



Bluer Vineyard Church

Small Group Leaders Guide



Bluer Vineyard Church

Small Group Leaders Meeting

Objective

Despite being a feature in our church for a long time, cell groups have

Goals

To announce “the new season” and to encourage a paradigm shift

A New Season

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Mission

Because God is real... we seek to live and reveal the reality of God. The reality of God is that you can know God, experience God and join God at work in the world.

Small Groups

Small groups exist in our church to help instill the above mission in others through the following priorities:

- Communicate Church Vision
- Opportunity for Community
- Facilitate Worship
- Learn God's word
- Demonstrate & Practice Healing Prayer
- Sharing of God's life together

What's Changing?

This new season in our church requires us to exert a new emphasis upon our small group ministry. This new emphasis

Every facet of our church's values and priorities can be embodied in a healthy small group

Future Meetings

Small Group Leader Meetings are on the 2nd Thursday of every month

September 13th, Thursday 7pm, October 11th, Thursday 7pm, November 8th, Thursday 7pm,

December 13th, Thursday 7pm

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Ground Rules for Small Groups

Here are some basic small group “ground rules”—a few simple, practical ways that help define commitment for the people. Incorporate them into your discussion time in an informal manner. Add your own as you see fit, too.

1. Priority

If you are committed to this Small Group, then you give the people and the meetings top priority.

2. Participation

Everyone participates and no one dominates. This is “our” group, not “(your name) group”!

3. Respect

Everyone is given the right to their own opinion.

4. Confidentiality

Anything that is said in the meeting is never repeated outside of the meeting.

5. Empty Chair

We are always open to new people.

6. Accountability

We are mutually accountable to each other.

7. Support

Permission is given to call upon each other in time of need, no matter what time.



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Building Community

Why is Community Important?

- Biblical Christianity is always lived in community
- Relationships are the context in which the Christian life is realized
- Community makes small group fun!
- People come to church for many reasons, but only stay for one: relationships

Five Principles

- Community comes from the core
 1. Relationships within the team
 2. Inviting others into these relationships
- Community involves shared history
 1. Find different kinds of experiences to have together
 2. Remember, “inside information” is exclusive
- Community involves “wasting time together”
- Community requires investment
 1. Time, energy, and money
 2. You get out what you put in
- Community is a process
 1. Form
 2. Storm
 3. Norm
 4. Perform

Some Practical Ideas

- Share within the group
 1. Move from safe to more intimate sharing
 2. Model vulnerability
 3. Share in smaller groups
- Have one-on-one meetings
 1. You with group members
 2. Group members with each other
- Have social outings
 1. Whatever people naturally like to do
 2. Consider involving food, games, and movies
- Have other kinds of experiences
 1. Go to trainings or other church stuff together
 2. Take trips together
 3. Go to museums, concerts, fairs, lectures, or whatever else people enjoy

Small Group Leader Job Description

Small Group Leader Job Description

Vineyard Small Group leaders fill a pivotal role in the life of our church. Their role is to shepherd a small group of believers to together live and reveal the reality of God that you can know, experience and join God. They do this by reaching Upward, Inward, Outward, and Forward with their small group.

- I. Reaching Upward
 - A. Consistently taking time with God
 - B. Growing in relationship with Christ
 - C. Praying for small group members, the small group meeting, and unbelieving friends
- II. Reaching Inward
 - A. Nurturing community, loving relationships, and fun activities within their group
 - B. Guiding their small group meetings to include the components of Welcome (Icebreakers), Word (Bible Study), Worship, Witness (Reaching Out to Un's— The Unconnected, Unchurched and Unbelievers), and Wind (Ministry)
 - C. Occasionally having the group extend love to Vineyard members in times of special need
 - D. Attending Leadership Team meetings and completing SG Reports to receive support and to keep their Coach and Community Life Pastors current with what is happening in the group
- III. Reaching Outward
 - A. Envisioning the group to reach beyond itself in mission and outreach
 - B. Taking time as a group to pray for friends, family and co-workers who need Christ
- IV. Reaching Forward
 - A. Encouraging potential leaders to come to our Vineyard Leadership Team meetings and Small Group Leader Training
 - B. Giving away ministry to others
 - C. Progressively handing over leadership of as many parts of group life as possible to others

What We Offer Vineyard Small Group Leaders

We want our Small Group Leaders to receive continual support and encouragement from the church and pastoral staff. To this end we plan and provide:

- I. Bi-Monthly leadership team meetings to provide a context for encouragement, ministry, and envisioning
- II. A support team of Small Group Coaches and Community Life Pastors to offer prayer, encouragement, and problem-solving to help leaders

III. An annual appreciation event

Small Group Leader Relational Requirements

Small Group Leaders are imperfect people who are nevertheless growing in their relationship with God and others. The lifestyle they live is pivotal because in Small Group relationships values are more often caught than taught. We expect leaders to demonstrate integrity and growth in the following relationships.

- I. Relationship with God
 - A. Has a consistent devotional time
 - B. Has been to (or will soon attend) an “Encounter God Retreat”
- II. Relationship with family
 - A. In obedience to God is seeking to have as positive a relationship as possible with their immediate family
 - B. Takes time needed to grow in family relationships
 - C. Is not involved in any extramarital sexual relationships
- III. Relationship to church
 - A. Is a committed member of The Vineyard Church
 - B. Speaks positively and supportively of the church and its leadership
 - C. Gives a tithe (10%) of their income to the church
 - D. Has attended (or will soon attend) the "How to Lead a Great Small Group Training"
 - E. Shares the value of Holy Spirit ministry and welcomes expression of all the gifts of the Holy Spirit
- IV. Relationship with others
 - A. Has a good reputation among Vineyard members and others where they work and live
 - B. Has attended (or will soon attend) "Learning to Minister Like Jesus"
 - C. Wants to positively impact their relational world with the kindness and love of Jesus



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Small Group Elements

Welcome

Icebreakers, small talk, etc.

Witness

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Word

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Wind

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Responding to God through Small Group Bible Discussion

Leading People to Respond to God in Bible Discussion

Focus on application and response instead of Bible knowledge.

- Educational research has shown that lecturing is relatively ineffective in changing
- Modeling, problem-solving, and discussion are far more powerful in transforming personal values and behavior.

Advantages to following Sunday's message and scripture in your Small Group:

- There is synergy between God's word on Sunday and God's word in the Small Group.
- It allows the Small Group to focus on application because they have already received extended teaching or preaching related to the passage and theme.
- It frees Small Group leaders to focus more on prayer and relationships rather than preparation for meetings.

Principles to follow:

- Normally focus on just one paragraph or verse from the Bible.
- Have a volunteer read the passage. Some people do not feel comfortable reading in public.
- Non-Christians and new Christians can be intimidated by questions that require cross-references or background knowledge. Ask questions that assume no previous Bible knowledge.
- Interact with the passage not people's opinion.
- Don't preach (or let anyone else preach or dominate the meeting). People can get sermons on Sunday morning.
- Don't intimidate or embarrass anyone.
- Don't defend the Bible.
- Ask open rather than closed questions.

Four questions that will work for almost any passage:

- What stands out to you in this passage? (Probe)
- What seems to be the main point? (Dig & Discuss)
- Can you illustrate this with an example from your own life? (Illustrate)
- What do you need from God right now? (Respond)