



FBCW Community Group Leaders Guide

First off, thank you for exercising your faith and leading a Community Group (CG). As you know, CG's are the primary vehicle for how we live in Gospel Centered and Gospel Driven Community. The following serves as an overview of leading a CG, know that additional information may be received during leadership training. To lead a CG is to shepherd, which can be intimidating, but remember to lead and shepherd a group of people does not require that we are theological super stars, but instead requires faithfulness, love, and commitment to their spiritual well-being. Again, thank you for faithfully serving!

I. Community Group Leaders

A) Each group will have a leader that is responsible for leading and shepherding the group.

B) It is not recommended for CG leaders to not host as well, but this can be done in cases where there is no other option.

II. Pre-Season Responsibilities

A) Participate in leadership training (huddles)

-This is important to be equipped and build relationships between leaders.

B) Reach out to potential group members

-This provides support for the ministry and gives you an opportunity to bring in people into your group.

C) Promote the CG Ministry

III. In-Season Responsibilities

***CG leaders are responsible for leading the gatherings that take place weekly which involve 1) Food & Fellowship 2) Bible Study & Discussion 3) Prayer. While these are part of the blueprint for the weekly gatherings, the activity or life of a CG goes beyond the weekly gathering. We refer to this as “living life together”.**

***CG’s are led using the UPward/INward/OUTward model of small groups. This model is aimed to provide a roadmap that will lead towards healthy Community Groups that provide a surface layer of discipleship. The following is a breakdown of this model and the responsibilities that follow:**

1. UPward - focuses on the spiritual growth and transformation of the group through interacting and engaging the word of God (loving God)

A. Lead the group through a Bible Study Discussion that encourages them to interact with the text and produces change in their hearts and lives.

- 1) Bible Study Discussions will primarily be sermon based, with a guide being provided through email. The sermon based model provides alignment throughout all CG’s and makes the gathering time an extension of Sunday morning.**
- 2) Leaders are encouraged to wisely use supportive text and additional questions that align with the aim of the texts truth.**
- 3) Focus on having an intentional discussion aimed at scriptural truths and not so much of a lecture.**

2. INward- focuses on the relational needs of the group (loving and serving one another)

A. Provide time and space for intentional prayer during gatherings.

- 1) Provide a brief time for sharing prayer needs at the time of your gathering that fits best.
- 2) Share times & Check Ups provides an opportunity to practice accountability within the group concerning an earlier weeks confession or response.
- 3) Try to avoid Check Ups turning in to prolonged times of gossip and venting.

B. Oversee and facilitate that the needs of the group are being communicated and met.

- 1) Needs could range from physical to spiritual, and everything in between. (Examples: Struggling with particular sin, family has been sick and could use physical healing and a meal brought by the house, family needs work done on their house, etc.)
- 2) Utilize group facebook page, texting, marco polo app, etc.
- 3) This role could be filled by someone else in the group who is particularly gifted in mercy and administration.

C. Oversee and facilitate a monthly "Hang Out / Celebration"

- 1) Each group will gather at the end of each month to celebrate, relax, and strengthen relationships with each other.
- 2) These gatherings should be different from a typical night and can involve activities such as bowling, movies, game night, bon fire, etc.
- 3) This role could be filled by others within the group.

D. Encourage and cultivate relationships outside of the weekly gathering

- 1) Communicate with people within your group throughout the week to check on them (lead out in this)
- 2) Some people within your group, possibly you, may engage in deeper discipleship / mentoring relationships outside of the CG ministry. This is known as the "root layer of discipleship".

E. Provide leadership development within the CG.

- 1) Oversee and support the group in the identification of, equipping of, and exercise of their spiritual gifts. This could involve others leading in the prayer time, meal plan, child care, organizing needs, organizing a mission opportunity, etc.
- 2) Identify and invest in a "number 2 guy" (apprentice), to train and raise up as a future leader. This could result in someone who can fill in, provide a break for a season, or lead in a multiplication/ group plant.

*Provide training in the following ways:

- 1- Provide the same info you've been given (guide)
- 2- Spend quality time with them to answer questions and discuss leadership
- 3- Give them opportunities to lead along-side you. This is "on the job training / discipleship"
- 4- Give them opportunities to lead on their own.

3. OUTward- focuses on reaching out to the lost and struggling, serving others on mission, and healthy group planting & multiplication. (loving and serving others)

A) Oversee that the group plans and participates in at least 1 group mission project each semester.

- 1) Prayerfully consider how your group can serve the area and context in which you are.
- 2) This could range from collecting and helping someone financially, doing physical labor, prayer walk, backyard bible school, adopting a business, etc. (they should all have a gospel focus)

B) Oversee that the group participates in 1 corporate mission day each semester.

- 1) These will involve all CG's working together, possibly in multiple locations, to reach and out and serve our region.
- 2) Mission work could involve out-reach opportunities, evangelism events, block parties, back yard bible clubs, etc. Mission days will typically end with a corporate worship service.

C) Oversee and encourage a culture of reaching out and inviting new people into the group.

- 1) Intentionally and prayerfully encourage your people to look for people in their lives that could be brought into the group and ministered to.
- 2) Every CG should have a goal of bringing in at least one person/family each Semester
- 3) With new people being reaching and brought into the group, space and effectiveness may become an issue, which is why the next section is crucial.

D) Lead the group towards the goal of healthy multiplication and group planting

- 1) Lay out and support the vision of groups growing spiritually and numerically to the point of multiplying or helping plant a new group. Look for opportunities to reaffirm the goal of multiplication.

*Multiplication = 1 Group will branch into 2

*Group Plant = 1 New group will be formed with members of existing CG's.

- 2) Healthy groups will have a goal of multiplying, while at the same time being able to maintain bonds and relationships.

- 3) Multiplication is not a perfect science with a "one size fits all mold" varying elements factor in such as:

- 1- Size of the group and space
- 2- Availability of a leader
- 3- Availability of a host
- 4- Size of other groups
- 5- Geographic and Time logistics

- 4) Multiplication and/or the planting of new groups will be managed with the support and guidance of the Connections Pastor.

4. Other Responsibilities

A) Take weekly attendance of all gatherings

- 1) Download and use the Simple Church App.
- 2) Take attendance for everyone who is present, including children.
- 3) Add guests and collect contact info if possible.

B) Manage your group during CG breaks

- 1) The typical schedule for CG's is 4 months on with 2 months of break in between.
- 2) Maintain some contact with you group and even look for opportunities to connect with them during the break, while at the same time enjoying the benefits that come with the intentional break period.

E) Examine and evaluate your CG during the break periods

- 1) Work with the connections pastor and other CG leaders to evaluate and examine the status of your group and begin making preparations for the upcoming semester

5. Oversight and Support

- A) The Connections Pastor is responsible for leading the CG ministry as a whole. His primary role is to shepherd, invest, equip, and support CG leaders and host's in their ministries.
- B) Any questions, concerns, or feedback related to your CG may be taken directly to him.
- C) Connections Pastor: Dustin Haile ~ dustin@fbcwoodlawn.org ~ 231-5688