

FAQ – THE GREAT BELONG

What does *The Great Belong* look like in real life for my church community?

The Great Belong initiative is for ministry leaders to create a small group that meets once a month and intentionally focuses on a specific experience of loneliness within your church or community. This is **discipleship in action!**

What is the purpose of the group?

The purpose of the group is to address a particular area of loneliness (for example: single parents, immigrants, refugees, etc.) and to create an intentional, monthly space of support. Each group is designed to be **strategic, intentional, relationship-building** and **Christ centred**.

How long does a small group run for?

The *Great Belong* challenge is to commit to **12 consecutive months**.

How often do groups meet?

The Great Belong groups meet **once a month**.

Can a church run two or more groups at the same time?

Yes! Churches may run more than one group at the same time. For example, a men's ministry may run a group for men facing financial difficulties, while a women's ministry runs a group for mothers of children with special needs.

Can I apply for seed funding for each group I create within my church?

Seed funds are allocated **one per ministry**. Churches may apply for funding for more than one ministry, but not for multiple groups within the same ministry. (*Example: Women's Ministries forms a group for single mothers while Family Ministries runs a group for immigrant families*)

Can the seed fund be used for another outreach initiative?

No. The seed fund is allocated **specifically for *The Great Belong*** small group you intentionally create. Ministries must show how funds are used in the Toolkit registration form and again in the end-of-year impact report.

Can we meet online instead of in person (Zoom, Teams, etc.)?

We strongly encourage **in-person gatherings**, as **face-to-face connection** is **key** to **building trust, safety, and meaningful community**.

That said, we recognize the realities of distance and travel across Ontario, particularly during winter months. For this reason, up to **four meetings may take place online**, with the remaining meetings held in person whenever possible.

Where is the ideal location and time for meetings?

Groups may meet in a variety of locations. Common and convenient options include church fellowship halls or Sabbath School rooms. Depending on the nature of the group, homes or local cafes, parks or public spaces may also be appropriate.

An ideal time is **after church**, often during potluck, allowing participants to eat, share, and connect naturally.

How do I receive the matching church fund?

Submit a copy of your **Toolkit registration form** to your local church board to apply for the matching fund.

Can ministries team up to create a group?

Yes. Some areas of loneliness may cross ministry lines. However, it's important to remember that groups are meant to remain **small**, fostering deeper relationships and building belonging and connection.

What should be the size of my group?

The ideal group size is **10–15 people**.

Can I start a niche group that is not on the list?

Yes! Each participating ministry will find a form titled **Toolkit: Needs-Based Group (Create Your Own Group)**, allowing you to design a group that reflects the specific needs of your community.

Who should be the group leader?

Group leaders are typically ministry leaders. However, leadership may also be shared with or given to someone who has a particular passion, lived experience, or expertise related to the area of loneliness the group is addressing.