

# Meeting Directions



**Christian Family  
Movement**





## THE CFM MEETING FORMAT

All CFM meetings are structured in the same format. The time increments are suggestions only but will help to keep the meeting close to 90 minutes.

### **Gathering and Opening Prayer (5-10 minutes)**

Members take a few minutes to share how their lives have been since they last met. Communal prayer moves group members out of their busy lives and toward the subject matter of the meeting.

### **Business (5 minutes)**

Many groups take this time to review their calendar of events and clarify organizational details.

### **Report on Actions and Scripture Reflection (15 minutes)**

Group members report on the progress of CFM actions taken individually, as a family, or by the group. Reflection on God's Word moves members to focus on the upcoming inquiry from a Christian perspective.

### **Social Inquiry - Observe, Judge, Act (45 minutes)**

Observe - The importance of the observe portion of the meeting cannot be over-emphasized.

Members should look ahead and come prepared. The observe portion is researching and reporting only. Facts and information are gathered from news sources, your own personal experience and that of others.

Judge - For CFMers, to judge is to compare how things are with how things should be, in accord with Gospel values. It is not assessing people, but rather circumstances. To make such a comparison requires objective observation as well as a sincere effort to understand the teachings of Jesus.

Act - Based on the discussion, members choose an action to bring about positive change. Actions can be as an individual, family or group. Actions in the book are suggestions only. The best actions come from the group as a result of the discussion. Group members occasionally choosing the same act increases unity and impact.

### **Chaplain's Remarks (5 minutes)**

If your Chaplain is present, they may use this time to offer closing comments or guidance.

### **At Home/Discuss as a Family**

Simple questions are provided at the end of each social inquiry meeting to facilitate carrying the conversation into the home with children and other family members.

### **Look Ahead to the Next Meeting and Closing Prayer (5-10 minutes)**

Preparation is critical for a fruitful meeting. Review the observe questions for the upcoming meeting and see if any research needs to be done in advance. Consider asking for volunteers. A closing prayer is supplied for each meeting. This is also a good time to offer prayers for the intentions of the group.

**Social Time** – Before and/or after the meeting, members enjoy the camaraderie of the group which may include simple refreshments or a shared meal.



## TIPS FOR HOSTING A CFM MEETING

1. Read through the lesson and decide how you'll share the leadership. Get any needed materials together. You might want to find a special prayer or song to set the mood for the meeting.
2. Call, text or email the members of the group three or four days before the meeting. Give directions and encourage them to prepare by doing the observe part of the meeting. Remind them to also be prepared to report on the actions they decided to do.
3. Involve your entire family in preparing for the meeting and greeting guests. If you have children, ask them to help welcome everyone, take coats, or put out the snacks.
4. Provide a welcoming atmosphere at the meeting by arranging seating that allows everyone to see each other.
5. Keep refreshments simple so there is less stress and no competition.
6. Start on time and end on time. Remember the social time is also important for the building of community...and enjoyable!
7. Be aware of time. It is important to complete the observe, judge and act portions for a good CFM meeting. If the group spends too much time on one question, help everyone to get back on track. Decide which of the remaining questions need to be discussed. Keep things moving.
8. CFM uses open sharing for discussion...leave the response open to the group. Let the group know that no one is required to answer any specific questions addressed to them. People can "pass" without answering if they do not wish to share. Be sure that all who wish to speak and share their ideas and questions can do so.
9. Don't be afraid of silence. People often need time to organize their thoughts before they respond. Allow this to happen. However, it is also important to recognize when to rephrase a question or move on.
10. Try to stick to the questions. If a good side discussion happens, encourage people to continue it during social time.



## WHAT'S NEXT?

After your group has your sample meeting, join the Christian Family Movement and choose your next program book from among our many offerings. A complete list of hard-copy and digital CFM meeting guides can be found at [www.cfm.org](http://www.cfm.org) under For Members.

The Mission of the Christian Family Movement is:

- To promote Christ-centered marriage and family life
- To help individuals and their families to live the Christian faith in everyday life
- To improve society through actions of love, service, education and example

### National CFM Office Contact Information

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We are here to help you. Please contact us with any concerns or questions.



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