

PARTICIPANT

SMALL GROUP
LEADER
TRAINING COURSE

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SESSION 1 – BELIEVE

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...

- _____ 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.

- _____ 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."

- _____ 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 _____.

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 members:

- Understand why the group _____.
- Small groups exist for the purpose of community, but primarily to grow as a body of believers of Christ and impact others.
- Go to _____ and develop an appetite or a deeper understanding of Christ.
 - Participate in _____ and are developing and deepening their personal time with God.
 - Grow in _____ with one another and serve one another.

**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: 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.

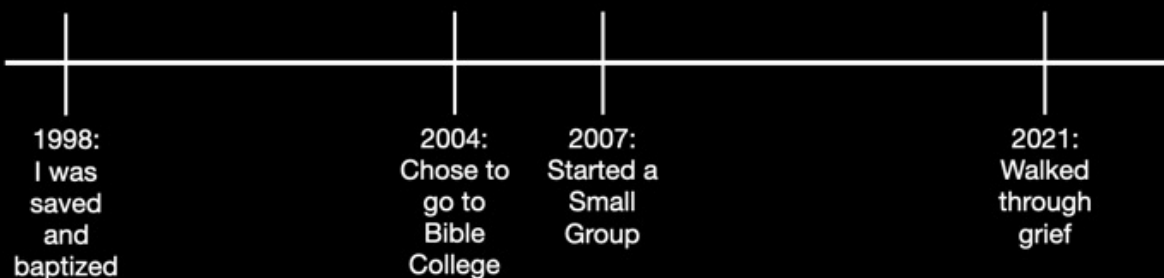
RESOURCES:

- 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?

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?

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?

SESSION 2 – BECOME

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 grows in three areas:

1. In relationship with _____, 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 _____ and _____, 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?*

3. In _____, 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?*

II. Being a small group leader means God is giving you people to disciple and becoming all that God has intended.

It requires:

1. _____ 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. _____ 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. _____ 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 _____ to one another
2. Deeper in their knowledge of _____
3. Grow _____, 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>

HOMEWORK: Complete the Spiritual Gifts & D.I.S.C Assessments through my.celebration.church, Rock log-in

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

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 _____ and _____. 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
- Distraction free: 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.

**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, _____ and _____ 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.

III. Group Care

A successful group is not defined by how many people _____, but by how each member is _____, _____, & _____.

- KNOWN

- CELEBRATED

- LOVED: 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 is asked to...

- _____ and _____ to communication from your coach, hub leader and small groups pastor.
- _____ all Small Group Leader Gatherings.
- Remain _____ to information contained within monthly Small Group Newsletters.
- _____ in church wide series & Small Group Campaigns.
- _____ 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

B	I	N	G	O
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

S.H.A.P.E. WORKSHEET

Use the SHAPE acrostic - your Spiritual gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality, and Experiences. These are the five things that make you, you. By looking at each of these areas, they can help as a guide as to what type of leader you are and what type of group you should consider leading.

Spiritual gifts are God-empowered abilities for serving him that are given to believers to BUILD into the Church.

- These gifts MOTIVATE YOU FOR and EMPOWER you for the work of ministry: e.g. serving, teaching, encouraging, leading, giving, showing mercy, discernment, knowledge, wisdom, etc.

What are your spiritual gifts based on your Spiritual Gifts assessment?

Heart refers to the bundle of desires, hopes, interests, ambitions, dreams, and affections you have. It's what you love to do and what you care about most.

What do you love to do? Who are the people you love to serve the most? Why?

Abilities are the natural talents you were born with or skills you've acquired. God wants you to do what you're able to do.

List any natural abilities or skill you have? Example: Music, Outdoors Skill, Sport, Cooking

Personality affects how and where you use your spiritual gifts and abilities. You'll use your gifts in different ways from anybody else.

What is your personality type? Introvert/Extravert, DISC,

Experiences teach you lessons that help you mature. They also help you minister to others going through similar experiences.

What lessons, good and bad, have you learned through some experiences you've had?

Based on your SHAPE, what type of group do you feel God is leading you to have?

The Group I See...

This form is a tool to help you discover what kind of group you might like to lead, as well as confirm that you are ready to align with the expectations and honor code associated with being a small group leader at Celebration Church. Thank you in advance to taking the time to consider your responses.

