

SMALL
GROUPS

LEADERSHIP GUIDE

“DAY AFTER DAY, IN THE TEMPLE COURTS
AND FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE, THEY NEVER
STOPPED TEACHING AND PROCLAIMING
THE GOOD NEWS THAT JESUS IS THE
MESSIAH.”

ACTS 5:42

WHY SMALL GROUPS EXIST

SMALL GROUPS HAVE ONE, SIMPLE PURPOSE – TO BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER. WE BELIEVE GOD CREATED US TO LIVE IN COMMUNITY WITH OTHERS, AND ONLY THEN CAN WE EXPERIENCE THE FULL LIFE HE INTENDS FOR US.

WE BELIEVE LIFE CHANGE HAPPENS IN THE CONTEXT OF RELATIONSHIPS.

MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS CAN BE HARD TO FIND, AND SMALL GROUPS EXIST TO MAKE LIFE-CHANGING RELATIONSHIPS RELEVANT AND ACCESSIBLE TO YOU.

AT TRUTH CHURCH, WE BELIEVE OUR CHURCH MUST GROW **LARGER** AND **SMALLER** AT THE SAME TIME.

WE BASE OUR SMALL GROUP MODEL ON THE EARLY CHURCH AS DESCRIBED IN THE BOOK OF ACTS. IN ACTS, YOU CAN READ ABOUT THE TREMENDOUS GROWTH OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN JERUSALEM, WHERE SMALL GROUP MEETINGS IN HOMES HELPED LAY THE FOUNDATION.

OUR SMALL GROUPS MODEL

- 1 A PLACE TO CONNECT | 1 CORINTHIANS 9:22**
WE WERE NOT MADE TO DO LIFE ALONE. GOD CREATED US FOR COMMUNITY.
- 2 A PLACE TO PROTECT | 1 JOHN 3:16**
IT IS THROUGH LIFE TOGETHER THAT OUR PROBLEMS BECOME SMALL AND GOD USES OTHERS TO BRING SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT.
- 3 A PLACE TO GROW | PROVERBS 27:17**
WE BELIEVE EVERY PERSON IS CREATED WITH GOD-GIVEN POTENTIAL TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD. BECOME MORE LIKE JESUS.

WHAT A SMALL GROUP LOOKS LIKE

YOUR LIFE IS YOUR GROUP

WE WANT PEOPLE TO GATHER TOGETHER BASED ON THE THINGS THEY ENJOY AND ARE IMPORTANT TO THEM. FREE MARKET LEADERS FORM THEIR GROUP AROUND THEIR INTERESTS

WE HAVE TWO TYPES OF GROUPS: INTEREST BASED & DINNER PARTIES.

HOSPITALITY

- Organizing things for the group
- Creating a welcoming atmosphere and casual fellowship with one another

DISCUSSION

- Leading the group with modest and Godly discussion
- Get people engaged by contributing feedback/questions to the conversation
- Lead in an activity. It will vary based on what kind of group it is you're leading

PRAYER

- Ask for prayer requests from each other
- Pray at the beginning and end of each group meeting

SPIRITUAL

- This is what differentiates your small group from your neighborhood gatherings
- Always find a way to include the Word of God in your activities or discussions

SMALL GROUPS ARE NOT A PLACE FOR BUSINESS, OFFERINGS, UNAPPROVED MATERIALS OR SPEAKERS; NOR CONTROVERSIAL TOPICS.

YOUR ROLE AS A LEADER

KEYS TO A LEADER

COMMUNICATE

TALK WITH OTHER LEADERS ABOUT YOUR SMALL GROUP. BE SURE TO HAVE CLEAR COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR GROUP EACH TIME YOU MEET. GOD HAS A PART FOR ALL OF US TO PLAY IN THE CHURCH, AND SMALL GROUP LEADERS COME ALONGSIDE THE PASTORS AND STAFF TO HELP CARE FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE CHURCH.

EQUIP THEM

THE PRIMARY ROLE OF A SMALL GROUP LEADER IS TO HELP GROUP MEMBERS MOVE ONE STEP IN THEIR WALK WITH GOD. HELP THEM TO FIND THEIR NEXT STEP.

PROVIDE GUIDANCE

PEOPLE IN YOUR GROUP WILL BE AT DIFFERENT PLACES IN THEIR SPIRITUAL LIVES AND EACH PERSON WILL HAVE DIFFERENT NEXT STEPS TO TAKE. YOU WILL NEED TO HELP GUIDE THEM. FOR EXAMPLE, HELP THEM TO START PRAYING REGULARLY OR START TITHING OR ATTENDING SUNDAY SERVICES.

PREP, PREP... and then PREP

AVOID FEELING UNPREPARED BY PREPARING WELL. PRAY AND WRITE DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS OF WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY. DON'T RUSH YOURSELF OR WAIT UNTIL THE NIGHT BEFORE TO START PREPARING FOR YOUR GROUP.

