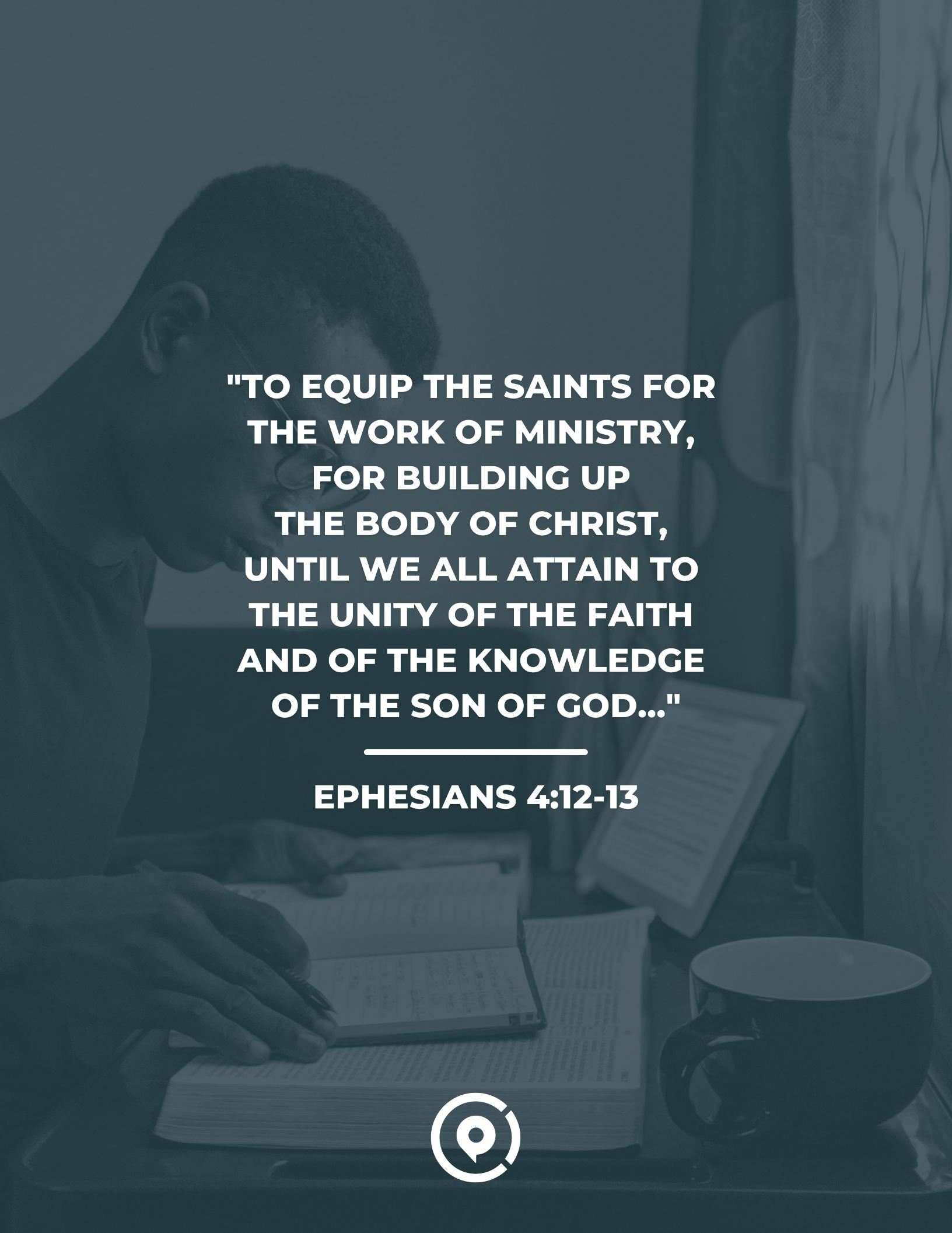




SMALL GROUP LEADER

TRAINING GUIDE

CENTER  POINTE

A man with glasses is sitting at a desk, reading a book. He is wearing a dark shirt and has a pen in his hand. There is a cup of coffee on the desk next to him. The background is slightly blurred, showing a window with curtains. The text is overlaid on the image in white, bold, uppercase letters.

