

LEADER

SMALL GROUP  
LEADER  
TRAINING COURSE

 | SMALL GROUPS

# CONTENT

Session 1 <i>Believe</i> _____	3
Session 1 Leader Material _____	4
Activity _____	8
Session 2 <i>Become</i> _____	9
Session 2 Leader Material _____	10
Activity _____	14
Session 3 <i>Belong</i> _____	14
Session 3 Leader Material & Onboarding _____	16
S.H.A.P.E _____	19

# SESSION 1 – BELIEVE TRAINING PLAN

## OUTCOMES

BY THE END OF THIS SESSION, GROUP MEMBERS WILL HAVE:

- Reviewed the BELIEVE section of Small Group Leader Material
- Gained an understanding of
  - What it means to be a Christ follower
  - Christ First in the Small Group Leader, Member & Environment
  - Why small groups exist at Celebration

## SESSION PLAN

Total Session Time: 75-90 min

### 1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

Welcome everyone and introduce yourself. Tell them about your journey with Small Groups.

### 2. INTRODUCTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Go around the room and ask everyone to share their name, how long have they have been part of Celebration, what small group were they a part of, and why do they want to become a Small Group Leader.

### 3. BELIEVE MATERIAL

Review section on “Believe” in Small Group Leader Booklet. Participants will read along and fill in the blanks.

### 4. GROUP ACTIVITY (20 MIN)

Pair up participants or have them work in groups of 3-4. Have them discuss how they would handle each scenario. Have them select who will share with the rest of the group at the end of group time.

### 5. ACTIVITY REVIEW (30 MIN)

Have each selected spokesperson to share how they would handle each scenario. Encourage everyone to take notes for future reference. Encourage everyone to ask questions and to give additional recommendations.

## 6. CLOSE & PRAYER (5 MIN)

### HOMEWORK: JOURNEY WITH CHRIST TIMELINE

In preparation for next week's session, ask everyone to draw a timeline of their journey with Christ, marking milestones of growth by date for homework.

Write what the milestone were and how it made them a better Christ Follower and a better leader. Show a sample.

# SESSION 1 – BELIEVE

## LEADER MATERIAL

A core value at Celebration is CHRIST FIRST. We believe that Christ should be the center of our lives and in all we do. A small group is an environment where Christ is at the center and where faith is deposited in its members. Because we BELIEVE that Christ is first, the small group leader, group members, and the group environment should all display that He is at the center of it all.

### I. When Christ is first, the Small Group leader...

- **LIVES OUT** a life of a Christ follower.

God desires for us to grow into Christlikeness. As a small group leader, you are an example of a life that puts Christ first.

As a small group leader, you take on the responsibility of leading others. A small group leader's behavior and reputation represents Christ and represents Celebration Church. For this reason, it's also important that all leaders are aligned with our church beliefs and core values.

- 1 Timothy 4:12 (ESV) - Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity.

- **SERVES OTHERS** out of an overflow of God's Spirit in their own lives. The small group leader does not depend only on experience, training, skill, or education, but on the Holy Spirit's infilling and leading. Before we can spiritually "feed", or pour into the souls of others, we need to make sure that our souls are being fed. Then, we can give from our overflow and not be drained.

- John 15:4 (ESV) - "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit

by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”

- **AGREES** on practical, ethical, and biblical expectations of a small group leader.

**Practically:** Does not exploit your relationship network for business purposes, financial gain, or network marketing.

**Ethically:** Does not engage with illegal drugs or unlawful practices.

**Biblically:** Refrains from sexual immorality (pornography, adultery, fornication, homosexual acts), divisive behavior (gossip, speaking against the pastoral leadership, or vision of the church), or any behavior that might grieve Christ or cause others to stumble.

- Titus 2:7 (ESV) - And you yourself must be an example to them by doing good works of every kind. Let everything you do reflect the integrity and seriousness of your teaching.

- 1 Timothy 4:16 (ESV) - Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

- Is **PREPARED**

You can create a life-giving, Christ First, environment simply by being prepared.

**Prayer:** God shows up when we pray! Prayer is essential in leading a small group. By praying we invite the Holy Spirit into our relationships, group time, and group member’s needs.

**Scriptures:** As you read scriptures in your devotional time with God, ask the Holy Spirit to give you a scripture to share with the group. Being prepared with a scripture shows you have been praying and thinking about the group.

**Curriculum:** If your group will be curriculum-based, Celebration provides resources for you to choose from. Once you make your selection, be sure to read each lesson and ask God to help you understand and apply the passage to your own life. Unless that happens, you will not be ready to lead others.

