

# Circles at Oasis

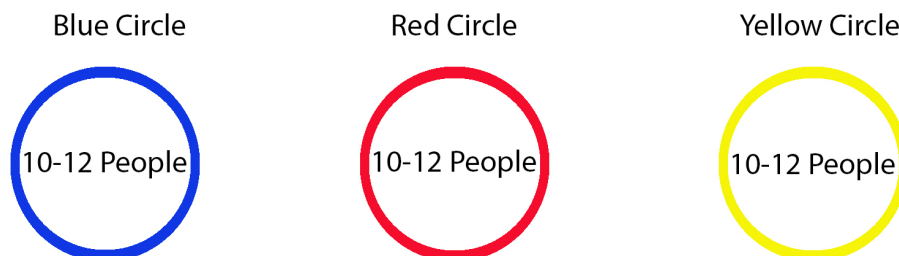
*“Making our church smaller, so you can be part of something greater.”*

**Goal of Circles-** Building a strong community of believers who are committed to grow in the knowledge of the Lord, and encourage each other to be people of purpose that will impact the world for JESUS.

**Focus-** 1. To see people grow in spiritual maturity and the knowledge of God’s Word. 2. To see people get connected with church family and build community.

**Internal Goal-** Raise and recruit new circle leaders and ministry volunteers.

**How does “Circles” work?** Each circle will open at the beginning of registration for members to join. A member will select which circle they would like to be a part of and they would sign up for that circle. Once that particular circle reaches its max (10-12 people), that circle will close. As this ministry grows, we can always



open more circles on different days.

**Committing to a circle-** We ask that all members who sign up to a circle, make a commitment to that circle for 1 year.

**Withdrawing from a circle-** If you would like to withdraw from a circle, you must inform your circle leader and have your name removed from the circle which will allow new openings for members interested in joining that circle.

**Switching Circles-** If you aren't comfortable with your circle or would like a

change of scenery you can switch circles. The way you do this is to check the availability for the circle that you want to join. Sign up for that circle, then withdraw from your current circle by following the withdrawal protocol.

**When will Circles start?** Our launch week is the 2nd week of October

**What is the format of a circles meeting?** We will be doing a book study that covers various books of the Bible. All content will be provided via a leader guide for each new book that we study.

A typical circle session will run as follows:

2nd, 3rd, 4th and occasional 5th weeks of the month at a day that each host selects. The Circle leader will have the option to use the occasional 5th week of the month to: 1. Make up a missed week. 2. Have a game/fun night. 3. Take the week off.

Note: Available days are as follows. Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, at the time the circle leader selects. (Wednesday night is preferred, but optional) Saturday night for Collective ONLY

No Circles will be held on Fridays, Sunday or the first week of each month due to FWW.

Coffee and dessert will be served at every session. For the first session, the host will provide the coffee and dessert. For each following session, the host will provide the coffee and encourage the members to each bring a small dessert.

7:00-7:10: Welcome and greet (10 min)

**We want to encourage our groups to arrive on time or a little early. However, we must start sessions no later than 10 minutes after our designated start time.**

7:10-7:30: Ice breaker question and discussion (20 min)

**Icebreaker suggestions will be listed on the group resource page of our website**

7:30-7:40: Previous week review and opening prayer (10 min)

7:40-8:00: Dvd lesson (15-20 min)

8:00-8:50: Group Discussion (50min)

8:50-9:00: Close in prayer

Take prayer requests. Encourage others to pray

9:00 Begin to clean up and break down.

## Meetings

All circle meetings will be very interactive, encouraging participation from everyone.

**Circle Links-** A couple of times per year, we will schedule circle links. A circle link is when 2 circles are assigned to come together and have their sessions joined. The goal for this is that we don't stay tied to our little circle only, but we eventually get to know everyone from every circle.



**Circle Pop Ups-** Every so often, a surprise pop up will be scheduled for one of our Pastors to be part of a circle session. Not even the circle leader will be aware of this pop up prior to the nights opening. This is a way for all the Pastors, especially Pastor Fred, to meet with small groups from time to time and get personal with them.

**Community Sessions-** Once each quarter, we will have a community session in each circle where members will brainstorm ways to reach the community around us. After this session, the group leaders and staff Pastors will meet to put our community outreach ideas in action. When we come up with a game plan for that quarter, all the circles will come together to reach the community. (Of course all Oasis members will have an opportunity to get involved with this as well). If everything goes to plan, we as a church will do some kind of community outreach at minimum, 4 times per year. (This will take place after the first year)

**Childcare Options-** Although it is not required, it is recommended.

1. Have a teenager in household be in charge of childcare in a separate room.

2. Have a babysitter come in and group chips in to pay.
3. One person from the group is in charge of childcare and they alternate each week.