**"TO EQUIP THE SAINTS FOR
THE WORK OF MINISTRY,
FOR BUILDING UP
THE BODY OF CHRIST,
UNTIL WE ALL ATTAIN TO
THE UNITY OF THE FAITH
AND OF THE KNOWLEDGE
OF THE SON OF GOD..."**

EPHESIANS 4:12-13



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**THEY DEVOTED
THEMSELVES TO THE
APOSTLES' TEACHING, TO
THE FELLOWSHIP, TO THE
BREAKING OF BREAD,
AND TO PRAYER.**

ACTS 2:42



WE BELIEVE LIFE CHANGE ALSO HAPPENS DURING THE WEEK, NOT JUST THE WEEKEND.

At Center Pointe, we try to do two things well: our weekend gatherings and small groups. As followers of Jesus we are called to come together and worship but God also created us for community - both with Himself and with each other. Small groups are the way to foster both of these relationships. Our goal is to not just have meetings together each week but the **life-changing community** that we see clearly in the Bible. We believe that it's in small groups where someone moves from Center Pointe being somewhere they attend, to somewhere they **belong**. We also hope our groups can be place where someone can belong even before they believe.

“OUR GROUPS EXIST TO HELP PEOPLE CONNECT RELATIONALLY AND TAKE NEXT STEPS SPIRITUALLY.”

Our small groups exist to do two things: to help people **CONNECT** relationally and take **NEXT STEPS** spiritually. We want them to grow in relationship with others and grow in relationship with God, so our group leaders work to create environments for this growth to happen. They are the heartbeat of the church and many times our leaders are on the front lines of ministry.

When you look at Jesus' life and ministry, you can see who he spent time with. He would always draw these large crowds everywhere he went, we would call that his "congregation," but more than half his time was spent with his small group. Then in Acts 2:42, you see that small groups were foundational to the launch of the New Testament church. Luke describes how the early church engaged in the **apostle's teaching, fellowship, and prayer**. It's these three things that guide our small group time here at Center Pointe.

This **LEADER GUIDE** is designed to unpack all the why's and how's of small groups to help prepare you to lead your own group. As you watch the video series, read through this guide, and engage with the reflection questions, keep in mind that we will use this guide when we come together for **New Leader Orientation**.

LEADERSHIP EXPECTATIONS

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

We understand that God has placed this desire to lead on your heart and we take this calling seriously. As a staff, we want to equip you in the best way to follow this calling and lead effectively. Our hope is that you are comfortable, confident, and equipped for what God is calling you into. We're committed to empowering and developing you as a leader through ongoing training, support, and encouragement to help you grow spiritually and in your spiritual leadership.

ONBOARDING LEADERSHIP INVESTMENT

As a group leader, you can expect training and encouragement during your onboarding process. Over the course of one year, you will engage in:

- **VIDEO BASED TRAINING** - you will have access to a series of short videos designed to help you get a feel for how we do groups at Center Pointe but also the impact you can have in a leadership role.
- **LEADER TRAINING GUIDE** - this guide is designed to help you reflect on the videos, give a deeper understanding on some key principles of group leadership, and to be used at New Leader Orientation.
- **NEW LEADER ORIENTATION** - new leaders will gather with our staff to put it all together and dive deeper on group culture at Center Pointe.
- **LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES** - an experienced coach will meet with you and discuss some of the key aspects of spiritual leadership.

GROUP MEMBER

for a term to get a feel for group life at Center Pointe. Then partner with your small group leader for next steps.

CO-LEADER

for a term while you work through video based training and attend New Leader Orientation.

