



a new era



St. John's
CHURCH



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CHURCH

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

FOR LIFE GROUP LEADERS

Leaders, use this Life Group Study Guide to facilitate Christ-centered conversations each week. Feel free to be creative with the questions, using it as a guide or following it word-for-word. Review each week before Life Group starts and pray for your group!

PARTICIPANTS

Feel free to use this Life Group Study Guide during Life Group, take notes during the sermon, or use for continued learning. We hope it blesses you as you grow in your relationship with Jesus and others!

LIFE GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE: 6 TIPS FOR A GREAT LIFE GROUP

*Leading a Life Group is a chance to help others grow in their faith.
Here's a quick guide to creating meaningful gatherings based on
Bill Search's 6 Tips for a Great Small Group.*

1. Use Curriculum

- Provides structure and biblical teaching.
- Review materials ahead of time and tailor them to your group.

2. Lead Great Discussions

- Create a respectful and open environment.
- Keep discussions focused and involve everyone.

3. Ask Great Questions

- Use open-ended questions to spark deeper thinking.
- Follow up with questions that encourage application.

4. Listen

- Show care by listening without interrupting.
- Reflect back what you hear to ensure understanding.

5. Study the Bible

- Keep God's Word central.
- Read Scripture together and discuss its meaning and application.

6. Pray Together

- Begin and end with prayer.
- Share specific requests and pray in smaller groups when needed.

*Your leadership makes an eternal impact. Stay faithful, rely on God,
and trust He's working through you!*

*"Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds..."
—Hebrews 10:24-25*

SERMON SERIES: A NEW ERA

OVERVIEW

The “A New Era” series uses the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Zechariah to focus on Israel’s return from exile and the challenges of rebuilding life, worship, and community in Jerusalem.

- **Ezra & Nehemiah:** These books recount the return of the Jewish people from Babylonian exile. Under leaders like Zerubbabel, Joshua the high priest, Ezra, and Nehemiah, the people faced the hard work of rebuilding the temple, the city walls, and their covenant life with God. The stories reveal the tension between joy and sorrow, progress and opposition, repentance and renewal.
- **Haggai & Zechariah:** These prophets encouraged the people during the rebuilding. Haggai called them to put God’s house and mission first, warning against self-centered living. Zechariah used vivid visions to remind them of God’s presence and to point forward to the coming of the Messiah and the fullness of God’s kingdom.

This series isn’t just about Israel’s past. In fact, it’s about God’s people today. We, too, are called to live faithfully in a world of shifting expectations, to persevere in mission, to confess and be renewed, and to look forward with hope to the kingdom of Christ.



NEW ERA WEEK 1

RESETTING EXPECTATIONS IN A NEW AGE

Opening Prayer

Lord, as we begin this series, help us to see Your faithfulness in every season. Reset our expectations to align with Your promises, not our fears. Amen.

Read the Text

Ezra 3:8–13, Haggai 2:3–5

Feel free to take any notes below:



RESETTING EXPECTATIONS IN A NEW AGE

- HEAD**
1. What emotions do the people of Israel express in Ezra 3:8–13, and why?
 2. What does Haggai's reminder that "My Spirit remains in your midst" teach about God's character?

- HEART**
1. When was a time you experienced disappointment while also seeing God at work?
 2. How do you respond to the idea that God's presence is enough for the future?
 3. What "new era" might you be experiencing right now? What challenges come to mind when facing a "new era" of life?

- HANDS**
1. What's one area where God may be asking you to reset expectations this week.
 2. How are you trusting God's presence over your feelings in your life right now?
 3. How can we as a Life Group pray for you as you experience change in this season of your life?

- HUDDLE**
- Break off into same-gender huddle groups and discuss:
1. What's one spiritual discipline (prayer, Scripture, fasting, worship) to "reset" in your home as a way to align with God's presence in this new era?

A NEW ERA WEEK 1

RESETTING EXPECTATIONS IN A NEW AGE

MEMORY VERSE

"Be strong, all you people of the land, declares the Lord. Work, for I am with you." -Haggai 2:4

SPIRITUALLY VIBRANT HOME

What's one way we, as a household, can pray and support each other through changes in life?



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A NEW ERA WEEK 2

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Opening Prayer

Father, help us to put first things first in our lives. Give us hearts that seek You before anything else. Amen.