Work through each question in the guide and become familiar with the leader’s notes.

- 1 Peter 3:15

But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.

- 2 Timothy 4:2

Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

*\*Checkpoint: HOW is “Christ First” modeled in my life? How am I an example of what I believe?*

## II. When Christ is first, the Small Group member:

- Understand why the group **EXISTS**.

Small groups exist for the purpose of community, but primarily to grow as a body of believers of Christ and impact others.

GROUP QUESTION: How can you help your group to understand WHY the group exists?

- Go to **THE WORD** and develop an appetite or a deeper understanding of Christ.

GROUP QUESTION: How can you help cultivate an appetite for the Word in your group?

- Participate in **PRAYER** and are developing and deepening their personal time with God.

GROUP QUESTION: How can you help build a culture of prayer in your group?

- Grow in **RELATIONSHIP** with one another and serve one another.

GROUP QUESTION: What does healthy group relationship look like? How will you build that?

*\*Checkpoint: How will you continually remind group members of why your group exists?*

## III. When Christ is first, the Small Group environment is:

- United not divided – No gossip, conversations are unified
- Safe – What is shared is confidential
- Loving – Accepting, believes the best of each other
- Edifying – Encouraging and builds each other up

Others are first – Group members serve one another, activities are not a stumbling block (for example no alcohol)

\*Checkpoint: This is a key area for small groups, especially creating an environment for safety...take a moment to discuss with the group on the HOW for all these points.

*How will I have the group agree on a Christ First environment?*

Whatever type of group you lead, Christ can be at the center. By always inviting the Holy Spirit and consistently praying together and reading scripture, you are communicating that Christ is first and at the center of your group.

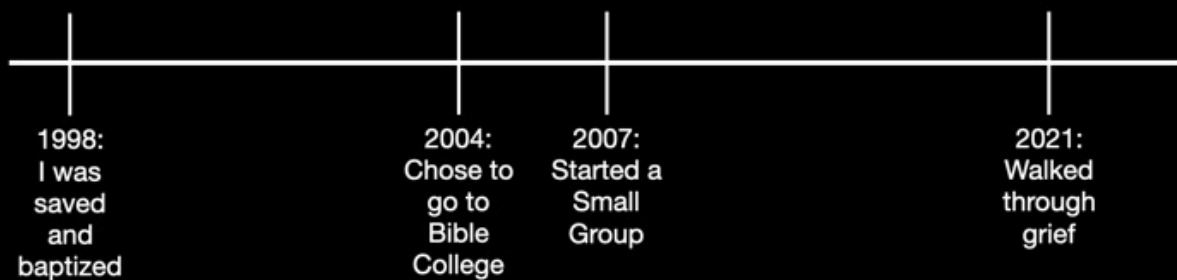
#### Resources:

- Our Beliefs: <https://www.celebration.church/ourbeliefs>
- Theology: <https://celebrationleaders.com/leadership-development>

## HOMEWORK: TIMELINE ACTIVITY

# WRAPPING UP

- HOMEWORK: draw a timeline of your journey with Christ...
  - Mark milestones of growth by date
  - Be prepared to share how each milestone made you a better Christ Follower/Leader



## SESSION 1 ACTIVITY

Pair up or work with a group and talk through how you would handle the following Small Group scenarios:

### ***Scenario #1***

You are a leader of an activity group called “Walking Warriors”. This group meets every week, and a one-mile walk is part of their time together. What are some ways you would ensure that Christ is First in your time together?

- *E.g. answers* - Use the time to debrief the study of the group, give them prayer points, pick up trash as a group as we walk to benefit our community, have them share their testimony

### ***Scenario #2***

You lead a small group that is open for anyone to attend. One of your group members is an unbeliever who often takes up lots of group time with tons of questions and sometimes even disagrees with topics about faith. What would you do?

- *E.g. answers* - be careful of affirming things that do not need to be affirmed, remember why we are here and reaffirm that at the beginning of the group, provide a Q/A box, refer to a coach, ensure that the person and the group feel safe and heard

### ***Scenario #3***

Someone in your small group privately tells you that some members of the group have been talking and are not happy with the way you lead discussion time. What would you do?