MULTIPLICATION

Continue to co-lead as you work with a Coach on next steps and as your group works to multiply.

1

2

3

?

WHAT ARE TWO AREAS YOU FEEL TRAINING WILL BE MOST VALUABLE FOR YOU?

ONGOING LEADERSHIP INVESTMENT

As a group leader, you can expect continued investment, encouragement, and support. Over the course of a year, you will be supported with:

- **COACH PARTNERSHIP** - an experience coach will be there, not to be directive, but to support you. They will pray with you, talk with you about your family, your group, just be there for you. They will touch base through email and text but will want to meet in person once per term.
- **LEADER HUDDLES** - each term we will have a couple of options for you to attend our leader huddles where small group leaders get to encourage each other, learn from each other, and pray for the church.
- **GROUP TALK** - every two weeks you will have access to a video or podcast that will touch on different topics to help you continue to grow as a leader.
- **LEADER APPRECIATION** - every year we will come together just so the staff at Center Pointe can say **THANK YOU**. You are such an important part of our faith family and we want to appreciate you for all that you do in serving the families of Center Pointe Church.

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU

To ensure the health of our groups, there are certain expectations of a small group leader at Center Pointe.

- Have a personal and growing relationship with Christ
- Be a member of Center Pointe by completing the membership process
- Faithfully attend Center Pointe worship gatherings
- Be willing to follow the vision and leadership team of Center Pointe
- If married, have your spouse's support for your role as a small group leader
- Guard personal integrity
- Empower those around you, never lead alone (give away ministry)



WHAT WOULD YOU WANT THE
RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR
COACH TO LOOK LIKE?

WHY DO WE MULTIPLY?

TAKE THE TIME TO READ GENESIS 12:1-3, MATTHEW 28:16-20, AND 2 TIMOTHY 2:1-2.

All throughout the Bible, we see our identity as "sent people." We were saved to be sent. God never intended for the gospel to stop with us, but for us to take it to others. **The Gospel is about movement, not maintenance.** As believers, we launch out of the comforts of our current community to create a place where new people can experience the same blessings we have. Jesus left His heavenly community to come to earth to save us. The disciples left their community in Jerusalem to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth. And most likely, someone in your life left the comfort of their community to invest in you. We now have the privilege to join this movement as we provide the same **life-changing community** to others that we have received from this group.

WHEN SHOULD MY GROUP MULTIPLY?

Multiplication is something that we celebrate. It should be the goal of each group to multiply over and over again because that means you are reaching new people. As you begin leading your group, helping them to see the vision of multiplication from the beginning is important so you can celebrate together when you do.

Group size will be a factor in multiplication as well as having a ready leader.

- **12-15 adults** - this is a sweet spot for group size
- **15-20 adults** - at this size it starts to become difficult to hear from everyone, your group should start planning to multiply
- **20+ adults** - you will need to multiply during the next term so that your group can celebrate and reach new people

BARRIERS TO MULTIPLICATION

There can be several different barriers that prevent groups from multiplying; below are four of the most common. Which multiplication barrier do you feel your group may deal with most?

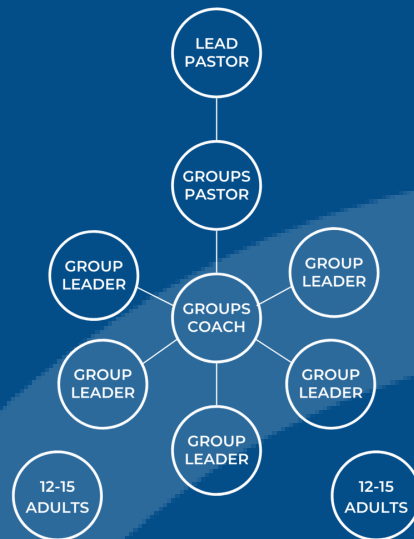
- **THEOLOGY** - I don't know if God is calling me to multiply.
- **COMMUNITY** - I don't want to leave my current group.
- **PRACTICAL** - I don't know how to multiply and start a new group.
- **LEADERSHIP** - I don't have a leader ready to start a new group.