Read the Text

Ezra 3:1–7, Nehemiah 8:1–8

Feel free to take any notes below:



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FIRST THINGS FIRST

- HEAD**
1. Why did the people of Israel begin with worship before rebuilding?
 2. Why was it significant that all the people gathered to hear the law in Nehemiah 8?
 3. What does this teach us about the foundation renewal in Him?

- HEART**
1. What do you prioritize first in your own life? Why?
 2. How do you feel when God's Word convicts or challenges you?
 3. When was a time that worshiping God grounded you in a season of uncertainty?

- HANDS**
1. What's one practice you can do to put God first in your life this week?
 2. How can God's Word help shape the decisions you make for this week?
 3. How do you want to realign your priorities? What would change?

- HUDDLE** Break off into same-gender huddle groups and discuss:
1. Where do you most struggle to put God first, and how can we support you?

A NEW ERA WEEK 2

FIRST THINGS FIRST

MEMORY VERSE

"The joy of the Lord is your strength." -Nehemiah 8:10

SPIRITUALLY VIBRANT HOME

Set aside intentional time in your home to talk about Scripture — share what God is teaching you and invite others to share what His Word means to them.



A NEW ERA WEEK 3

FACING OPPOSITION

Opening Prayer

Lord, when opposition rises, remind us that You are greater than every obstacle. Strengthen our hearts to trust You. Amen.

Read the Text

Ezra 4:1–5

Feel free to take any notes below:



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FACING OPPOSITION

- HEAD**
1. What kind of opposition did Israel face in Ezra 4?
 2. How did the people of the land try to discourage them?
 3. Why do you think opposition often arises when God's work is moving forward?

- HEART**
1. What strategies did the enemies of God's people use?
 2. How can we see Satan's tactics mirrored in our own lives?
 3. Why is perseverance important when faced with opposition in our lives?

- HANDS**
1. When is a time you faced opposition in regards to your faith?
 2. What sort of discouragements make you most likely to quit?
 3. How has God strengthened you in times of difficulty?

- HUDDLE** Break off into same-gender huddle groups and discuss:
1. Where do you most feel spiritual resistance, and how can your brothers/sisters hold you up in prayer?

A NEW ERA WEEK 3

FACING OPPOSITION

MEMORY VERSE “Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah and made them afraid to build.”-Ezra 4:4

**SPIRITUALLY
VIBRANT HOME**

Opposition can bring fear and isolation. Extend hospitality this week by welcoming someone into your home or life as an act of encouragement, showing them God’s presence even in times of resistance.



A NEW ERA WEEK 4

SEEKING THE LORD'S FAVOR

Opening Prayer

God, we confess our need for You. Teach us to seek Your favor in humility and faith. Amen.

Read the Text

Ezra 8:21–23

Feel free to take any notes below:



SEEKING THE LORD'S FAVOR

- HEAD**
1. Why did Ezra proclaim a fast before traveling?
 2. What did the people seek from God in Ezra 8:21–23?
 3. How does dependence on God reveal faith?

- HEART**
1. What is the purpose of fasting in this passage?
 2. How does prayer reflect trust in God's protection?
 3. Why is humility essential in seeking God's favor?

- HANDS**
1. When have you sought God's favor in a desperate situation?
 2. How does fasting or prayer shift your heart toward God?
 3. What fears keep you from fully depending on Him?

- HUDDLE**
- Break off into same-gender huddle groups and discuss:
1. Where do you most need God's favor right now, and how can we support you?

A NEW ERA WEEK 4

SEEKING THE LORD'S FAVOR

MEMORY VERSE

"So we fasted and implored our God for this, and he listened to our entreaty." -Ezra 8:23

SPIRITUALLY VIBRANT HOME

Choose a time this week as a household to fast from something (food, media, distractions) and seek God's favor together in prayer.



A NEW ERA WEEK 5

EVERYONE PITCHING IN

Opening Prayer

Lord, thank You for calling us into community. Show us how each person has a role in building Your kingdom. Amen.

Read the Text

Nehemiah 12:27–13

Feel free to take any notes below:



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EVERYONE PITCHING IN

- HEAD**
1. What role did the people play in dedicating the wall in Nehemiah 12?
 2. How did Nehemiah lead the community in reform in chapter 13?
 3. What does this show about shared responsibility in God's work?

