

# 2009-2010

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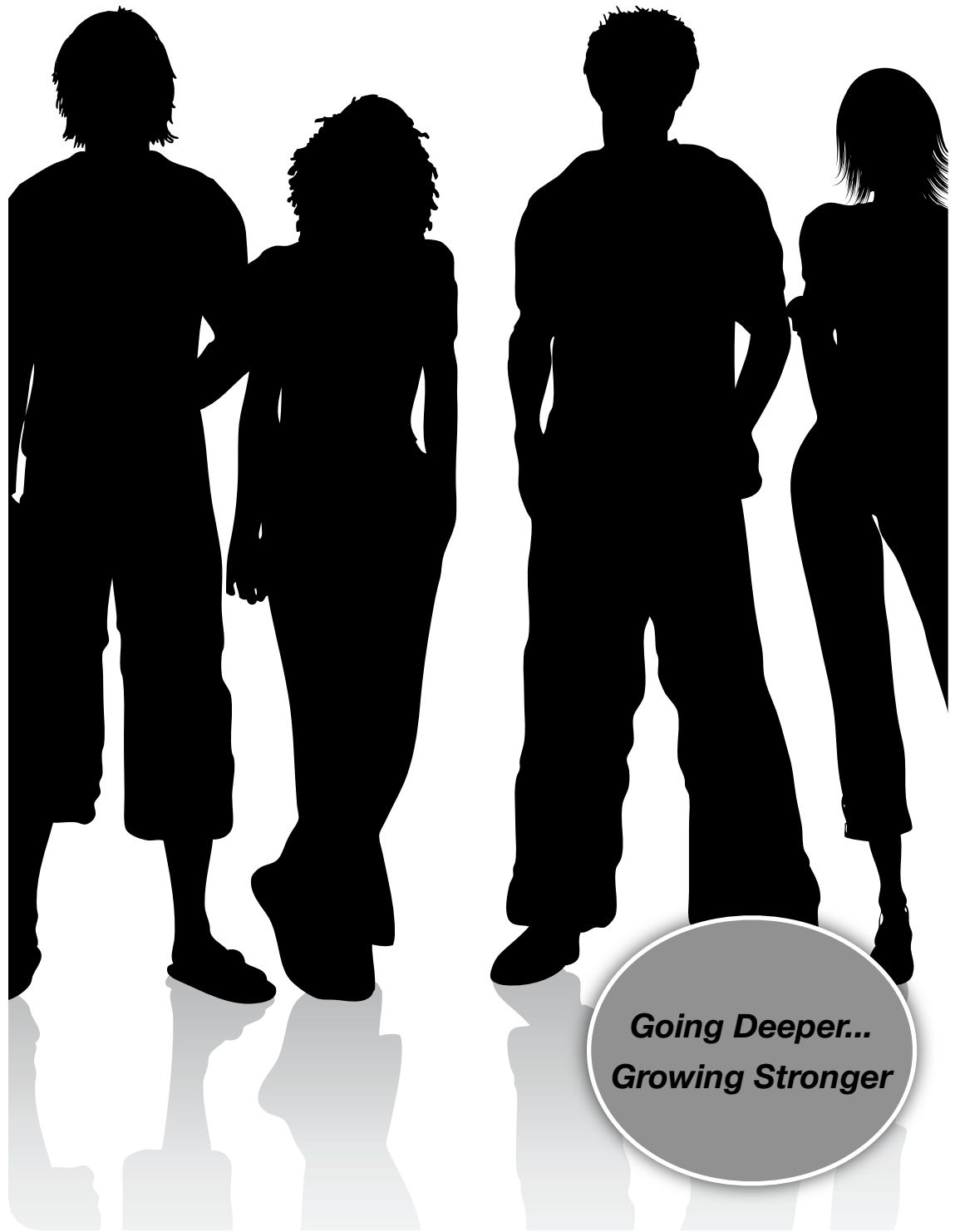
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**Going Deeper...  
Growing Stronger**

*"Jesus came and told his disciples, 'I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'"*

*Matthew 28:18-20*

# A NEW APPROACH TO YOUTH MINISTRY AT IMMANUEL

## Current Perspective:

**Sunday night is our main event, Youth Explosion.** All youth gather on this night for a meal, worship, fellowship and teaching. Senior High and Junior High students split for the teaching time. Youth Explosion is currently the main vehicle for teaching and discipling on a regular basis.

We have a strong program, but we just aren't able to take many of our youth to a deeper level spiritually. Many of our youth are ready for deeper maturity in their faith. There are too many youth and too many differing youth each week to accomplish true discipleship training on Sunday nights. We are also not bringing in new youth like we could nor are we making as big an impact in our community.

## New Perspective

**Think of a funnel...** Funnels are large at the top and smaller at the bottom. If we think of our youth ministry like a funnel, Youth Explosion will be like the top. It is a fun, high energy, entry level event where ANY youth can enter. We will not stress out about going "deeper" with our youth on this night. We will purposefully stay more "shallow" on this night although youth will continue to be taught a solid, foundational understanding of the gospel of Christ and what it means to follow Him.

**Life Groups** will be the vehicle for taking youth deeper in their faith. This is where true discipleship training happens.

**Life Groups are not simply an additional "program" we are adding on to our youth ministry.** This is a part of the new perspective of creating disciples. If we are going to see our youth become TRUE followers of Christ who become the next generation of leaders, our ministry MUST provide a format where they are not only converted to Christianity--but taught and mentored on how to BE a true follower of Christ by adults who are following Christ as well.

### Details of Life Groups:

- Meet weekly
- Sr High Groups are co-ed
- Jr High Groups are gender specific
- The Purpose is Discipleship Formation
- Youth will be taught to take responsibility for their spiritual growth
- Groups will have at least one mission focus/project they participate in or support.
- Empty Chair concept will remind groups that new youth should always be filtering into these groups.
- New groups will be formed once groups become too large (8-10 is a good range)
- Groups can meet in homes or Starbucks...anywhere they can have a FOCUSED conversation and discussion.
- Friendship evangelism is taught and encouraged.



## Responsibilities of Life Group Leaders

- Leaders give a minimum one-year commitment (one school-year)
  - Meet with your group one night per week from September through May
  - Time frame for meeting is at least two hours
  - Leaders commit to missing as few gatherings as possible
  - Two adult leaders per group
  - Leaders commit to receive training from Susan
  - Leaders commit to meet bi-monthly with Susan (maybe monthly at first) for follow-up and accountability, assessment of curriculum, concerns, etc...
  - Weekly preparation for group time.

Life Groups are the new vehicle for helping our youth become followers of Christ.

## How Does This Fit in With Immanuel's Vision and Goals?

As you look at the Biblical Priorities of Immanuel, our Scripture basis for these priorities, and the Values Immanuel claims, you will see that this approach to doing ministry falls in line with all of it.

### We believe God has called Immanuel to be:

- Healthy and Growing
- Praying, Worshipping, and Spirit-led
- Sharing Faith and Serving Others
- Raising the Next Generation of Christian Leaders

Through this new format we will fulfill this vision more fully.

*"...Of all the commandments, which is the most important?' 'The most important one,' answered Jesus, 'is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these.'"*

*Mark 12:28b-31*