



www.  
**Western Hills**  
**Church.com**



# 101 Newcomers Class



**Like**



**Listen**



**Follow**

# 101: Newcomers Class

## Welcome!!

### GREETINGS FROM WESTERN HILLS CHURCH!

One of the first things you will notice about our church is that we are relational. So many people in America view “church” as a 90 minute weekend worship experience. This definition is far removed from the kind of community and purpose that existed in churches described by the Bible!

We want to get to know you a little. Let’s begin by sharing life with one another...

1. WHERE ARE YOU FROM?
2. WHAT AREA OF THE METRO DO YOU LIVE IN?
3. TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY.
4. WHAT DO YOU DO?
5. WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO FOR FUN?

# What is Church?

When the Bible uses the word “church,” it is the Greek word “ecclesia,” which means literally “the called out ones” or “those that have been called out.” It is used in the context of an adjective, not a noun. In our culture today we often view the church as a “place” or “thing,” not a description.

Our weekend service is not the church, it is a meeting or assembly of the church. Our group meetings are not the church, they are weekly meetings the church holds. The church is not a place of a meeting; God’s people are the church.

## The Church:

- “GOD’S PEOPLE AND MEMBERS OF HIS HOUSEHOLD” (FAMILY) EPH 2:19
- “A UNIFIED BODY OF PEOPLE BRINGING GLORY TO GOD” (ONENESS) JOHN 17:20-23
- “CHILDREN OF GOD” (HEIRS) GAL 3:26

## SO, ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE, WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

*The church is a local body of baptized believers... joined together under biblical leadership... to grow in the likeness of Christ... who express the love of Christ to one another... and work as a team to make disciples of Jesus.*

(Definition adopted from David Platt’s book *Follow Me.*)

### THERE ARE MANY TERMS USED TO DESCRIBE THE CHURCH AND ITS MEMBERS IN THE BIBLE:

- CHRISTIANS
- PEOPLE OF THE WAY
- BELIEVERS
- SOLDIERS/WARRIORS
- FAMILY OF GOD
- THE BODY OF CHRIST
- DISCIPLES

Let’s look at the concept of a disciple.

# What is a Disciple?

The Bible describes all Christians as disciples of Jesus. At Western Hills, we find unity in the biblical definition of a disciple found in Matthew 4:19:

**JESUS SAID, “FOLLOW ME AND I WILL MAKE YOU FISHERS OF MEN.”**

## A disciple of Jesus is...

1. ONE WHO FOLLOWS JESUS (FOLLOW ME)
2. ONE WHO IS BEING CHANGED BY JESUS (AND I WILL MAKE YOU)
3. ONE WHO IS ON MISSION FOR JESUS (FISHERS OF MEN)

In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus gave His disciples a mission. We often refer to this mission as “The Great Commission.” Here is what Jesus said:

*“All authority is given to me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations. Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”*

The mission of the church is to make disciples. In Mark 3:14, we see that this is how Jesus made disciples:

*“He appointed twelve - designating them apostles - that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach.”*

*The church has been given a mission – to know Jesus and to make Him known, to be disciples who make disciples, to follow Jesus and to lead others to follow Him. Jesus accomplished this mission through a relational environment with his twelve disciples. The churches in the Bible carried out this mission through relational environments or small groups that met in homes (see Acts 2:46). We are called to do the same – to make disciples relationally.*

# What is Discipleship?

DISCIPLESHIP HAPPENS WHEN ONE FOLLOWER OF JESUS HELPS ANOTHER FOLLOWER OF JESUS GROW SPIRITUALLY.

We believe that God has called every believer to be a disciple because the Bible makes this clear. By definition, a disciple of Jesus is someone who is on mission for Jesus. Again, the mission is given by Jesus in the Great Commission:

## Matthew 28:18-20

*And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

The mission of Jesus is to make disciples! Therefore, a disciple of Jesus makes disciples of Jesus. This is the heart of discipleship. **By joining a group, you can immediately engage in God's call for you to make disciples!!**

*Disciples are made in groups because all of our groups are relational environments. Let's take a closer look at relational environments...*

# What are Relational Environments?

As you have already seen, we believe in living life together *relationally*. Through relational environments, followers of Jesus and those who are seeking to follow Jesus can grow closer to God and to each other.

