study, pray, serve, and play" together.



Growing in the context of relationships

Some important ways to connect and grow with others at Abundant Life Church are through Connecting Events and Lifegroups.

CONNECTING EVENTS FOR MEN

- Men's Breakfast's
- Retreats
- Interest Groups
- Sportsmen's Banquet

CONNECTING EVENTS FOR COUPLES

- Marriage Retreats & Conferences

CONNECTING EVENTS FOR WOMEN

- Christmas Brunch
- Retreats
- Women of Faith
- Interest Groups

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- The Bridge, a monthly connecting event for highschoolers
- Tag, a monthly connecting event for Junior Highers
- Seven01 in the Valley, a community for adults 18-25
- Abundant Life University, seminars offered between lifegroup seasons to enhance your journey of growing closer to God and others.

Dates and times for upcoming Connecting Events can be found at coolchurch.com or in Cool Stuff.





lifegroups

Lifegroups help a growing church feel small. A lifegroup is a group of 6-15 people who meet in a convenient community location at least twice per month to make new friends, have fun, and grow closer to God as they study, pray, serve and play together.

Lifegroups have three seasons. Each season is 10-12 weeks long and is followed by a 6-week break.

Lifegroups do four things together:



Specialty lifegroups include: _____

CARE GROUPS

- Grief Share
- Divorce Care
- Genesis Groups
- Men of Honor
- Women of Valor
- Changes that Heal
- Substance Abuse



starting
POINT

a lifegroup environment for those taking their first steps with God.

How to connect to a group:

lifegroup seasons start at the following times:

- Fall Season Sign-ups: September/October
- Spring Season Sign-ups: January/February
- Summer Season Sign-ups: May/June

You can sign up for a lifegroup by one of four ways:

At the lifegroup kiosk in the lobby, by calling the leader directly using the lifegroup catalogue, by searching for available groups online at coolchurch.com, or by joining a friend's group.

Next Steps

Depending on where you are in your journey, your next step after leaving The Connection may be one of the aforementioned ways of connecting, like serving in a ministry, or joining a lifegroup. Or, perhaps you may be interested in attending the next Membership Class to learn more about Abundant Life and to commit to ALC as your church home.

I want to get connected!

Who do I contact? Where do I go? The following contacts will get you directed to the best resource for your questions:

Family Ministries, Pastor Josh Galgan

Children's Ministries

Email: Jenifer Stone at jens@coolchurch.com

Blogs: www.coolchurchkids.com
www.coolchurchfusion.wordpress.com

Student Ministries, Pastor Jason Roeder

Email: Jennifer Byerly at jenb@coolchurch.com

Blogs: coolchurchoyouth.com ([highschool](#))
coolchurchoyouth.com/unleashed ([junior high](#))

Serving/Volunteering and Membership Class, Pastor Jeff Boxell

Email: Cori Unglert at cori@coolchurch.com

Joining a lifegroup, Pastor Jeff Boxell

Email: Cori Unglert at cori@coolchurch.com

Serving in Worship Ministries, Pastor Scott Miller

Email: Amy Dunn at amy@coolchurch.com

Serving in First Impressions, Local Outreach or Pastoral Care Ministries,
Pastor Mike Vermace

Email: mike@coolchurch.com

Serving in Technical Ministries, Pastor Dave Proehl

Email: Nicole Kassab at nicole@coolchurch.com

Also feel free to contact the church office during normal business hours with any questions:

Phone: 503-658-8271 Email: office@coolchurch.com
Monday–Thursday 8:30AM-5:00PM
Fridays 8:30AM-12:00PM

A couple of blogs to follow:

Senior Pastor, George Powell's blog: www.pastorgeorge.com

Share your story: mycoolchurchstory.com

Cool Stuff

Our weekly bulletin, found in the lobby and online, has information on all upcoming dates of Membership Class, baptism opportunities and other activities at Abundant Life.

coolchurch.com

You can also find event information and much more (including our beliefs, bio's of our leadership and past messages) on our website.