As you pray through multiplication, try and identify if you are telling God "Not Now," or if God is telling you, "Not Now."

CARE AT CENTER POINTE

OUR SPAN OF CARE MODEL HELPS US TO MAKE SURE THAT EVERYONE IS CARED FOR.

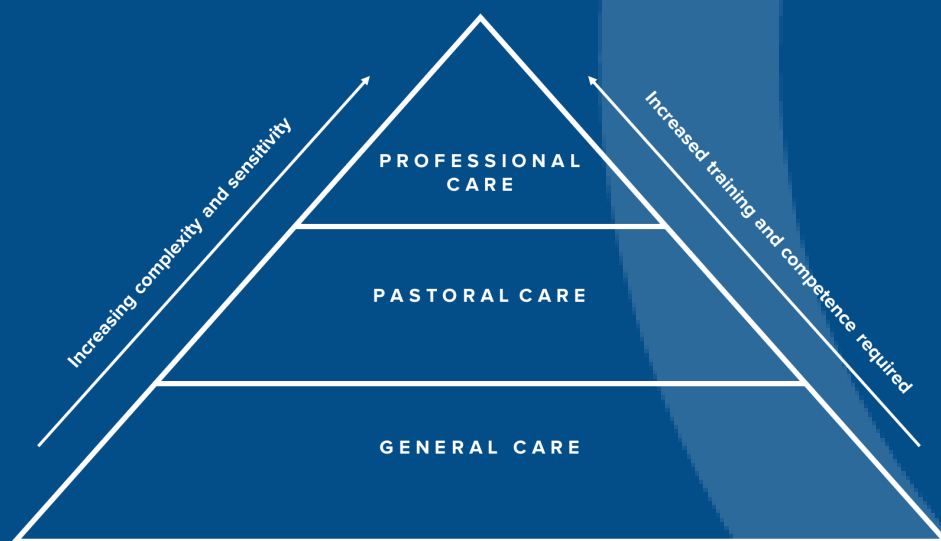
We have a lead pastor, a pastor or director over small groups, a system of coaches, our small group leaders, and then our small groups. **Each person in our leadership structure will minister two levels down.** We ask that significant events are communicated to the coach and pastor so that we can celebrate, support, and pray with you. Each of our leaders look out for one another, so letting the other small group leaders know how they can serve in practical ways is important.



THREE LEVELS OF CARE FOR THE FAMILIES OF CENTER POINTE

General Care is provided to the families of Center Pointe at the small group level. It's in small groups where we exercise the 59 "one anothers" we see in the New Testament. **It's where you get to "one another", one another.**

At times there may be needs that require more time and more experience than our group leaders have, those should be escalated to the **pastoral level of care**. The partnership between the group leader and the pastoral staff is important here.




If there are needs that require **specialized care**, we have partnerships with biblical counselors to help care for individuals or families. We will also help offset the cost of this care for those who are **members** of the church.

SMALL GROUP RHYTHMS

WE WANT OUR GROUPS TO EXPERIENCE A LIFE-CHANGING COMMUNITY TOGETHER

This simple framework helps our groups provide a life-changing community where you can **connect relationally** and take **next steps spiritually**.

- **GROW TOGETHER** - small groups meet weekly because consistency builds community. We want our groups to become part of the weekly rhythms of our people's lives. Whenever you meet with less frequency, it can be difficult to gain traction and if someone misses, they will go a month without seeing the group members. By meeting weekly, you make the group a priority on your calendar and community forms quickly.