IMPORTANTCE OF PRAYER: HOW TO PRAY

- PRAY FOR ANY REQUESTS GROUP MEMBERS SHARE
- ASK FOR THE PRESENCE OF THE HOLY GHOST IN YOUR GROUP
- PRAY THAT GOD WILL OPEN PEOPLE'S HEARTS TO HEAR HIS TRUTH AND FOR AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY TO DEVELOP

**PRAYER IS A FOUNDATION OF OUR CHURCH, AND IT IS
IMPORTANT FOR YOUR SMALL GROUP.**

"2 CHRONICLES 7:14"

HOW TO BE A SUCCESSFUL LEADER

Doing Small Groups every week creates a consistent, welcoming space for people to gather for a purpose. As a leader you are praying for wisdom and strength to lead your group well.

TOP TIPS

PRAY DAILY

Pray daily for the members of your group, and that they would make Him the center of their lives.

CO-LEADER

Consider partnering with a co-leader to help share the responsibility of caring for and leading your group.

CONNECT

Connect with group members outside of weekly meetings through phone, text, email, social media, or face-to-face. Encourage group members to connect with each other throughout the week as well.

FUN

Have fun through laughter and by creating a relaxed and enjoyable environment.

TIME

Respect people's time by beginning and ending on time.

INVITE

Invite members to attend church services and events with you like First Wednesday services, conferences, or outreach.

RALLY

Rally the group around a member going through a crisis. Use wisdom and be sensitive.

IF YOU ARE TRAVELING FOR A WEEK OR ARE SICK, HAVE A PLAN B WITH YOUR SMALL GROUP. HAVE A CO-LEADER TO HELP SO THAT YOU ARE NEVER SCRAMBLING OR UNPREPARED.

DISCUSSION

PURPOSE

TO BUILD PEOPLE
UP THROUGH GOD'S
WORD AND LIKE-
MINDED FELLOWSHIP



TO LIVE LIFE
TO CREATE LIFE
TO POINT PEOPLE
TO JESUS CHRIST

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”

- Philippians 4:8

REMEMBER, WHATEVER YOU ARE THINKING ON, SO WILL YOU BE TALKING ABOUT; “FOR OUT OF THE ABUNDANCE OF THE HEART, THE MOUTH SPEAKETH.” – MATTHEW 12:34

PREPARATION

BE EXPECTANT ALWAYS

- View every single person you encounter (especially those that often cross your path) as a potential candidate for your Small Group and guest to church.
- Listen to what God is sharing with you personally. These are the keys of connecting His voice to your life first – then it will flow out.

TALK WITH YOUR DIRECTORS

- Share what you got out of your preparation and what you want to talk about.
- Your Directors number one priority is to pray for you daily. Reach out to your Director or fellow small group leaders if you have a need, prayer request, or concern.

PRAY, PRAY, PRAY!

DURING THE MEETING

GAUGE THE ATMOSPHERE

Is the group big or small? If it is a larger group, discussion works better splitting up into two groups to help more people engage in the conversation.

SET A TIME FRAME

Honor the people in the room and have a set time goal of when you want to start and end discussion. We suggest 1 hour of activity and connecting and 1 hour of discussion and prayer to balance the night.

HAVE A GAME PLAN

Pick a few key scriptures and/or points of discussion rather than a completely open, unorganized conversation. Have questions ready to build on each other.

BREAK WALLS DOWN

Warm up the room if necessary when you start the discussion with a fun question, opening in prayer, introduce yourself, or sharing the history of the Small Group and purpose of the night.

DISCUSSION

KEYS TO REMEMBER

1

ENGAGE

Ask questions that are open for everyone to answer. Don't spend too much time talking about yourself.

2

REDIRECT

As the leader of your group, feel confident to redirect the conversation with another question or thought if it gets offensive or too off topic from the heart of the conversation.

3

BE FLEXIBLE

Let God into the room; pray during the night and for the people in the room, allowing the Holy Ghost to lead you. If the night didn't hit an expectation, don't feel it is because of you. Keep the focus on pointing people to Jesus and building the church.

4

PRAYER

End the night strong in prayer. Having people either break off and pray in groups or as a big group asking for prayer requests and praise reports. Create a culture during the week to be praying for the requests from the Small Group and checking in on how they are doing.

FOLLOW UP

PURPOSE

**FOLLOW UP AFTER EACH MEETING TO
CONNECT AND PLANT PEOPLE IN THE HOUSE**

Following up and personal connections build and establish people in God's House. We have a heart for the one because of God's heart for us.

"Let not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."

Philippians 2:4

1

PRAY FIRST

Pray for people by name and ask God by His Spirit to plant them and establish them. He will anoint our efforts and work in partnership with us. We will be less burnt out about follow up if we pray first then step out in faith as we go through these steps.

2

CALL & CONNECT

Follow up with a call or text and connecting someone new at church.

