

# SPIRITUAL LIFE & FORMATION

During my first four months on staff, my priority was to ask lots of questions to first understand what “is” at Mapleview and then to discern where the needs are that should be addressed in the sphere of spiritual formation. Of course, that required relationship building with the wonderful staff and people of Mapleview and listening to the stories of how God is working in the lives of people presently and through the years. Meetings were held with existing group leaders and those who had been apart of group life in the past.

A new approach to Spiritual Life & Formation began to emerge with a four-pronged approach to help people connect with God and connect with others using Classes, Studies, Support Groups, and the introduction of Connect Groups.

- Classes are short term group settings (i.e., 6-8 weeks), often meeting at the Mapleview campus. These are content driven and include elements of teaching and discussion.
- Studies are ongoing, larger group settings with an emphasis on a teacher delivering content.
- Support Groups are small group environments focusing on specific life circumstances. These are usually content driven and for a specific number of sessions.
- Connect Groups are small groups that usually meet in homes with a facilitator guiding a discussion focused on applying spiritual principles to daily life. Rather than a teaching, the guided discussion highlights key truths and resulting application.

With the help of other staff members, during the fall we outlined, scripted and created a seven-session small group class for new believers called reStart. The focus of this series ties directly to the “Give” part of our Give, Grow, Go mission at Mapleview. These sessions feature video teaching by Mapleview staff members followed by a discussion time centred around that session’s topic. We did the work in the fall and launched our first small group series in January 2023.

Respectfully Submitted,  
John Ratz