- HEART**
1. How do these chapters highlight unity in worship and work?
 2. Why did Nehemiah address compromises in chapter 13?
 3. What does this teach us about accountability in God's people?

- HANDS**
1. How do you feel about being needed in God's mission?
 2. When have you experienced joy in working together for God's purposes?
 3. What challenges arise when everyone is called to contribute?

- HUDDLE**
- Break off into same-gender huddle groups and discuss:
1. Where do you still live as though the resurrection hasn't happened?

A NEW ERA WEEK 5

EVERYONE PITCHING IN

MEMORY VERSE

"And they offered great sacrifices that day and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy."
-Nehemiah 12:43

SPIRITUALLY VIBRANT HOME

Practice hospitality by involving your whole household in serving together: prepare a meal, write encouragement notes, or invite someone to share in your table.



A NEW ERA WEEK 6

PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE

Opening Prayer

Father, open our eyes to those who are vulnerable and oppressed. Give us the courage to act with justice and compassion. Amen.

Read the Text

Nehemiah 5:1-13

Feel free to take any notes below:



PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE

- HEAD**
1. What injustice did Nehemiah confront in chapter 5?
 2. How did Nehemiah call the people to change?
 3. What does this reveal about God's heart for the vulnerable?

- HEART**
1. Why was Nehemiah's example of leadership important?
 2. What principles of justice can we apply today?
 3. What injustices are impacting our world today? How do we respond?

- HANDS**
1. How do you feel when you see injustice in the world?
 2. What experiences have shaped your compassion for the vulnerable?
 3. What fears hold you back from speaking up for others?

- HUDDLE** Break off into same-gender huddle groups and discuss:
1. Who in your life do you need to stand up for, and how will you do it?

A NEW ERA WEEK 6

PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE

MEMORY VERSE

So I said, 'The thing that you are doing is not good. Ought you not to walk in the fear of our God?'"
-Nehemiah 5:9

SPIRITUALLY VIBRANT HOME

Have a spiritual conversation in your home (or extended home) about God's heart for justice. Who are the vulnerable around us, and how can we respond as a household of faith?



A NEW ERA WEEK 7

CONFESSING SIN

Opening Prayer

Merciful God, we confess our sins before You. Wash us clean and restore us by Your grace. Amen.

Read the Text

Ezra 10:1-5, Zechariah 3

Feel free to take any notes below:



CONFESSING SIN

- HEAD**
1. Why was confession necessary in Ezra 10?
 2. How does Zechariah 3 portray God's forgiveness?
 3. What do these readings teach about holiness and impurity?

- HEART**
1. How does confession restore a relationship with God?
 2. What does the vision in Zechariah 3 teach about God's mercy?
 3. Why is repentance essential in spiritual renewal?

- HANDS**
1. How do you feel when you confess sin before God?
 2. What sins are hardest for you to bring into the light?
 3. When have you experienced God's grace most deeply?

- HUDDLE**
- Break off into same-gender huddle groups and discuss:
1. What sin do you most need to confess right now, and will you allow us to pray for you?

A NEW ERA WEEK 7

CONFESSING SIN

MEMORY VERSE

"See, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with pure vestments."

-Zechariah 3:4

SPIRITUALLY VIBRANT HOME

Include confession in your home's spiritual rhythm — pray together naming sins honestly and receiving God's forgiveness.



A NEW ERA WEEK 8

KEEP GOING

Opening Prayer

Lord, when we grow weary, give us strength to keep going. Help us to prioritize Your kingdom above all else. Amen.

Read the Text

Haggai 1

Feel free to take any notes below:



KEEP GOING

- HEAD**
1. What was the problem Haggai addressed in chapter 1?
 2. How had the people misplaced their priorities?
 3. How did God call them back to His work?

- HEART**
1. What warnings and promises are found in Haggai 1?
 2. Why was it dangerous for the people to focus only on themselves?
 3. What does this teach about obedience to God's mission?

- HANDS**
1. How do you feel when life becomes more about comfort than obedience?
 2. When was a time you felt convicted about misplaced priorities?
 3. How do you find motivation to keep going in God's work?