3

REPORTING

Throughout the semester, respond to your directors about group attendance (track in Planning Center weekly), potential new Small Group Leaders, and how members are moving one step.

Encourage Share scripture Pray Next steps

CONFIDENCE AS A LEADER

IF YOU ONLY DO WHAT YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE DOING, YOU DON'T NEED GOD. GOD'S BEST IS OFTEN FOUND OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE.

WHEN YOU SERVE GOD AND PEOPLE BY LEADING A SMALL GROUP, HE WILL EQUIP YOU AND GIVE YOU THE STRENGTH AND WISDOM TO LEAD WELL. PHILIPPIANS 4:13 & TIMOTHY 1:7

WHEN YOU FEEL UNCERTAIN ABOUT LEADING A GROUP, USE SCRIPTURE TO OVERCOME THE LIES OF THE ENEMY

GOD HAS CREATED YOU

When you feel like you don't have the time, remember God has created you for this and His timing is perfect. "He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap." Ecclesiastes 11:4

GOD HAS EQUIPPED YOU

When you feel unqualified, remember that God has equipped you. "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." 2 Corinthians 3:5-6

GOD USES IMPERFECT PEOPLE

When you feel like your past disqualifies you, remember God uses imperfect people. "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." 2 Corinthians 1:3-4

HOW TO START A SMALL GROUP

<p>DIRECTION</p> <p>Ask God for direction about what group to lead and who to invite.</p>	<p>INVITE</p> <p>Invite people you know or meet to come check out your group. They can sign up online.</p>
<p>DECISION</p> <p>Decide when, where and why you are doing your Small Group.</p>	<p>PRAY</p> <p>Pray for God to do great things through your Small Group.</p>
<p>REGISTRATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semesters are Fall, Summer (mini) and Spring • Wait for the announcement of registration to open for the semester. • Register your group online at denisontruth.org/church-life#groups and your group will be entered in the Small Group Directory 	<p>THANK YOU!</p> <p>Send “thank you’s” to the new people that signed up to start building the relationship and connection.</p> <hr/> <p>SUPPORT</p> <p>You are never alone in creating community. We have a pastor and staff who are all working alongside you to invest in great Small Groups at Truth Church.</p>

MUST COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING TO BECOME A SMALL GROUP LEADER

- Become a member of Truth Church of Denison
- Complete First Steps Course at Truth Church
- Attend a Small Group Leadership training session
- Complete the Small Group Leadership application
- Must sign Small Group Leader Commitment and Honor Code

FAQ

HOW CAN I RECRUIT PEOPLE TO COME TO MY GROUP?

- Start with people who you already know in your sphere of influence (co-workers, neighbors, friends).
- Find people around you who are new to the church, are new believers, or have shown interest in getting involved.
- Look for people you think you can help realize their potential.
- Ask God to send the right people to your group.

WHERE CAN I HOLD MY SMALL GROUP?

We encourage Small Group to meet outside the church building in the places where you like to spend your time. Some of the most common meet places are coffee shops.

WHERE CAN I FIND SMALL GROUP CURRICULUM?

We have a variety of curriculum suggestions available to you. Email jordan@denisontruth.org

DOES MY GROUP HAVE TO MEET WEEKLY?

We encourage meeting weekly each semester in order to build genuine relationships.

DOES TRUTH CHURCH OFFER CHILDCARE DURING SMALL GROUP MEETING?

You are welcome to choose to offer childcare at your Small Group. The church does not provide it.

HOW DO I MEASURE IF GROUP MEMBERS ARE MOVING ONE STEP?

- How did the Member get connected to this Small Group?
- What is the Member most looking forward to in the group?
- Does the Member attend Truth Church?
- What brought the Member to Truth Church?
- Has the Member ever been part of a Small Group before?
- What does the Member feel like God has been doing in their life?
- What is the Member focused on in their life right now?
- What area of the Members faith are they hoping to grow?

FAQ

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF SOMEONE ASKS A QUESTION I CAN'T ANSWER?

It's okay to not have all the answers. Thankfully we can find guidance through prayer, God's Word, and the Holy Spirit. Encourage them to spend time reading the Bible and praying. Also, let them know that you will do your best to get some information and get back with them.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF SOMEONE IN MY GROUP SHARES SOMETHING WITH ME OR THE GROUP THAT REQUIRES MORE ATTENTION BEYOND WHAT I CAN PROVIDE?

If you encounter a difficult situation within your Small Group, please know that you are not alone. If a member is going through crisis, you can rally the group around them. If you are unsure of what to do, don't hesitate to ask. You can call Truth Church at (903)-463-1962, if needed.

HOW CAN I SHARE STORIES OF LIFE CHANGE FROM THE SMALL GROUP SEMESTER?

We love hearing about lives that are changed through Small Groups. You can share your stories with your Small Group Director and fellow Leaders. You can also share your own personal stories through your social media and tag #TCSGSpring22.