## We define a relational environment as...

- A GROUP OF 3 TO 18 PEOPLE.
- A GROUP LED BY A MORE MATURE DISCIPLE.
- A PLACE WHERE SAFE RELATIONSHIPS ARE BUILT AND PEOPLE CAN BE TRANSPARENT.
- A PLACE WHERE ACCOUNTABILITY, PASTORING, ENCOURAGEMENT, AND BIBLICAL TEACHING EXIST.
- FRIENDS REGULARLY MEETING TO SEEK AND FOLLOW JESUS TOGETHER.
- A PLACE WHERE THE BIBLE IS STUDIED AND APPLIED TO OUR LIVES.
- AN OPEN, WELCOMING PLACE WHERE PEOPLE CAN COME AND CONNECT TO GOD AND WITH OTHER BELIEVERS.
- **A COMMUNITY WITH A PURPOSE:** TO GROW AS DISCIPLES (FOLLOWERS) OF JESUS AND LEAD OTHERS TO FOLLOW JESUS.

*Optional Video: Shallow Small Groups*

---

*At Western Hills, we call our relational environments "Mission Teams" or "Groups."*

---

How would a relational environment, such as the one defined above, make it easier to grow closer to God than just attending a weekend worship service?

# What does it mean to be “connected?”

**QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION:** *Why are you considering the possibility of connecting with Western Hills Church?*

We consider someone to be connected to our church when they are connected to discipleship through one of our groups.

In a group, each person has the opportunity to grow closer to Jesus and mature spiritually. It is out of this growth that other opportunities in our church are realized (volunteering, giving, serving, leading, etc.).

## In a group you will...

- BUILD FRIENDSHIPS WITH OTHER BELIEVERS
- GROW AS A DISCIPLE OF JESUS WHO CAN MAKE DISCIPLES
- STUDY GOD’S WORD, WORSHIP, AND PRAY
- HAVE OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY AT WESTERN HILLS  
(GIVE, SERVE, LEAD, TEACH, DISCIPLE, VOLUNTEER, JOIN, ETC.)

**THE LIFE OF OUR CHURCH FAMILY PRIMARILY TAKES PLACE IN OUR GROUPS.  
WHEN YOU ARE CONNECTED TO A GROUP, YOU ARE CONNECTED TO THE BODY OF  
BELIEVERS AT WESTERN HILLS!**

# Next Step: You're Invited...

Thanks for taking this time to learn a little more about church, discipleship, and our groups! Before we finish, we want to help you get connected to your next step...

## ALL TYPES OF PEOPLE COMPLETE THIS CLASS:

- PEOPLE WHO HAVE GROWN UP IN CHURCH AND BEEN A PART OF THE CHURCH THEIR ENTIRE LIVES
- PEOPLE WHO DO NOT HAVE ANY CHURCH BACKGROUND OR A RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS
- PEOPLE FROM VARIOUS CHURCH DENOMINATIONS
- PEOPLE STRUGGLING, SEEKING GOD AND LOOKING FOR ANSWERS
- PEOPLE LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO JOIN GOD'S CHURCH AND MINISTER TO OTHERS
- PEOPLE SEEKING TO JOIN OUR CHURCH FAMILY THROUGH CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

With this in mind, we want to help you get connected to your next step(s):

1. **JOIN A GROUP** – Take a look at our available groups and prayerfully consider which you should attend. We have groups that are for men only, women only, and everyone. We have groups that are child friendly and/or student friendly. There are groups that meet on different days of the week and at different times. Some groups meet in homes while others meet at various locations around the city. We can help you find a few good options that you can consider.
2. **102: MEMBERSHIP CLASS** – Get a copy of your membership training booklet and sign up for our next membership class. We cover seven essential issues for our church in 102: the gospel, baptism, our mission and methods, stewardship/giving, our core beliefs, our church structure, and our membership covenant. Read the booklet and fill in the blanks on your own, then come to class ready to discuss and share. At the end of 102, you can submit a request to join our church membership.



3. **MEET WITH A PASTOR** – Do you have spiritual questions? Do you want to better understand church, discipleship, baptism, etc.? Do you need prayer and encouragement? Are you looking for biblical advice and direction? Do you need to learn how you can make the decision to follow Jesus and become one of His disciples? You can meet with one of our pastors by indicating your desire on your ***Next Step*** card.

**USE THE NEXT STEP CARD TO CONNECT TO YOUR NEXT STEP WITH  
YOUR CLASS LEADER OR HOST BEFORE YOU LEAVE.**

**THANK YOU FOR JOINING US!!**