 **WE WANT OUR GROUPS TO BECOME PART OF THE WEEKLY RHYTHMS OF OUR PEOPLE'S LIVES."**

- **PARTY TOGETHER** - each term our groups take at least one week to host a Hangout Night, which is when the group intentionally creates a warm and welcoming place to invite new people to experience their life-changing community. These nights provide strategic invite opportunities for each person's ONE that they are praying for and investing in.
- **SERVE TOGETHER** - each term, we want our groups to take at least one week and choose one way your group can reach your neighborhood, the city, or world. You can do this is by partnering with a number of local ministries in the area, by adopting a local school to partner with through service projects, or any other number of ways to create memories as a group and allow God to stir in the hearts of your group members.

OUR GROUPS MEET DURING THREE TERMS EACH YEAR.

Our group schedules work off a trimester system. **TERM 1** is January through April. Then there is a break before **TERM 2** starts in May to go through August. Then we take another break before we start up again for **TERM 3** in September and go through December.

We take breaks between terms for two reasons. First, we want to make sure you get a break from group leadership. Second, the breaks serve as an onramp for new people. 95% of new people will jump into a group during the break because everyone is starting over, everyone is starting at the same place.

WHO'S YOUR ONE?

At Center Pointe, we want every believer to identify **ONE** person in their life who is far from God and intentionally pursue that person with the hope of the gospel by **praying, investing, and inviting**. Take some time and identify one person in your life who either doesn't have a relationship with Jesus or is disengaged with the local church. This person should be someone you see on a regular basis: think friends, family, neighbors, coworkers, classmates, the person you get your Starbucks from every day. Once you identify this person, start to pray.

who's your **1** ONE?

WE WANT TO COMMIT TO DOING THREE THINGS FOR OUR ONE...

- **PRAY** - I will pray daily for my **ONE**. I will ask God to make my **ONE** aware of Christ's love and their need for Him (2 Cor. 4:4; Matt. 13:15) and to give them the faith to repent and believe (Acts 20:21; Romans 10:9-10). I will also ask that God allows me to share the Gospel with them.
- **INVEST** - I will create ways to invest weekly in my **ONE**. My hope is to build a relationship where I can share Christ's love with my **ONE** (1 Cor. 9:19-23). Simple investments like text messages, phone calls, and acts of kindness are easy, but impactful ways to invest in the relationship, thus building trust which creates more opportunities to share the Gospel.
- **INVITE** - As I pray and invest, I will invite my **ONE** to the next right thing. The ideal would be to share your faith and invite your **ONE** to enter into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. When he or she isn't there yet, I will invite them to an intentional environment where they can belong before they believe. I will do this by inviting them to events like Small Group, a Hangout Night, or a Sunday morning service, either online or in person.

SMALL GROUP HANGOUTS

HOSTING AN AWESOME HANGOUT NIGHT

What is a hangout night? _____

A hangout is a gathering hosted by your small group that intentionally creates a warm and welcoming place to invite new people to experience their life-changing community.

How do we do hangout night? _____

These serve as a strategic invite opportunity for the ONE you are praying for and investing in. By creating a place that displays authentic community, you can offer hope to your friends and neighbors as they experience the love of Christ in a fun, but profound way.

Who is it primarily for? _____

These nights are intentionally designed for those who are not yet in your group. A great question to ask is, "Who in my life could benefit from a group like this?" As you think through this list, consider your ONE. These nights provide a great opportunity to invite them and invest in that relationship. Also consider your neighbors and other people who are not involved in a small group.

When will we do it? _____

Small groups meet weekly for 12 weeks each term. Your group is encouraged to choose at least one of those weeks and set that as your designated "Hangout Night". It helps to have someone in the group "own" this for the group to plan the events.

How do we host a hangout night? _____

Every member of the group should be involved in this.

- **Each One Bring One:** Ask each member to invite their ONE.
- **Each One Connects With One:** Ask each member to connect with one new person each Hangout Night.
- **Each One Follows Up With One:** Ask each member to invite their friend back the next week.

"The most persuasive argument for the Christian faith is the Christian community. The majority of conversions throughout church history have come not through argumentation, but through belonging to a meaningful community before belief is ever required."

