

“What Have You Got Planned This Summer?”

As your group approaches the summer months it will be helpful to have a plan for connecting. You’ve worked hard to get to know each other! You’ve gotten to a point where you are beginning to form some great relationships that really will help you grow spiritually...as long as you stay connected!

The summer is always a challenging time for small groups. With vacations and time away, camps for the kids, swimming parties and barbeques on the weekends, family reunions, and so many other great things to do, it is sometimes hard to fit your small group into the calendar! In fact, is it even possible? The answer is usually, “YES, AS LONG AS YOU PLAN AHEAD!”

So the question is, how can you keep your group growing together over the summer? Here are some tips that many groups have found helpful at Lake Avenue Church:

Mark’s Top 10 Ideas for a Great Summer

1. Make your plans now, before you get into the heat of the summer.
 - a. Pull out a calendar and compare vacation plans! You may find several good meeting dates right in front of you!
 - b. Don’t be afraid to meet on a different night if it helps you get more of the group there for the meeting.
 - c. Realize going into the planning session that you may not all be able to be at every meeting. And it’s ok to meet with just part of the group as long as you can include everyone over the course of the summer months.
2. Consider scaling back on your meetings. If you’re meeting every week, give some thought to twice a month. If you’re meeting twice a month, think about meeting once for study and once for fellowship (maybe even at the park or a Dodger’s game).
3. Talk about putting several groups together for a picnic. This can be a great time to get to know a few more people at Lake! It is also a great opportunity to invite neighbors and friends to your group!
4. Plan a block party and ask your group to help you plan it and put it on!
5. Plan a movie night and take the whole family. All the families! Or have the movie night at home! Pop popcorn and serve cokes and movie candy! You might even have your own multi-plex theater: one screen for the kids and another for the adults.

6. Have a game night! Playing Pictionary, Scattergories or Cranium can be a great way to get to know your group. Or try playing Bunko or Mexican Dominoes. Whatever pulls you together and can include the kids is a great way to connect your group.
7. Give some thought to connecting to serve someone else! You may know of a family or a person that just needs some help with their yard or their home. Finding a way to play a part in meeting a need is a great way to stay connected!
8. Serve together in the Children's Ministry! Serve together as Ushers or Greeters! Sign up to serve together as Bulletin Stuffers on Friday mornings! Join the Get Connected Team and help new folks find a group! You can find out about these and other opportunities by calling any of the ministry offices (626-817-4879).
9. Sit together at the weekend service! This is a no-brainer. Even if you normally don't attend the same service, consider linking arms for the summer! Then, go out for lunch or coffee and desert after the service!
10. Have a monthly party and invite your friends to join your group for dinner and a fun activity.