



New Community

small group leader training

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WHY SMALL GROUPS EXIST

Small Groups have one, simple purpose—to bring people together. We believe God created us to live in community with others and only then can we experience the full life He intends for us.

We believe life-change happens in the context of _____.

Meaningful relationships can be hard to find, and Small Groups exist to make life-changing relationships relevant and accessible to you.

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

ECCLESIASTES 4:9-12

New Community Small Groups Model

At New Community, we believe our church must grow _____ and _____ at the same time.

We grow larger to reach as many people as possible with the life-changing message of Jesus. We gather in Small Groups to build community and care for people.

New Community wants to become a church ____ Small Groups, not a church _____ Small Groups.

We base our Small Group model on the early church as described in the Bible in the book of Acts. There, you can read about the tremendous growth of the first church in Jerusalem, where small group meetings in homes helped lay the foundation.

Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.

ACTS 5:42

Small Groups offer people:

1. A Place to _____.

Yes, whatever a person is like, I try to find common ground with him so that he will let me tell him about Christ and let Christ save him.

1 CORINTHIANS 9:22 TLB

We were not made to do life alone. God created us for community, and Small Groups provide a place to connect with others, share life, and grow in faith together.

2. A Place to _____.

Make this your common practice: Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you can live together whole and healed. The prayer of a person living right with God is something powerful to be reckoned with

JAMES 5:16 MSG

We know what real love is because Jesus gave up His life for us. So, we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters.

1 JOHN 3:16 NLT

It is through doing life together that our problems become smaller, and God uses others to bring support and encouragement to our lives. Small Groups become a place where others don't just know your name, but care about what is happening in your life and help you find Christ's healing and freedom along in your spiritual journey.

3. A Place to _____.

As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

PROVERBS 27:17

We believe every person is created with God-given potential to make a difference in the world. Small Groups are a place you can grow with others to become more like Jesus and reach the potential God has put inside you. That journey is one "next step" at a time.

WHAT SMALL GROUPS LOOK LIKE

Your Life is Your Group

At New Community, we use a _____ approach to Small Groups. This means we want people to gather together based on the things they enjoy and are important to them. Essentially, the things you are already doing in your life are the things that can make up your Small Group!

Free market leaders form their group around their _____ or _____.

From sports groups to lunch groups, mom groups to student groups, Bible study groups to creative arts groups, our groups are as varied as we are. All groups fall within one of eight hubs.

- Men
- Women
- Marriage and Family
- Student
- Freedom
- Outreach
- Prayer
- Study / Curriculum - Based

Group Structure

Groups meet throughout the year in three semesters.



Groups meet _____ or _____ during each semester.

Groups meet in a variety of places like homes, parks, restaurants, coffee shops and office buildings. Limited meeting spaces and times are available at New Community.

New groups start every semester making it easy to build community and enjoy different types of groups.

No matter what your group meets about, each meeting should be made up of four things:

1. _____:

Laid back time for group members to talk and get to know each other.

2. _____:

This will vary based on what kind of group you're leading. It could be an activity like Frisbee or outreach or a discussion about a book or Sunday message.

3. _____:

Ask for prayer requests from group members and pray at the beginning and/or the end of each group meeting.

4. _____:

This is what differentiates your Small Group from your neighborhood supper club. Whether it's through activities or discussion, always find a way to include the Word of God. This can be as simple as sharing something God is teaching you with the group, talking about a verse you read that week, or doing a deep dive in Bible Study.

Small Groups are not a place for:

- Business
- Offerings
- Unapproved materials or speakers
- Controversial topics

YOUR ROLE AS A SMALL GROUP LEADER

God has a part for all of us to play in the church, and Small Group Leaders come alongside the pastors and leadership of New Community to help _____ for people.

Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

EPHESIANS 4:11-13 NLT

The primary role of a Small Group Leader is to help group members _____ in their walk with God.

Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds;

PROVERBS 27:23

Possible Next Steps

People in your group will be at different places in their spiritual lives and each person will have different next steps to take. Here is a guide of some next steps you can help people take:

1. Start attending Sunday services
2. Start reading the Bible regularly
3. Start praying regularly
4. Be water baptized
5. Complete New Community's Growth Track
6. Join A Team
7. Start giving or tithing
8. Start attending Community Outreaches
9. Attend a New Community Conference (Marriage, Men, Women, Freedom, etc.)
10. Take Freedom in Christ
11. Invite a friend or neighbor to church or a Small Group
12. Attend a Small Group Leadership Training to become a Small Group Leader.

10 Ways to be a successful Small Group Leader:

1. _____ daily for the members of your group.
2. Have _____ through laughter and by creating an enjoyable environment.
3. Respect people's _____ by beginning and ending your group on time.
4. _____ with group members between meetings through phone, email, text, social media and face-to-face. Encourage group members to connect with each other throughout the week as well.
5. Consider partnering with a _____ to help share the responsibility of caring for and connecting with your group weekly. There should be at least one leader for every 10 people.
6. _____ group members to attend church services and events with you like First Wednesday services, conferences, or outreach opportunities.
7. _____ the group around a member going through a crisis. Use wisdom and be sensitive.
8. Update a finalized _____ near week 6 of each semester through Planning Center Groups.
9. Help each member identify their next step and submit their _____ at the end of each semester.
10. _____ through ongoing Leader Training and Coach-relationship.

The Importance of Prayer

Prayer is a _____ of our church, and it is important for your Small Group.

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

2 CHRONICLES 7:14

How to pray for your group:

- Pray for any requests group members share.
- Ask for the presence of the Holy Spirit in your group.
- Pray that God will open people's hearts to hear His truth.
- Pray for authentic community to develop.
- Pray for wisdom and strength to lead your group well.

How To Create Good Group Dynamics:

- **Set _____.**

A key to helping people feel comfortable in your group is to let them know what to expect. Take time to share how the group will flow from week to week. This can include things like explaining the times you will begin and end the group, how discussion or group activities will happen, and how group members can share prayer requests or best engage in the group.

- **Follow the _____ - _____ rule.**

Give the members of your group room to speak up instead of doing all the talking yourself. About 70% of talking should come from members and 30% from the leader.

- **Keep discussion _____.**

If conversation takes a negative or destructive turn, guide it back to a healthy place. If someone needs to talk about a sensitive or complex issue, you can follow up with them after the group or call your coach to help you respond well.

- **Keep the conversation _____ to everyone.**

Remember people in your group will be at different places in their spiritual journey. Be thoughtful when you talk about spiritual concepts or church terms that might be unfamiliar to new Christians or new church-goers.

- **Respect _____.**

Men should minister to men and women should minister to women. A couple may minister to a single person. We want to maintain integrity and purity in our Small Groups. These boundaries will help protect the leaders and group members from entering into an uncomfortable or inappropriate situation.

Leadership Support

As a Small Group Leader, you are never alone in creating community. We have pastors and leaders who are all working alongside you to invest in great Small Groups.

Your Coach

As a Small Group Leader, you have a Coach paired with you to help as you need support throughout the semester.

Your Coach's number one priority is to _____ for you daily.

What should I do if someone in my group shares something with me (or the group) that requires attention beyond what I (or we) can provide?

If you encounter a difficult situation within your Small Group, know that you are not alone. If a member is going through a crisis, you can rally the group around them to provide prayer, encouragement, and support. Use wisdom and be sensitive to the moment.

If you are unsure of what to do, don't hesitate to ask your _____. Also, you and/or the group member can call the New Community Team at (804) 315-3535.

HOW TO START YOUR SMALL GROUP

1. Ask God for direction about what group to lead and who to invite.
2. Once you decide on a topic or activity, choose a place and time to meet.
3. Register your group at www.thenewcommunity.church/GROUPS
4. Invite people you know or meet to come check out your group.
5. Pray for God to do great things through your Small Group.

Preparing For Your Group Meetings:

Send a message to group members reminding them about the first meeting.

Arrive early to set up a welcoming environment.

Consider having nametags available to help everyone learn names the first few weeks.

Creating Conversation

Here are a couple conversation starters to help get people talking as your group gets to know each other:

How did you learn about our group?

What are your hobbies?

What are you looking forward to this year?

