

groups.†

LEADER

TRAINING MANUAL

NOTES

THANK YOU! Those are the **first** words I want you to hear as you lead a Group here at Grace.

Leading anything can be scary at times, but it is definitely *fulfilling*.

As you pour your heart into those in your Group, you will find that you might be getting more out of it than the recipients. Leading is *not* about being an expert, but being a facilitator of Life-Change, which is a core value at Grace.

- Pastor ryan peterson

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VISION/MISSION

Here at Grace Church, our vision is simple:

[Fill the City with Jesus]

How we fulfill our vision, is called our **Mission**. Our mission is accomplished by inviting everyone to participate in 3 things:

Worship Experience | Serve | Groups

Worship Experience is a time where our entire family comes together and worships God through song, a message, and a time to respond to what God is doing and saying. **Serve** is giving away what we have received; gifts, talents, time, money, and most important, the Gospel. **Groups is what we will talk about today.**

WELCOME TO GRACE'S GROUPS!

WHO WE ARE:

Groups provide authentic communities where we become disciples who fill the city with Jesus. As leaders, we guide these circles of people to pursue Jesus together while also shepherding and facilitating the Group.

Being a Grace Church Group leader starts with understanding your role in Groups. First, as a Group leader, you shepherd your group members. Your job is to, by the grace of God, care for the people in your group and help them take their next steps in faith.

Since Groups leaders fulfill such an amazing and important role, we ask that you agree to the **Group Leader Expectations**. This gives us permission to hold each other accountable in our role to make disciples of Jesus. **SEE LAST PAGE.**

EXPECTATIONS FOR SHEPHERDING

*Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make **disciples** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20*

*"By this everyone will know that you are my **disciples**, if you love one another." John 13:35.*

Discipleship begins with loving one another. You are expected to shepherd and care for your Group members as they become disciples of Jesus. This may get messy at times and you are not expected to be an expert. But with the help of the Holy Spirit and a willingness to gain some practical tools, you can become confident that God will use you to minister to your Group members:

- Create and maintain relationships with members
- Call them and know what is going on in their lives
- Be available to visit them:
 - When they have a new baby
 - In the hospital
 - When they have a death in the family
- Godly support and pastoral care, but not a counselor:
 - Financial struggles
 - Marriage issues
 - Childrearing difficulty
 - Grief or trauma
 - Spiritual healing
 - Sharing the Gospel
 - Life balance and margin

If you feel you need guidance or godly counsel before engaging with a group member about a particular topic, let your coach know. They have a wealth of knowledge and can also provide prayer support.

EXPECTATIONS FOR LEADING

HELP PEOPLE COMMIT TO THEIR NEXT STEP:

It is a joy to help others find and commit to their next step: opening a Bible, praying out loud, getting baptized, or leading their own Group.

Pray for your members and believe they will become mature followers of Jesus. Below are some conversation starters you can use to begin the discipling process as you talk with Group members on the phone or meet with them one on one outside of the Group. (Remember, you will not want to meet Group members of the opposite sex alone outside the Group.)

1. Where do you see God most at work around you?
2. Describe to me how you spend time with God.
3. What do you sense God is speaking to you lately when you read the Bible or spend time in prayer?
4. What are you most excited about in your life right now?
5. What is a big challenge you are facing right now?
6. In what area of your life are you experiencing the most growth?
7. What changes do you want to make in your life? What changes can only God make in your life?
8. What is stopping you from doing what you know God has called you to do?
9. Give me one word that best describes how you currently feel.
10. What do you need most from God right now?
11. What one area of your character, personal life, or spiritual life would you most like to develop?
12. Where and how do you receive support and encouragement?
13. What do you wish you had more time for?
14. How does the Bible address that?
15. What do you see in Scripture that leads you to that conclusion?

EXPECTATIONS FOR FACILITATION

You are expected to handle the facilitation of the Group, which is both hosting and guiding conversation.

HOW TO HOST:

LOCATION:

You choose the location of your meetings. We advise meeting in a home, but a public place like a coffee shop works well depending on the type of Group you have.

Make sure to consider:

Is your location accessible, have adequate parking, have space for childcare (if provided), provide privacy if conversation topics are sensitive, clean, with comfortable seating? Note that rotating between member's homes is fine as long as it is well communicated.