- *E.g. answers* - be unoffendable, open it up to the other groups to lead one night, perhaps find out from them how they responded or what might they do differently,



# SESSION 2 – BECOME TRAINING PLAN

## OUTCOMES

### BY THE END OF THIS SESSION, GROUP MEMBERS WILL HAVE:

- Reviewed the BECOME section of Small Group Leader Material
- Gained understanding of the need for leader & group members to grow in relationship with Christ and in their calling
- Identified their own growth and development as a believer
- Developed listening skills to identify where someone is at in their journey and recommend a next step.

### SESSION PLAN

Total Session Time: 75-90 min

#### 1. WELCOME

#### 2. REVIEW OF LAST WEEK'S SESSION

Give a brief overview of last week's session on BELIEVE. Ask participants what stood out to them and why?

#### 3. BECOME MATERIAL

Allow the homework from last week to be a bridge to the "BECOME" content for this week. It will be a great starting point for conversation about the importance of growth. Participants will read along and fill in the blanks.

#### 4. GROUP ACTIVITY (20 MIN)

Pair up participants or have them work in groups of 3-4. Have them discuss how they would handle each scenario. Have them select who will share with the rest of the group at the end of group time.

#### 5. ACTIVITY REVIEW (30 MIN)

- Have each selected spokesperson to share how they would handle each scenario. Encourage everyone to take notes for future reference. Encourage everyone to ask questions and to give additional recommendations.

#### 6. CLOSE WITH ANNOUNCEMENTS & PRAYER (5 MIN)

**HOMEWORK:** In preparation for next week's class, ask everyone to take the Spiritual Gifts & Disc Assessments available on their profile in Rock.

# SESSION 2 – BECOME LEADER MATERIAL

## REVIEW OF LAST WEEK'S SESSION: (10 MIN)

- Review the timeline – ask participants what they discovered about their growth journey from this exercise? Did it involve others?

Small groups are a space where everyone can grow and become more like Christ and everything, He has called us to be! A core value at Celebration Church is Everyone Grows. In a small group the leader grows, the group members grow, and the group itself grows.

## I. The small group leader is expected to grow in these areas:

### 1. In relationship with CHRIST, becoming an example of a Christ follower.

As a small group leader, it's vital to have a vibrant ongoing relationship with Christ. Spending time with Jesus, reading His Word, and prayer is how we are continually transformed into the image of Christ. It is out of this overflow a small group leader can disciple others, propelling each member closer to Christ.

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus. Acts 4:13

*\*Checkpoint: Am I spending time daily in God's Word and prayer? What do I need to do to make more time with God possible?*

## **2. In SPIRITUAL GIFTS and CALLING, becoming a believer fulfilling the call of God.**

Exercising your spiritual gifts will build spiritual muscle and will also enlarge your capacity as you grow in your calling.

1 Timothy 4:14 (ESV) - Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you...

*\*Checkpoint: What are my spiritual gifts? Which spiritual gift needs more development? How will I exercise it?*

### ***\*INTRO SPIRITUAL GIFT ASSESSMENT***

## **3. In LEADERSHIP, becoming a leader who leads others to salvation and purpose.**

Leadership is a spiritual gift, but it is also a skill to continually develop. As a leader it's important to always be looking for opportunities to grow in your leadership.

Psalms 78:72 (ESV) - And David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them.

Acts 20:28 (ESV) - Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

*\*Checkpoint: What areas of growth are still needed in my leadership? What are some practical things I can do to grow in this area? What resources are available for my leadership development?*

### ***\*INTRO D.I.S.C. ASSESSMENT***

## **II. Being a small group leader requires:**

*\*It means God is giving you people to disciple and becoming all that God has intended*

### 1. KNOWING the members of your group

Being intentional about building relationship with group members is vital. Each member being known and valued is the first step to discipling them.

- Know members by name and their family
- Be intentional about learning who they are
- Celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, and accomplishments

### 2. IDENTIFYING where each member is in their journey with Christ

Every member of a small group is unique and at a stage in their journey with Christ that may range from an unbeliever to a seasoned saint! No matter what stage someone is in, there is always room to grow. Identifying what stage a member is in will help you provide a next step for them to grow!

- Pray over each member by name
- Ask the Holy Spirit for insight & discernment
- Inspire members to become more

### 3. PROVIDING next steps to growing in Christ and their purpose

Everyone needs a next step to grow in becoming what God desires them to be. As a small group leader, you have an opportunity to provide that for your small group members.