What brought you here?

What are you hoping to get out of this Small Group?

Stay Connected

Throughout the semester, respond to your Coach about group attendance, potential new Small Group Leaders, and how members are moving one step.

Preparing to Lead

All Small Group Leaders complete the following steps before leading:

- Become a member of New Community
- Complete Growth Track
- Attend a Small Group Leadership Training
- Complete the Small Group Leadership Application Online
- Complete a Small Group Leadership one-on-one interview
- Sign the Small Group Leadership Commitment and Honor Code

Thank you for being an important part of Small Groups at New Community!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How can I recruit people to come to my group?

Start with people who are already in your sphere of influence (co-workers, friends, and neighbors). Find people around you who are new to the church, are new believers, or have shown interest in getting involved.

Look for people you think you can help to realize their potential.

Ask God to send the right people to your group.

Where can I hold my Small Group?

We encourage Small Groups to meet outside the church building in places where you like to spend your time. Some of the most common meeting places are homes, restaurants, parks, coffee shops, and office buildings.

Where can I find Small Group curriculums?

We have a variety of curriculum suggestions available to you at thenewcommunity.church/groups.

Does New Community cover the cost of curriculum materials?

New Community does cover the cost of the leader's materials needed for any pre-approved curriculums. Small Group participant workbooks, textbooks or other resources must be covered by the individual. Of course, if there is someone who wants to take your group but cannot afford a text book, we are happy to discuss alternative purchasing options or even scholarship opportunities.

Does my group have to meet weekly?

We encourage meeting weekly each semester in order to build genuine relationships.

Does New Community offer childcare during Small Group meetings?

You are welcome to choose to offer childcare at your Small Group.

New Community offers childcare reimbursement for individuals who would like to attend a Small Group, but do not have the resources to pay for a babysitter each week. We do not want anyone to miss the chance to be in a Small Group for financial reasons. Reimbursement is for New Community members or attendees who would not otherwise be able to attend a Small Group, and it applies to childcare costs that occur during a Small Group.

Please refer to the Childcare Reimbursement Request Form for complete guidelines, which is available online.

For more information, contact New Community at (804) 315-3535 or groups@thenewcommunity.church.

How do I measure if group members are moving one step?

Ask! Make it part of your discussion whether in a group setting or individually. Here are some great questions to guide your conversation:

- How did you get connected to this Small Group?
- What are you most looking forward to in the group?
- Do you attend New Community?
- What brought you to New Community?
- Have you ever been part of a Small Group before?
- What do you feel like God has been doing in your life lately?
- Have you ever been to a New Community conference?
- What areas of your faith are you hoping to grow in the coming months?
- What are you focused on in your life right now?
- Have you been through the New Community's Growth Track?
- Do you remember what your personality type is or what your spiritual gifts are?
- Have you ever served on a New Community Team?
- How can I pray for you?

Everyone in your group will be at different places spiritually. The vision of helping them “move one step” is not to get them to do everything at once, it's to help identify where they currently are spiritually and offer a practical next step to help them grow.

Here are some examples of next steps you can share depending where a group member is spiritually:

- Invite them to attend a Sunday service with you.
- Share your personal story and what God has been teaching you.
- Invite them to a New Community events, small groups and services.
- Share how Growth Track can help them discover their purpose and invite them to attend.
- Invite them to consider being water baptized. Invite your Small Group to be there to celebrate anyone getting baptized.
- Share how you find time regularly to pray, worship, and read God's Word, and encourage them to make their own plan for time with God.
- Tell them about the New Community Bible reading plan.
- If they are ready to receive Christ, offer to pray with them.
- Encourage them to learn more about areas like tithing, the Holy Spirit, prayer, and spiritual warfare by watching past messages at thenewcommunity.church.

What should I do if someone asks a question I can't answer?

It's okay to not have all the answers. Thankfully, we can find guidance through prayer, God's Word, and the Holy Spirit. Encourage them to spend time reading the Bible and praying. Also, let them know that you will do your best to get some information and get back with them at your next Small Group meeting. Do some personal research and call your coach to get advice.

What should I do if someone in my group shares something with me (or the group) that requires attention beyond what I (or we) can provide?

