



church

LEADING SMALL GROUPS

GUIDELINES FOR SMALL GROUP
LEADERS AND APPRENTICES

KNOW GOD > FIND FREEDOM >
DISCOVER PURPOSE > MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Thank you for saying yes to leading a Small Group! This guide is designed to help you understand the vision, values, and expectations of Small Group leadership at Jubilee. Our hope is that it provides clarity, encouragement, and practical tools as you shepherd people and partner with your Small Group Coach.

Our Vision

At Jubilee, our vision is that all people would **Know God, Find Freedom, Discover Purpose, and Make a Difference.**

As Small Group Leaders and Apprentices, we have the privilege of helping people take their next step on that journey.

While every area of church life contributes to this vision, Small Groups play a unique role in helping people **Find Freedom** through authentic relationships, intentional discipleship, and pastoral care.

We often say that we aren't simply a church *with* Small Groups, we're a church *of* Small Groups. We are a spiritual family on mission together, and Small Groups are one of the primary ways we care for one another, build disciples, and connect people into the life of our church.

As a Small Group Leader, you provide an important connection point for members, regular attenders, and guests. Through your faithfulness, hospitality, and leadership, you help create environments where people can know God more deeply, find freedom, discover their purpose, and make a difference.

Thank you for investing your time, energy, and heart into this ministry!

Our Values

The following values, introduced in **Growth Track Class 3**, describe the culture we're building together at Jubilee. These reflection questions are intended to help you evaluate your leadership and identify opportunities for continued growth.

None of us lives these out perfectly. Instead, use them as a guide as you continue growing as a disciple and leader.



Love God

Am I cultivating a love for God in both my own life and in the people I lead?

Love People

Am I showing hospitality by praying for, caring for, and communicating well with my group?

Pursue Excellence

Am I faithfully carrying out my responsibilities with the support of my Small Group Coach?

Choose Joy

Am I cultivating an encouraging and uplifting group through my attitude, words, and actions?

Becoming a Small Group Leader

Small Group leadership begins with an apprenticeship.

Connect with a current Small Group Leader to discuss apprenticing. Together, you'll walk through this guide to understand the vision, values, and expectations of leadership.

Once you commit to the apprenticeship, you'll begin leading alongside your leader. Throughout the process, they'll intentionally train you using the multiplication model outlined later in this guide.

During your apprenticeship, you'll become familiar with the following resources according to a timeline agreed upon with your leader:

- *Leading Others* by Mac Lake
- Simon's Prayer Team Training Video
- The two messages on the Small Group Leader Resources page
- *The Path* discipleship tool

You do not need to complete every resource before becoming a Small Group Leader. The goal is to have a plan for continued growth.



When both you and your leader agree you're ready, you'll transition from Apprentice to Small Group Leader. Every apprenticeship is different, so there is no required timeline.

Sunday Prayer Ministry (Optional)

We love seeing our Small Group Leaders serve by praying with people after Sunday services. Simon's Prayer Team Training equips you for this opportunity. If you're interested, we'll add you to the Planning Center schedule. If now isn't the right season, there's no pressure, just let us know!

Leadership Rhythm

Our goal is for each Small Group to begin with either:

- Four qualified Small Group Leaders, or
- Two leaders and two apprentices.

Leadership responsibilities rotate every six months so that every leader has opportunities to both lead and support the group.

Semester 1 (August–January)

- Leaders 1 & 2 lead
- Leaders 3 & 4 support

Semester 2 (February–July)

- Leaders 3 & 4 lead
- Leaders 1 & 2 support

This rhythm helps prevent burnout while allowing leaders to remain engaged year after year. While there will always be exceptions, our desire is to create a healthy and sustainable model for leadership.

Group leaders determine their weekly meeting day and time. If changes become necessary during the semester, please discuss them with your Small Group Coach and let Rachel know.

The annual Small Group calendar is available on the **Jubilee Public Google Calendar** and in the Small Group Leaders chat. It includes meeting schedules, church-wide gatherings, and leadership meeting dates throughout the year.



