

Quickstart Guide: Ideas to incorporate fun and social fellowship into your group.

- Eat meals together! Potlucks, meals out, picnics, grill out. Mix it up, and sometimes let your group meeting JUST be about the meal and time around the table.
 - Meet up at a restaurant for a meal in place of group one week and make a point to go around the table to check in with everyone at some point in the night, but otherwise, let conversation flow and talk about your lives.
 - Grill out one evening and let everyone contribute with a potluck meal.
 - Amp it up with s'mores in the backyard or an ice-cream sundae bar.
 - Make a taco bar and have everyone bring something they love on tacos!
 - Pick an international theme, (or find a theme) and rally around it for a potluck dinner.
 - Around the holidays, bring your favorite holiday treat/appetizer for a special gathering- and be sure to take a moment to share why it's a favorite!
- Do you have kids in your lifegroup? Show up at their sporting events or performances. Is an adult in your group competing in something or performing nearby? Show up!
- Set up corn-hole in the church one Friday morning and enjoy some competition and fun before work with the guys in your group instead of your usual discussion. Don't meet at the church? Great, you just need a sidewalk, hallway or driveway.
- Head to a local sporting event together- baseball, football- college or high school, hockey.
- Field Day in your group - pair off as couples, split to girls v. guys, or pair up people who you know don't know each other very well to foster growth- backyard games are great for this.
- Meet up for a beach day or boat day- there are plenty of ways to have free group fun around Charleston. Tap into the interests of your group members.
- Gather together to watch a football game this fall or make plans for super bowl party when it finally rolls around.
- Have a pumpkin carving contest or visit Boone Hall for a seasonal event.
- Take it further and get-away together as a group for a day trip or weekend retreat. A little bit of fun and travel together always creates a bonding experience. Does someone have a mountain house or a favorite place to get away within driving distance? Go together and incorporate elements of fellowship like prayer, study, meals together, walks, FUN...
- Jump in and serve together- connect with a local outreach opportunity, or stick close to home and clean up a yard, serve a neighbor or colleague who needs a hand. Bring it to the church- serve on a Sunday morning team together - in next gen or on a hospitality team - how fun would a parking lot take-over be? As a leader, leverage serving together when your semester is winding down and it's time to multiply or people are looking for ways to stay together.
- Help a group member move.
- Have a holiday party or celebrate the major birthday/milestone of a group member.
- Go be tourists together in our town.

- Go to a conference or a concert together. Check out Awendaw Green on Wednesday nights.
- Go on a prayer walk together.
- Challenge another group to a golf tournament or something else competitive for a large group. YOU can play disc golf up the road by the Sewee Outpost or in the Park Circle area. Just need to bring your own discs.
- Participate in a charity walk around town that holds value for someone in the group- what a way to be on mission as a group and enjoy the experience together.
- Mix it up- have guys nights and girl's nights if you're in a co-ed group and let the group bond in unique ways.
- Have a game night every once in awhile- we can help you with fun group games that will make you laugh and create some moments to bond. BYOB(oardgame). Grab Ellen's Heads Up Game in the App store or download a conversation starter app (and be sure you read through the questions before bringing it to your group to screen any out!). Scattergories, Jenga, Apples to Apples, and Fish Bowl are other fun group games.
- Go to the prayer service once a month together.
- Encourage your group to share what service they regularly attend or where they serve so that people can make connections and sit or serve together.

As you make plans, remember to be sensitive to group members as far as cost, time, etc. And if you don't feel like you're the best candidate to captain fun for your group, find a member and delegate- just be sure to cast the vision, provide some guidance, and hold this up as a value for your group. You may not have to lead it, but you should be the first follower after your group's fun captain!

Ways to do it every time you gather:

- If you don't already, you can incorporate some social rhythms into your group life regularly simply by leaving some unstructured time at the beginning of your group for people to catch up- uniquely as a leader, you should look for ways to pull everyone in or ensure that everyone feels included. *You can help steer the conversation to make it inclusive rather than just two people chatting across the quietly waiting group.*
- Kickoff with an icebreaker question that helps everyone get warmed up for discussion and leads to learning more about each other- they don't always have to be thought-provoking or profound- sometimes silly is better for helping people bond and feel at ease. I start to connect when I hear how someone takes their coffee, one of the bravest things they've ever done, their favorite Christmas gift, or what caused them to experience joy lately. As your group grows more comfortable over time, your questions can grow deeper or even more quirky! This is a way to create small deposits of trust and listening.
- Take an evening or time with each group meeting to focus on one person- hear their story, or let them share about the peaks and valleys of their life if they don't yet have a faith story to share.