If you encounter a difficult situation within your Small Group, please know that you are not alone. If a member is going through a crisis, you can rally the group around them to provide prayer, encouragement, and support. Use wisdom and be sensitive to the situation. If you are unsure of what to do, don't hesitate to ask your Coach. Also, you and/or the group member can call the New Community Ministry Team at (804) 748-8613, if needed.

How can I share stories of life change from the Small Group semester?

We love hearing about lives that are changed through Small Groups. You can share your stories with your Coach or email them to groups@thenewcommunity.church

You can also share your own personal stories through social media and tag #NewCoGroups

LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT

“The same goes for those who want to be servants in the church: serious, not deceitful, not too free with the bottle, not in it for what they can get out of it. They must be reverent before the mystery of the faith, not using their position to try to run things. Let them prove themselves first. If they show they can do it, take them on. No exceptions are to be made for women— same qualifications: serious, dependable, not sharp-tongued, not overly fond of wine. Servants in the church are to be committed to their spouses, attentive to their own children, and diligent in looking after their own affairs. Those who do this servant work will come to be highly respected, a real credit to this Jesus-faith.”

1 TIMOTHY 3:8-13 THE MESSAGE

LEADER QUALIFICATIONS

Sincere, worthy of respect, and of a good reputation.

Tithe regularly to New Community.

Have a genuine desire to serve and minister to other people.

Able to lead, motivate, and teach other people.

Able to create positive group dynamics, and deal with conflict resolution within the group.

Agree to teach in alignment with New Community’s Statement of Faith.

HONOR CODE

As an essential part of the New Community Church Leadership family, you have a responsibility to develop and exhibit mature Christian behavior. This should be the basic premise of your desire to participate in a servant-leader position here at New Community.

While serving the Body of Christ as a servant-leader at New Community, you pledge to present a good appearance at all times. In both attire and behavior, you should strive to demonstrate Biblical standards in all situations. As Christians, the way we present ourselves to others is of vital importance to the way others perceive Christ. Our conduct should never be an embarrassment to Christ but should exemplify the best qualities of a mature believer and servant-leader.

Exemplifying the highest moral commitment, New Community’s leaders are to maintain a disciplined life of Bible reading, prayer and fasting. You must also refrain from such things as:

- Illegal & recreational drugs
- Pornography
- Indulging in much wine or other alcoholic beverages
- Dishonest gain
- All behaviors which might cause Christ to grieve and others to stumble

LEADER DECLARATION

“Because God has called me to serve my generation, I will value worship over wealth, “we” over “me,” character over comfort, service over status, and God’s purposes over possessions, positions, popularity, and pleasure.

To my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, I say: However, whenever, wherever, and whatever you ask me to do, my answer in advance is yes! Wherever you lead and whatever the cost, I’m ready anytime, anywhere. I want to be used by You in such a way that on that final day, I’ll hear You say, “Well done, good and faithful servant. Come on in, and let the eternal party begin!”

ABUSE POLICY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I understand that New Community is a safe place for children and vulnerable adults and that New Community complies with all Federal and State laws regarding reporting suspected child abuse. As a Small Group Leader, I understand that suspected abuse is to be reported to the staff member who oversees the area in which I serve. I also understand the 4 types of abuse defined below:

Physical: A physical act directed at a child or vulnerable adult that causes injury;

Sexual: Contact or interactions between a child and an adult, or another child, when the child is being used for sexual stimulation of the perpetrator or another person. This includes exploitation through photographs, videos, or other communication methods;

Emotional: Acts or omissions by the parent or other caregivers that have caused, or could cause, serious behavioral, cognitive, emotional, or mental disorders;

Neglect: Failure to provide for the child or vulnerable adult's basic needs. This includes adequate adult supervision, medical attention, housing, food, and clothing. Most cases of physical neglect involve inadequate adult supervision that has caused harm to the child or vulnerable adult, or places them in danger of such harm.

I understand it is not my responsibility to investigate and in no instance will I confront a parent or care giver if abuse is suspected. As a Small Group Leader, I agree to comply with this policy and report any suspected abuse to the staff person who oversees the area in which I serve.