<i>Stage</i>	<i>Next Step</i>
<i>An unbeliever</i>	<i>A prayer of salvation</i>
<i>A new believer</i>	<i>Baptism, New Believers Class</i>
<i>Disconnected</i>	<i>Connection Point, Small Group</i>
<i>Desire to serve</i>	<i>Dream Team</i>
<i>Leadership potential</i>	<i>Small Group Leader Orientation</i>
<i>Struggles with ...</i>	<i>Coaching, Referral, Prayer</i>

Not only does the small group leader and group members grow to becoming all that God desires, but the group itself grows. Purposefully growing together is a necessary part of thriving in the Christian life.

## III. A small group can grow and become

1. Richer in their RELATIONSHIP to one another
2. Deeper in their knowledge of CHRIST
3. Grow WIDER, making room for others to Belong, Believe and Become.

Acts 2:42-47 (ESV) - And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. 43 And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. 44 And all who believed were together and had all things in common. 45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Maintaining group health and ensuring growth of the group depends on the small group leader. As a leader it is important for you to evaluate if your small group is becoming what God intends. Some questions to ask yourself are:

- Are members in my group growing in relationship with one another?
- Is our time together edifying and always encouraging?
- Are there areas of spiritual disciplines the group needs to grow in?
- Are we serving as a group, reaching the lost by serving our community?
- Can we make room for more people to join by birthing a new group?

Your answers should be followed with a plan on how you will lead your group to growing in that area and becoming the best small group ever!

**Resources:**

- Connecting to Celebration: <https://www.celebration.church/connect>
- Baptism Orientation: <https://rock.celebration.church/events>
- Leadership Resources: <https://celebrationleaders.com/leadership-development>

## SESSION 2 ACTIVITY

Pair up or work with a group and talk through how you would handle the following Small Group scenarios:

### Scenario #1

You have started a small group and opened it up for others to join. You go through your roster of those who have signed up and you realize you don't know anyone. What are some things you will do to learn more about the individuals in your group?

### Scenario #2

You've been leading a group for a couple of months, and you are starting to realize that the group members are not connecting to one another. What are some things you can do so that relationships can be formed?

### Scenario #3

You've been leading the same small group of people for 3 years. The group has a consistent attendance of 15+ people and cannot accept any new members due to capacity. What are some things it's time to consider? What are your next steps?

# SESSION 3 – BELONG TRAINING PLAN

## OUTCOMES

BY THE END OF THIS SESSION, GROUP MEMBERS WILL HAVE:

- Gained understanding of the BELONG section of Small Group Material
- Gained understanding of leader resources
- Completed a S.H.A.P.E Worksheet
- Completed a New Group Registration Form

## SESSION PLAN

Total Session Time: 75-90 min

### 1. WELCOME

Welcome everyone. Ask how the sessions have affected their thinking of small group leadership.

## 2. REVIEW OF LAST WEEK'S SESSION

Give a brief overview of last week's session on BECOME. Ask participants what stood out to them and why?

## 3. BECOME MATERIAL

- Review section on "BECOME" in Small Group Leader Booklet. Participants will fill in the blanks.
- Display and present leadership resources
  - Rock, Forms, Closer Look
  - Leadership Curriculum

### .GROUP ACTIVITY/DISCUSSION (40 MIN)

- People BINGO (10 min) - use this activity to bridge the gap between FUN & S.H.A.P.E, introducing what the acronym means.
- Introduce NEW SG FORM: inclusive of S.H.A.P.E Worksheet (30 min) as a group and with discussion \*Rock Form
- RESOURCE: NEW SG FORM (<https://rock.celebration.church/sgnewgroup>)

## 4. WHAT'S NEXT?

- Talk about the process of Coaches contacting them and taking them through a New Group Registration
- What does onboarding look like?
- What forms do the new SG Leader fill in? Where?
- Homework: complete the NEW SG FORM through *my.celebration.church*

# SESSION 3 – BELONG

## LEADER MATERIAL & ONBOARDING

A core value at Celebration is WE ARE FAMILY. We believe that Small Groups are a place where everyone can feel that they Belong, where they are known, celebrated, cared for, and loved.

Celebration Small Groups operate in a “free market” system. This means that we do not assign people to groups or assign your group type. We want you to do the things that God has gifted you to do! We believe the Lord connects us through all stages and walks of life. Our groups range from curriculum-based studies to activity-based groups, in all sizes and types. Whatever group you choose to do, our desire is that your group will be a place where everyone can say “*I Belong Here!*”

### I. Group Environment

The best environment for a small group to gather is one that is inviting and distraction free. Make your meeting area the most inviting place it can be for your group.