Modeling Membership

At Jubilee, membership is more than attending church, it's choosing to embrace our vision of helping people **Know God, Find Freedom, Discover Purpose, and Make a Difference.**

As Small Group Leaders, we have the privilege of modeling that vision for those we lead. While none of us does this perfectly, we want our lives to reflect the values and commitments we invite others to embrace.

Our hope is that you would model membership in these five ways:

Pray

We believe prayer is one of the primary ways we shepherd people and pursue God's direction together.

As a Small Group Leader:

- Pray regularly for your group.
- Participate in Second Wednesday Dinner & Prayer.
- Engage in 21 Days of Prayer & Fasting and other church-wide prayer opportunities.

Invite

We want to be people who intentionally create space for others to belong.

As a Small Group Leader:

- Invite people to Sunday gatherings, Small Groups, and church events.
- Welcome new people into your group and, when appropriate, into your home.

Participate

Leadership begins with faithful participation in the life of the church.

As a Small Group Leader, we ask that you:

- Attend your Small Group consistently.
- Attend Sunday gatherings regularly (our expectation is approximately 90%).
- Arrive early and stay after services to welcome guests and care for people.



- Be ready to pray for others and share encouragement as the Holy Spirit leads.
- Serve on a ministry team.
- Participate in prayer gatherings, Celebration Southeast, and Men's/Women's weekends or other leadership events as you're able.

Unite

We protect the unity of our church by loving one another well.

As a Small Group Leader:

- Bear one another's burdens while taking responsibility for your own.
- Refuse to participate in gossip.
- If someone begins gossiping, lovingly encourage them to speak directly with the person involved and make your Small Group Coach aware when appropriate.
- Remain teachable by receiving coaching and apprenticeship.

Give

We believe generosity is part of following Jesus.

As a Small Group Leader:

- Give faithfully and generously to the mission of Jubilee.
- Prayerfully consider participating in special offerings as the Lord leads.

Discipleship

One of our core values at Jubilee is making disciples who make disciples.

As outlined in **Growth Track: Explore Membership**, every member is invited to continue growing through our discipleship pathway.

Know God

1. Be baptized
2. Spend one-on-one time with God
3. Become a weekly worshiper



Find Freedom

4. Join a Small Group
5. Participate in one-on-one discipleship
6. Be filled with the Holy Spirit

Discover Purpose

7. Complete Growth Track
8. Work as Worship
9. Continue Growing

Make a Difference

10. Serve
11. Give
12. Share Your Faith

Our hope is that every member continues taking these next steps as the Holy Spirit transforms their life.

Additional resources can be found through the **Jubilee Discipleship Process**.

As Small Group Leaders, you play a vital role in helping people experience **Find Freedom** through authentic community. We also encourage you to help people take the next step into one-on-one discipleship, either by discipling them personally or by partnering with your Small Group Coach to connect them with someone who can.

As leaders, we also remain committed to our own growth by pursuing mentoring relationships and engaging with the discipleship resources Jubilee recommends:

- *The Path*
- *God's Lavish Grace* - Terry Virgo
- *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* - Pete Scazzero
- *The Total Money Makeover* - Dave Ramsey

Leading Your Group

Leading a Small Group begins with who you are as a follower of Jesus. We can't lead others where we aren't willing to go ourselves. As leaders, we strive to model the vision, values, and commitments of Jubilee in our everyday lives.

Practically speaking, healthy Small Group leadership can be summarized in three ways: **communicate well, care well, and multiply leaders**.



Communicate Well

Clear, consistent communication helps people feel connected and engaged.

As a Small Group Leader:

- Stay connected to the Small Group Leaders chat in our WhatsApp thread.
- Choose one primary form of communication for your group and use it consistently.
- Plan ahead, communicate clearly, and include everyone.
- Record weekly attendance using the provided link.
- Share church announcements and upcoming events.
- Communicate prayer requests and celebrate answered prayers.
- Collect contact information from new guests and include them in future communication unless they ask not to be contacted.

Care Well

Small Groups are more than weekly meetings, they're a place where people are known, loved, and cared for.

