



— SMALL GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE —

# Faith & the City

A six-session series equipping Christians to understand local government and step into faithful civic participation.

SIX SESSIONS · FOR HOMES, CLASSES, AND CHURCHES

---

CALLED TO OFFICE · A NONPARTISAN CIVIC EDUCATION PROJECT · TEXAS NONPROFIT IN FORMATION  
WE EQUIP CITIZENS TO UNDERSTAND AND SERVE. WE DO NOT ENDORSE CANDIDATES OR PARTIES.

# How to use this guide

Faith & the City is built for ordinary Christians – no political background required, and designed to be led by anyone willing to gather a few people and work through it together.

The arc is deliberate. It begins with conviction, builds understanding, and ends in participation. By the final session, the goal is for every member to have taken a real step into the civic life of their own community.

## **Gather a few people**

Four to ten is ideal – large enough for real discussion, small enough that everyone speaks. Invite directly and personally; a personal ask fills a room far better than a broadcast.

## **Pick a rhythm and a place**

Most groups meet weekly or every other week for the six sessions, in a home, a church classroom, or a quiet corner of a coffee shop. Consistency matters more than the venue.

### **A simple session shape**

Open in prayer and a few minutes of catching up. Read the scripture and work through the session together. Close by having each person name the one local step they will take before you meet again. Accountability is where study becomes service.

## **Keep it nonpartisan and gracious**

These groups are for civic education and Christian formation – not for advancing a party or candidate. Welcome honest disagreement, model gracious dialogue, and leave voting decisions to each person's conscience. That posture is both faithful and what keeps the wider work credible.

# I Called to the City

---

“Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you... for in its welfare you will find your welfare.” – Jeremiah 29:7

## The heart of this session

Faithful civic life begins not with strategy but with conviction. God places his people in particular cities and counties and calls them to seek the good of those places. This session lays the foundation: civic engagement as stewardship, neighbor-love, and a form of public service – part of Christian discipleship, not a distraction from it.

## Talk together

1. Where has God placed you – and what would it mean to truly seek the welfare of that place?
2. What has shaped how you think about Christians and public life, for better or worse?
3. Where do you see the line between faithful conviction and mere partisanship?
4. What holds you back from being more present in your own community?

### THIS WEEK'S STEP

Before the next meeting, name your own “city” out loud: your county, your school district, your council. Write down one thing you genuinely care about in that place.

### LEADER'S NOTE

Set the tone now: this group is about understanding and service, not advancing a party or candidate. Welcome honest disagreement and model grace.

## II The Ground Beneath You

---

“Let every person be subject to the governing authorities...” – Romans 13:1

### The heart of this session

Local government is less complicated than it looks. This session walks the offices that shape daily life – school boards, city councils, county government, and precinct conventions – in plain language, so every member can picture how decisions near them actually get made.

### Talk together

1. Which local offices did you understand least well before tonight?
2. Which decisions in your community have affected your family most directly?
3. Why do you think the most local elections draw the fewest voters?
4. Where might your gifts fit in this structure – even just as a present, informed citizen?

#### THIS WEEK'S STEP

Look up when your school board or city council next meets, and read one posted agenda. Notice what is actually being decided.

#### LEADER'S NOTE

Keep this session concrete. If members get lost in federal politics, gently bring it back to the offices closest to home.

# III Know Where You Live

---

“The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it..” – Psalm 24:1

## The heart of this session

This session turns from the general to the personal: each member maps their own civic geography. Your precinct, your districts, your county election office, the decisions being made near you right now. By the end, everyone should know what is actually on their ballot.

## Talk together

1. What surprised you about your own districts or precinct?
2. Who currently represents you at the local level – and did you know before tonight?
3. What local issue would move you to show up to a meeting?
4. How does knowing your own ground change how you pray for your community?

### THIS WEEK’S STEP

Use the Called to Office civic map to find your county, districts, and election office. Confirm your voter registration while you are there.

### LEADER’S NOTE

Have the Find My Districts tool open during this session. Helping members find their own information together is the heart of the night.

## IV Conviction Without Faction

---

“...be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.” – Matthew 10:16

### The heart of this session

How do you hold real convictions – faith, constitutional liberty, personal responsibility, strong families, moral courage – while serving the whole community with integrity and grace? This session draws the line between principled engagement and mere partisanship, and equips members to be unmistakably convictional without becoming combative.

### Talk together

1. What is the difference between holding a conviction and joining a faction?
2. When has political conversation among Christians gone poorly – and why?
3. How can you be clear about what you believe and still serve people who disagree?
4. What would gracious, courageous public witness look like in your community?

#### THIS WEEK'S STEP

Have one honest, gracious conversation this week with someone who sees civic life differently than you. Listen more than you speak.

#### LEADER'S NOTE

This is the session that protects the whole project. Emphasize that we serve the whole community and leave voting decisions to each person's conscience.

# V Showing Up

---

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.” – Colossians 3:23

## The heart of this session

From study to action. This session covers the practical habits of an engaged citizen: how to attend a public meeting, how to speak with courage and charity, how to contact a local office, and how to be a faithful, consistent presence over time.

## Talk together

1. What has kept you from attending a public meeting before now?
2. What would it take for you to speak up – and what would you say?
3. How might consistent, respectful presence change a local body over time?
4. What is one habit of citizenship you want to build this year?

### THIS WEEK'S STEP

Attend a public meeting – school board, city council, or commissioners court – or contact one local office about something you care about.

### LEADER'S NOTE

Encourage members to go in pairs the first time. Presence is less intimidating together, and shared experience fuels the next session.

# VI Called to Serve

---

“Here I am! Send me.” – Isaiah 6:8

## The heart of this session

The series ends where it aimed all along: discernment. Each member considers their own next step – to be present, to organize others, or one day to run for local office. The group decides how to keep walking together.

## Talk together

1. After these six weeks, what is your honest next step?
2. Is God stirring anything in you toward deeper service – and how would you test that?
3. How could this group keep supporting one another in civic life?
4. Who else in your circle should be invited into this kind of formation?

### THIS WEEK'S STEP

Make one concrete commitment in writing – to attend regularly, to organize, to explore running, or to start your own group – and tell the group.

### LEADER'S NOTE

Close by having each person name their step aloud. Consider continuing as an ongoing civic fellowship or sending members out to start new groups.

# Keep walking together

Election to nothing, and graduation from nothing – the point was never to finish a study. It was to send faithful, equipped citizens into the places they already call home.

Some groups continue together as an ongoing civic fellowship. Others send each member into a different corner of the community, and a few begin new groups of their own. However you continue, keep three things in front of you:

- **Stay present.** Show up consistently, long after the novelty wears off.
- **Stay gracious.** Serve the whole community, including those who disagree.
- **Stay faithful.** Treat public life as a trust held on behalf of your neighbors.

## Our commitment to you

Called to Office is convictional and strictly nonpartisan. We do not endorse candidates or parties, and nothing in this guide is a directive on how to vote. We equip citizens to participate, to serve, and to vote with knowledge and conscience.

---

Called to Office · [calledtooffice.org](http://calledtooffice.org) · A nonpartisan civic education project and a Texas nonprofit in formation. This guide is a starting framework for leaders to adapt to their own group and context.