Your Group

Full Name: _____

Campus: Georgetown Central Austin Italy Mozambique

Date: _____

Email: _____

Best Contact Phone Number: _____

1. What type of group are you considering leading?

- Activity Group: Consider the activity you might do with the group...
- Bible Study Group: Consider the curriculum you might use...
- Endeavor Group
- Freedom Group: Have you been through Freedom yourself?
- Message Discussion Group: Consider how you can utilize "Closer Look" guides to reflect on the weekend preaching series...
- Prayer Group: Consider what book you might study with the group...
- Book Study Group: Consider what book you might study with the group...
- Outreach Group: Consider how/when you serve others with the group...
- Onsite Group: Consider which onsite day you might lead a table...
(Radiant Sisters: Tues AM or Wed PM / Men: Friday AM)

2. What people group are you looking to have participate?

- Students Young Adults Adults Men Women/Radiant Sisters
- Seniors Another Language

3. Look at your work/life schedule. When would be the best time to begin your group? How often is best for you to meet with your group? What day of the week works best for you? What time of day?

4. Where will your group meet?

My Home Cafe/Restaurant Outdoors Onsite (Table Leaders Only)

Other: _____

5. What are the names of those you hope to invite?

Leader Expectations & Honor Code

Please fill out this document and submit to your leader

Leader Expectations & Honor Code

This section is meant to clearly lay out the expectations and honor code required for all small group leaders at Celebration Church. Before you agree to this, please prayerfully consider your commitment and responses...

Expectations

As a Small Group Leader, you are assuming the responsibility for leading others. As you take on the title of leader, you must remember that your behavior and reputation represent Celebration Church and the body of Christ. For this reason, it's important that all leaders are aligned with our church beliefs and core values. Therefore, we have practical, ethical, and biblical expectations for our Small Group Leaders.

Whilst none of us are perfect, these are common areas that can impair the influence of Small Group Leaders and our ability to provide safe a Christ-like community to the Celebration family. During your Small Group leadership, should you begin to struggle with any of the above circumstances or something else you feel convicted about, please talk to your Coach or a Celebration Church Campus Pastor.

Name: _____ Campus: _____ Email: _____

Practically: I will not exploit my relationship network for business purposes, financial gain, or network marketing whilst serving as a leader at Celebration Church.

Agree Disagree

Ethically: I will not engage with illegal drugs or unlawful practices whilst serving as a leader at Celebration Church.

Agree Disagree

Biblically: I will refrain 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 whilst serving as a leader at Celebration Church.

Agree Disagree

Honor Code

When you become a leader at Celebration Church, you're committing to live your life at a higher standard. Everyone grows! As a leader, it's especially important that you pursue learning and growth throughout your lifetime, as well as demonstrate mature behavior as a follower of Christ. The Bible is our foundation for what it means to be mature in our thoughts, words, and actions. When you assume responsibility for leading others, and take on the title of leader, you must remember that your behavior and reputation represent Christ, His Church and Celebration Church. For this reason, it's important that all leaders are aligned with our church beliefs and core values. For clarity, please "Agree" or "Disagree" to making a commitment to these standards, behaviors and environments.

Standards: I agree to...

- Demonstrate Biblical standards in speech and attitude in all situations
- Maintain a daily time of prayer
- Read my Bible and apply His Word to my actions
- Present cleanliness in my attitude, language, dress and home whilst serving as a leader at Celebration Church...

Agree Disagree

Behaviors: Whilst serving as a leader at Celebration Church, I make a commitment to refrain from...

- Profanity
- Overindulgence of alcoholic beverages
- Dishonest activity
- Illegal drugs
- Pornography
- Sexual immorality
- Same sex relationships
- Sleeping with someone with whom I am not married
- Illegal activities (behavior that is contrary to governmental laws)
- All behaviors that do not line up with the Word of God.

Agree Disagree

Environments: Whilst serving as a leader at Celebration Church, I make a commitment to...

- Maintain alcohol-free environments for small group or team gatherings and meetings. This means not meeting in venues that are specifically intended for alcohol consumption (bars) or allowing alcohol to be brought into the environment (such as a tasting or meal with alcohol provided by the host, leader, or guests).
- Maintain tobacco-free environments for small group gatherings and meetings.
- Creating positive social media environments by being mindful and aware of the effects I post on social media. As a leader, your social media posts represent not only yourself, but His church as well. Seek to be a positive voice and reflection of Christ through your social media platforms.

Agree Disagree

Signature: _____

Date: _____