### ***Yearly Meeting Calendar***

#### ***October***

Second week– Launch “Meet and Greet”

Third week– Lesson 1

Second week-

#### ***November***

Second week- Lesson 3

Third week- Lesson 4

#### ***December***

Second week - Lesson 5

Third week - Christmas Party

Christmas Break

#### ***January***

Second week- Lesson 6

Third week- Lesson 7

Fourth week- Lesson 8

#### ***February***

Second week- Lesson 9

Third week- Lesson 10

Fourth week- Lesson 11

#### ***March***

Second week- Lesson 12

Third week- Lesson 1 New Study

Fourth week- Lesson 2

#### ***April***

Second Week- Lesson 1

Third week- Lesson 2

Fourth week- Lesson 3

## *May*

Second week- Lesson 4

Third week- Lesson 5

Fourth week- Lesson 6

### **Five E's to a Successful Circle**

**Embrace-** Give members of your group the feeling that they are part of something greater at Oasis. Build community and relationships that will last a lifetime. Fellowship together and really take the time to know the members of your group especially in between sessions. Its important to follow through and follow up. Ex. If you say you will agree in prayer for a need, make sure that you take the time to do so and follow up by checking in on that person to get an update on their status.

**Environment-** Create an environment that's safe, comfortable, relaxed and enjoyable for your group. Make sure that everyone feels welcome. It is vital to create an atmosphere of trust so each person would feel comfortable to be vulnerable and share. Also its important to set the tone of the atmosphere. Prepare the coffee and desserts ahead of time. Put on some inviting music, make sure the house smells nice for your guests. It's the hosts job to set the tone for the night and get everyone involved.

**Equip-** Equip members with the word of God to help your group grow in spiritual maturity. Make sure that you are well prepared to lead each lesson. If you do not know an answer to a question, do not make one up. Tell the person that you are not sure about how to answer the question but you will ask one of the Pastors and get back to them. Make sure that you follow up. Encourage everyone to bring Bibles and take notes. A member who is strong in the word will be able to overcome challenges easier.

**Encourage-** Be a light and support system to your group. Pray with them, meet frequently, communicate. Make sure all members are participating, not just sitting around listening to the leaders talk. Encourage them to share their stories and be interactive with each other. Take prayer requests and agree together in prayer as a group.

**Empower-** Empower them by giving them tasks during the group, encourage them to get involved at oasis, and look for future group leaders out of current groups.

## **Circles Core Values**

### **1. "A healthy environment is created when there is balance."**

We need to remember the purpose of Circles. Although we need fellowship, we need to grow in the Lord as well. And although we need the Word, it's important also to build relationships. If there is too much of one but not the other, it would not be a healthy environment. There has to be a comfortable balance of fellowship and building relationships with the combination of growing and encouraging each other in the Word.

### **2. "The Bible is Gods spoken Word and will never be compromised"**

The Bible is God's instruction for our lives and we should live, think and speak reflecting this thought. Some in the group may bring up questions or thoughts that do not agree with the Word and Gods commandments for our life. People will always have their own point of view. However, the Word and Gods truth will never be changed or compromised. The answers to those questions always come back to what the infallible Word of God dictates.

### **3. "Train our mouths to be filled with kindness and respect at all times."**

Some times as groups of people get together and build relationships, gossip tends to form in conversations. In Circles, we must maintain respectful conversations that don't include gossip, complaining, rumors, division tactics or disrespect . This is not a gossip forum. Any conversations that include those actions will be shut down immediately. There will also be no tolerance for talking negatively against Pastors and church leaders in the group. Pastors and leaders have been put in a place of authority will not be disrespected and those conversations will be shut down by group leaders immediately. If a leader hears a conversation like this, kindly ask that person or persons to take their issue up with the pastor or leader personally rather than talk behind their back.

### **4. "The benefits of community will only go as far as you take it"**

If you want to get the most out of being involved in your small group and church community, it's up to you to keep the hand to the plow. Make sure you attend

meetings on time, establish friendships and open up to the group. Allow the group to know who you are and what you are about. Take on tasks and show interest. Participate in interactive conversations and put in the work required to learn the weekly lessons. There is so much that can come out of being part of a small group but ultimately, you will get out of it what you put into it.

Group Vitals: <https://occnj.groupvitals.com/dashboard>

Brief GV Tutorial video- <https://occnj.groupvitals.com/leaders>

GV help topics: <http://support.groupvitals.com/article/113-getting-started-overview-read-this-first>

Website for Circles resources: [www.Oasisnj.net](http://www.Oasisnj.net)  
click on the lock icon on the bottom right of screen. Password: Circles2022

Make sure attendance is taken after each week. Group vitals will automatically send you an attendance email immediately following your session.