FIRST NIGHT:

Confirm with members (24 -48 hours) before first meeting

Clean up (trash, clutter, and pets)

Play light music in background

Be ready and welcoming (face the door)

You may want to have open time for socializing

Icebreakers (question examples in the back of manual)

Go over ground rules and expectations

Have enough copies of resources

End on time (you pray)

Take attendance and turn in your prayer requests

Follow up with everyone over the course of the next week (but you will want to do this often)

EXPECTATIONS FOR FACILITATION

It is a great way to gather people, make them comfortable, and build relationships! Consider potlucks or rotating responsibility so you aren't always making the food. Keep allergens in mind.

COMMUNICATION:

It is important that you communicate with your Group members on locations, time, dates, what to bring, homework, and any other key details consistently to avoid confusion and frustration.

CHILDCARE:

Leaders are responsible for all aspects of childcare if they choose to have it. Childcare is recommended because so many Grace families need it.

Make sure to consider:

- Should you wait for your first meeting to decide if there is a need? Or should you go ahead and advertise childcare?

- Two types of Childcare: on church campus or off church campus.

- You must abide by our policies if you have childcare on campus. **Childcare Policies in Back of Manual for Groups Meeting on Campus.**

- If you must meet* at the church you will be responsible for booking a room for childcare. This includes the fun zone if it is available.

- Whether you meet on or off church campus, you will need to decide how to cover childcare costs. Will you split the cost among Group members?

- Ideas to cover childcare:

- Have group members take turns watching the kids.

- Pass an envelope to all members, even those who don't have kids.

- Charge a fee to join the group (specifically to cover childcare).

- Swap childcare with another Group, you watch the kids for their Group and they watch the kids for your Group.

But remember, anyone who provides childcare on church campus must complete and clear a background check.

EXPECTATIONS FOR FACILITATION

PRAYER AND PREPARATION:

Prayer: This is the difference maker. Part of your preparation for each meeting is to extensively pray for your time together.

Bible Translation: Consider choosing a translation that is easily understood (NIV, NLT, ESV, CEV, NiRV)

GUIDING CONVERSATION:

SET GROUND RULES AND EXPECTATIONS:

- Make clear what you expect from members:
 - Confidentiality
 - Regular attendance and punctuality
 - Responding to calls
 - Conversations need to stay on topic because time is short
 - Make room for other people to speak (don't be afraid of awkward silence)
- Make clear what they can expect from you:
 - I will show up prepared
 - I will pray for you
 - I will do what I say
 - I will call you
 - I will keep our Group on topic
 - I will ask questions that help you grow
 - I will begin and end on time

EXPECTATIONS FOR FACILITATION

LISTENING SKILLS:

It's not that you don't have confidence as a leader, but you want to hear what they are thinking. "I already know what I know. I want to hear what you all know" -Anonymous

FACILITATING PERSONALITIES:

• Extroverts

- Use body language and break eye contact
- Sit beside person so they better experience your body language
- Ask to hear from someone you haven't heard from yet
- Look comfortable during awkward silences
- Be willing to talk with them privately
- Ask them to share with you after the meeting

• Introverts

- Give them a few meetings to warm up
 - Ask their permission to call upon them
- Body Language:
 - Pleasant eye contact
 - First person you look at after questions
 - Turn towards them

GraceLink

GraceLink is more than just the place to log attendance. It allows us to do ministry across departments, know the state of our flock, and meet the individual needs of our members.

Things you are responsible for:

- Adding people to your Group
(Email smallgroups@gracechurchsp.org to create a profile for someone you can't find in the system)
- Submit attendance after each meeting- "You know what's going on in your Group, but no one else does"
- You will be responsible for your Group calendar after Groups begin. (You will receive attendance reminders based on your calendar meetings)
- Update member contact information
- Communicating (Text, emails, Group needs, Leader talk)
- People joining your Group (Process Queue and Groups Push)
 - Making notes
 - Clicking "Done"
- Needs Group for sharing members needs

Help Section (Watch the tutorial videos if you need help)

Coaching

With your Group you will also receive a coach to care for you, continue your training, and be your resource. Our coaches have successfully led Groups of their own and are such excellent examples that we asked them to help shepherd and train other leaders. Your coach will reach out to you.

RESOURCES

Your training continues with our ongoing trainings. Here, we gather our leaders and coaches to address, understand, and apply relevant topics as well as build community amongst our leaders.