- **Meeting place:** When selecting a meeting place consider room size and appropriate seating. Making sure people can see each other’s faces makes for better discussion. Circling your chairs is ideal—get everyone looking at, and relating to, one another

*QUESTIONS: What are some things to consider when selecting a place to meet?*

- **MANAGE OR ELIMINATE Distractions:** A distraction-free environment keeps everyone focused and engaged in your group’s time together. Make sure environment is comfortable and that temperature, outside noise, or smells are not a distraction.

*QUESTIONS: What are some things that can be a distraction during small group?*

*\*Checkpoint: How can your environment be a place people feel welcome from the moment they walk in?*



## II. Group Time

What you do when you gather depends on the type of group you lead. Whatever you decide, consistency and intentionality are key to a successful group time.

- **Schedule:** Groups meet year-round taking natural breaks as needed while staying in close communication. Decide on your schedule and remain consistent. Occasionally there may need to be a change but do your best to keep to the schedule you've agreed on.
- **Starting on time:** If people know the study begins on schedule, they will work harder to arrive on time.
- **Fellowship:** Allow time for it. A fun time together to connect in conversation is while eating some snack foods. You can rotate the responsibility for small group food. This ensures a variety of foods and keeps it from being a burden on any one member.
- **Discussion:** Effective leaders are not teachers or lecturers. They are facilitators whose primary job is to get people to interact with each other.

Encourage more than one answer to each question. A good question should have more than one possible answer, and each person has his or her unique perspective. Ask, *"What do the rest of you think?"* or *"Anyone else?"* until several people respond.

Affirm people's answers. People often are reluctant to speak up unless they know you appreciate their insights. Simple words such as *"That's a great insight," "Good response," "Excellent idea,"* or *"I hadn't thought of that before"* are enough to show people you value their comments.

Small groups are all about working with people and the small group meeting is the art of blending different personalities. Always stay in control of group discussion. Do not let people take over and derail things. You are responsible for reinforcing the context of the group discussion. If you must briefly interrupt someone, it's okay. Say something like, *"John, I love what you're saying, but I want to give a chance for others to share too."*

## III. Group Care

A successful group is not defined by how many people **ATTEND**, but by how each member is **KNOWN, CELEBRATED & LOVED**.

- **KNOWN:** How a group member is accepted into the group is the first step of belonging.

A small group has the option of being “invite only” or open for anyone to join. If you decide your group will be open for others to join, your group will be visible in our small groups’ directory. When someone joins your group through the directory you will be notified via email, and they will appear as a “pending” member on your roster. It is especially important to receive and acknowledge someone’s interest in joining your group and ask that you respond within 48 hours (about 2 days).

Once they become a member of the group, be intentional about learning all you can about them and their family.

- **CELEBRATED**

Remembering birthdays, milestones, and accomplishments let’s everyone in your group know that they are valued, known, and loved.

- **LOVED**

Care well for your group members by being the first line of care when a member goes through a life changing event such as sickness, hospitalization, or loss of a loved one.

When you become aware of a need, share the event or crisis along with how you are caring for the group member by completing the Pastoral Care Form. By doing this your campus team can come alongside you and your group members for additional support.

## **IV. BELONGING for the Small Group Leader**

Every small group leader Belongs on the Small Groups Team where they receive oversight and support. That means that participation is crucial to staying connected to leadership and life of our church.

Every small group leader is asked to...

- Read and respond to communication from your coach, hub leader and small groups pastor.
- Attend all Small Group Leader Gatherings,
- Remain accountable to information within monthly Small Group Newsletters.
- Participate in church wide series & Small Group Campaigns.
- Manage your group through Rock.

## V. RESOURCES for the Small Group Leader

- CelebrationLeaders.com: <https://celebrationleaders.com>
- Rock: <https://my.celebration.church/>

## VI. S.H.A.P.E People Bingo

<b>B</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>O</b>
I like to organize tasks	I am convinced of God's daily presence and action in my life	I enjoy working creatively with wood, cloth, paints, metal, glass, or other materials	I enjoy challenging people's perspective of God by using various forms of art	I am a person of discernment
I love being behind the scenes	I remember prayer requests and pray for them	I empathize easily for others	I love working with my hands	I would love to help start a church plant
I feel a responsibility to communicate Truth	I enjoy meeting new people		I love being in the spotlight, entertaining	I make difficult things simple
I can see through phoniness	I enjoy making things	I love extending hospitality in my home	I love giving financially to help support need	I love bringing hope
I like to create spaces so people feel they belong	I can anticipate consequences	I am adaptable	I openly tell people I am a Christian and share my faith	I like knowing my financial support makes a difference