- HUDDLE**
- Break off into same-gender huddle groups and discuss:
1. Where do you need encouragement to "keep going," and how can we as a Life Group cheer you on?

A NEW ERA WEEK 8

KEEP GOING

MEMORY VERSE

"Thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways."-Haggai 1:7

SPIRITUALLY VIBRANT HOME

Share in your household what keeps you going in faith and encourage one another with God's promises in conversation.



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A NEW ERA WEEK 9

RECOUNTING THE STORY

Opening Prayer

Faithful God, remind us of Your mighty acts and lead us to recount the story of Your grace with joy. Amen.

Read the Text

Nehemiah 9

Feel free to take any notes below:



RECOUNTING THE STORY

- HEAD**
1. How did Israel recount their story in Nehemiah 9?
 2. What did the people acknowledge about God's faithfulness?
 3. How did remembering shape their repentance?

- HEART**
1. What role does storytelling play in faith formation?
 2. How does Nehemiah 9 show God's character through history?
 3. Why is remembering essential for ongoing faith?

- HANDS**
1. How do you feel when you reflect on God's story in your life?
 2. What memories of God's faithfulness encourage you most?
 3. How does recounting the story fuel your hope?

- HUDDLE** Break off into same-gender huddle groups and discuss:
1. What part of your story do you need courage to share with others?

A NEW ERA WEEK 9

RECOUNTING THE STORY

MEMORY VERSE

"But you are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love."-Nehemiah 9:17

SPIRITUALLY VIBRANT HOME

Invite a friend or neighbor into your home and share with them a story of God's faithfulness in your life.



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A NEW ERA WEEK 10

LIVING IN JERUSALEM

Opening Prayer

Lord, thank You for calling Your people to dwell in Your city. Teach us to live faithfully where You have placed us. Amen.

Read the Text

Nehemiah 11

Feel free to take any notes below:



LIVING IN JERUSALEM

- HEAD**
1. Why was it significant that people were chosen to live in Jerusalem?
 2. What does this show about sacrifice and commitment?
 3. How does community strengthen God's people?

- HEART**
1. What was the importance of dwelling in the restored city?
 2. Why was the willingness to relocate necessary for God's mission?
 3. What does this teach us about living faithfully in our context?

- HANDS**
1. How do you feel about where God has placed you today?
 2. What sacrifices have you made to live faithfully in community?
 3. How does belonging to God's people encourage you?

- HUDDLE**
- Break off into same-gender huddle groups and discuss:
1. How can you be more intentional about living for God in the place He has planted you?

A NEW ERA WEEK 10

LIVING IN JERUSALEM

MEMORY VERSE

"And the people blessed all the men who willingly offered to live in Jerusalem."
-Nehemiah 11:2

SPIRITUALLY VIBRANT HOME

Living in Jerusalem required commitment and sacrifice. Practice a discipline of prayer for your city or neighborhood daily this week, asking God to bless and use your household right where He's placed you.



A NEW ERA WEEK 11

LOOKING TO THE FULL KINGDOM

Opening Prayer

King Jesus, lift our eyes to Your coming kingdom. Fill us with hope as we wait for Your reign to be fully revealed. Amen.

Read the Text

Zechariah 14

Feel free to take any notes below:



LOOKING TO THE FULL KINGDOM

- HEAD**
1. What vision of the future does Zechariah 14 give?
 2. How does God's kingship bring hope to His people?
 3. What promises of restoration stand out in this chapter?

- HEART**
1. How does it feel knowing that God is reigning over all the earth?
 2. Why is it important that all nations will one day worship the Lord?
 3. What does this vision teach us about the full kingdom of God?

- HANDS**
1. How do you imagine Christ's return?
 2. What gives you hope when you face the brokenness of this world?
 3. How does longing for God's kingdom shape your faith today?

- HUDDLE**
- Break off into same-gender huddle groups and discuss:
1. What part of your life most needs the hope of God's kingdom right now?

A NEW ERA WEEK 10

LOOKING TO THE FULL KINGDOM

MEMORY VERSE

"And the Lord will be king over all the earth. On that day the Lord will be one and his name one."-Zechariah 14:9

SPIRITUALLY VIBRANT HOME

Have a conversation in your home (or with a friend) this week about the hope of Christ's return and what it means to live in light of His coming kingdom.