As a leader, we encourage you to:

- Pray regularly for your group members.
- Practice hospitality both during and outside of group gatherings.
- Help everyone feel welcomed and included, especially at larger Jubilee events.
- Celebrate meaningful moments such as birthdays, baptisms, graduations, and other milestones.
- Rally around people during seasons of grief, illness, or hardship by praying, providing meals, visiting, sending encouragement, or organizing practical support.
- Listen well and partner with your Small Group Coach whenever situations require additional wisdom or care.
- Organize practical details such as contact information, hosting schedules, appetizers, and childcare.

A helpful framework for caring for others is **ESPN**:

- **Encourage** - Speak life and encouragement as the Holy Spirit leads.
- **Share Scripture** - Bring God's truth into every situation.
- **Pray** - Pray with people, laying hands on them when appropriate.
- **Next Steps** - Help people identify practical steps toward growth and healing.



Multiply Leaders

Healthy Small Groups don't just grow, they raise up new leaders!

Work with your Small Group Coach to identify and apprentice future leaders using this progression:

- I do, you watch, we talk.
- I do, you help, we talk.
- You do, I help, we talk.
- You do, I watch, we talk.

By the end of the apprenticeship, your apprentice should be prepared to lead and begin training others.

We also encourage you to:

- Regularly invite new people into your group.
 - Share stories of faith and encourage evangelism.
 - Begin conversations with your Coach about multiplication when your group consistently reaches 11 or more adults.
 - Launch new groups by sending trained leaders rather than simply splitting an existing group whenever possible.
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Small Group Meeting Rhythm

Throughout the semester, our groups gather in a variety of ways. Each type of gathering serves a unique purpose in helping people grow spiritually and build authentic community.

Sermon Discussion

These evenings focus on Scripture, discussion, prayer, and applying Sunday's message together.

A typical gathering might look like this:

- **6:30 PM** - Arrive, eat, and connect.
- **6:45 PM** - Welcome and church announcements.
- **6:50 PM** - Sermon discussion.
- **7:45 PM** - Prayer requests and prayer.
- **8:00 PM** - Dismiss.

As you facilitate discussion:



- Prepare ahead of time.
- Focus on asking good questions rather than teaching.
- Encourage conversation instead of simply moving through discussion questions.
- Avoid printing discussion guides so the gathering feels conversational rather than classroom-like.
- Remember that a great Small Group Leader usually talks less and listens more.

Community Building

Community Building Weeks are designed to deepen friendships and strengthen relationships.

These gatherings may include dinners, men's or women's outings, community events, game nights, or other activities chosen by your group.

Community Weeks are an important part of the Small Group rhythm - not "off weeks."

As you plan these gatherings:

- Schedule events well in advance whenever possible.
- Keep your Small Group Coach informed.
- Create environments where new people feel welcome.
- Encourage your group to help plan activities.
- Naturally incorporate Jesus into your time together through prayer, communion, sharing testimonies, celebrating answered prayer, and communicating church announcements.

Wednesday Dinner & Prayer

Second Wednesday Dinner & Prayer is an important opportunity for our entire church family to gather around a shared meal, communion, worship, and prayer.

Schedule

- **6:15–7:00 PM** - Dinner and Communion
- **7:00–8:00 PM** - Worship and Prayer

Please encourage your group to participate regularly. Many groups enjoy coordinating a shared meal before the prayer gathering.



Connect & Pray

Several times each semester, we'll gather in Men's and Women's groups for intentional prayer and vulnerability.

James 5:16 reminds us: *"Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed."*

During these gatherings:

- Model appropriate vulnerability.
- Never pressure people to share beyond their comfort level.
- Create a safe and confidential environment.
- Record prayer requests when appropriate and follow up by praying throughout the week & celebrate answered prayers together.

Thank You

Thank you for saying yes to serving as a Small Group Leader! Your faithfulness helps people know God, find freedom, discover purpose, and make a difference.

As you lead, remember that you are not alone. Your Small Group Coach, the elders, and the Jubilee family are here to support and encourage you. Thank you for helping us 3be a spiritual family on mission together!