LeadStep

This is our optional leadership resource built for leaders in the Church, business arena, or anyone interested in leadership. This is open to anyone and everyone.

Lead App

This downloaded phone app allows you to easily lead by:

- Seeing your Group's events
- Adding, removing, or editing Group members
- Taking attendance
- Sending messages or texts to your Group
- Viewing upcoming special days: birthdays, anniversaries, etc.

Personal Enrichment Opportunities

We will also provide information on optional resources like conferences, trainings, and events that will help you grow as a leader, as well as build community with other leaders.

Extra Resources Lists

To help you shepherd your Group members we provide lists that direct people towards shelters, financial assistance, food, and other resources. The front desk will always have a copy of this information.

ICE BREAKER QUESTIONS

1. Best/Worst

Have each person share their best and worst moments from the previous week. This icebreaker is an easy one to use at first and gives you good feedback concerning their life at the moment. Some veteran groups do this several times a year... the answers become more honest as you go.

2. Most Unique

Go around the room and have each person share something that makes them different from anyone in the group, like, "I've never left the state I was born in" or "I am one of 10 kids."

3. Two Truths and a Lie

Have each person make three statements about themselves: two true statements and one lie. For example, "I've never broken a bone. I have 5 sisters. I was born in Yugoslavia." The group tries to guess which statement is the lie.

4. Get To Know You Questions

- What do you do for fun?
- What would be your ideal vacation?
- What is the most memorable activity you did with your family as a child?
- What quality do you appreciate most in a friend?
- What is a good thing happening in your life right now?
- What makes it good?
- If you knew you couldn't fail and money was no object, what would you like to do in the next 5 years?
- If you could have any superpower what would it be?
- When, if ever, did God become more than a word to you, and how did it happen?
- If you could have dinner with any person alive in the world today, who would that be?
- If you could ask God one question, what would it be?
- What is your favorite TV show and why?
- Name a gift you will never forget.
- If you had the power to change one problem in the world today, what would that problem be?

ON CAMPUS CHILDCARE POLICY

As the leader, you have the ability to use Grace's building for your Group. When hosting children, you will have to abide by these policies when meeting in the building.

- Group leaders are responsible for making sure childcare workers get paid.
- Parents are responsible for their child's behavior. They may be called in by childcare workers if the child does not listen.
- No outside food is allowed inside the children's room due to allergies
- Kids must be checked in (use the computer checkin system if Tuesday, written sheets are in rooms on the other days)
- You must have at least one trained adult who is 18 years or older
- You must have two workers in each childcare room
- You must reserve a Childcare room
- You must reserve the Fun Zone if you plan to use, but children over 10 may not play on the equipment
- Children may not be left in the cafe or "hanging out" in the building

GROUP LEADER EXPECTATIONS

Commitment to serving here at Grace is a commitment to discipleship. Discipleship is the process of becoming more like Jesus everyday from the inside out by:

1. Following Jesus
2. Being changed by Jesus
3. Committing to the mission of Jesus

I commit to:

- Being in God's Word at least 5 out of 7 days a week.
- Praying for my Group members.
- Participating in the weekly Worship Experiences.
- Submitting to the authority of the Church.
- Remaining a member of Grace Church.
- Living a Biblical lifestyle by representing Jesus in my public and private life.
- Tithing (Malachi 3:8-10, Matthew 23:23, and Luke 11:42).
- Handling conflict and practicing forgiveness (Matthew 6:14-15 and Matthew 18:15-17).
- Keeping my word (Matthew 5:37).
- Supporting unity in the Church by acting in love towards other members (1 Corinthians 1:10).
- Uphold the vision of Grace to
[FILL THE CITY WITH JESUS] (John 17:21).

Group Leader Expectations:

- Be a member, have attended ConnectStep, have attended a Group Leader Training.
- Contact potential new Group members.
- Create a safe environment where it's OK to not be OK.
- Lead the group through facilitation and promoting participation among group members.
- Shepherd your Group members.
- Submit attendance through GraceLink.
- 1-on-1 meetings with your Coach or Groups Director.
- Attend leader meetings.
- Identify and develop a potential new group leader (apprentice).

Group Leader Signature _____

FOR MORE INFO VISIT
GRACECHURCHSP.ORG/GROUPS