- Todd Engstrom

"What type of event would my ONE like to attend?"

That's the question we should be asking. Ideas for hangout nights are endless. Below are a few ideas that are welcoming and engaging for both believers and non-believers.

HANGOUT NIGHTS (PHYSICAL GATHERINGS)

Grill Out: Have your group over and invite the neighborhood! This is fun especially on a warm day where everyone can be outside talking, and don't be afraid to break out cornhole.

Bowling: This is the staple of a classic group night out where everyone can get together and have a good time all the while hurling balls at an assortment of pins!

Board Game Night: Have your group over and invite the lost people in your lives to come because everyone loves board games. What's good about this activity is that once you finish you can just start another one.

Yard Game Night: Feel free to play whatever game you want. The whole point of this activity is to get everyone outside and show your community what it looks like to live in a community with others.

Potluck: Food is always a win! The host will let the group members know in advance and everyone can choose what they want to bring, then inviting people is the easy part!

Go To A Restaurant: Get out of the house! Go to a restaurant with the members of your group and get to know each other better over a meal.

Go To A Local Event: Go out and get to know the people in your community and have a good time. This is a great time to see the needs of other people and see potential serving opportunities.

HANGOUT NIGHTS (ONLINE GATHERINGS)

Scavenger Hunt: The host calls out a household item and the first person to fetch the item and bring it back wins.

Trivia Night: Invite your neighborhood to join your trivia night. Each household can be a team!

Take Your Pets To The Zoom: Everyone in your group gets the chance to bring their furry friend on screen with them and show them off.

Pictionary: Thanks to Zoom, you can share a whiteboard with every one and start drawing. The first person to guess the drawing in the chat gets a point. At the end of the night, the person with the most points wins.

Theme Night: The host contacts all the people in the group and tells them a certain theme. When you log on for your hangout night everyone can vote on who dressed up/decorated the best.

SERVE THE CITY GUIDE

HERE ARE THREE STEPS TO HELP YOUR GROUP MOBILIZE.

STEP 1: IDENTIFY

The key to engaging others in conversation around serving is being able to ask good questions. Sometimes this can be difficult or intimidating in a group setting. Don't worry...the **Serve The City Guide** is your key to finding out your group's passions. You can use this and the conversation guide together to identify:

- **Where God is already at work within your group.**
- **What is your group passionate about?**
- **What breaks their heart/moves them to action?**
- **Where are they already serving as individuals?**

STEP 2: CONNECT

Once you have had the ability to work through the **Conversation Guide**, the next step is to connect what God is doing in your group with where God is moving in your community.

- **What are the needs?**
- **Where is the opportunity?**
- **How can we serve?**
- **What can be done?**

STEP 3: COMMIT

If you are going to receive pushback from members in your group, this is where it will happen. Some of it comes from not having served before and they are intimidated. Others will push because it means extra time. Don't get frustrated as these are natural reactions people exhibit when they are asked to leave their "comfort zone."

At Center Pointe, we believe that part of our responsibility is to advance God's Kingdom in the world whether that be Liberty Township, Central Ohio, or the world (Acts 1:8). We are called to care for our neighbors and the best way we can do this is through small groups. We ask our groups to commit to serving each term and those groups who develop long term relationships with partner ministries have the best participation rate and are more consistent in investing in their community.

CONVERSATION GUIDE

HERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHERE TO SERVE

What breaks your heart/moves you to action? (Circle top 3)

- Homelessness
- Hunger
- Lack of Access to Education
- Children in Crisis (Adoption/Foster)
- Families in Crisis (Illness, Relationship, etc.)
- Human Trafficking
- Crisis Pregnancy
- Spiritual Lostness
- Nations/Immigrant Unreached Peoples
- Neighbors
- Next Generations/College Campuses
- Refugee Crisis
- Crisis Caused by Natural Disaster/Terrorism

What things do you perceive as wrong, unjust or unfair in this world that you would like to see made right?

What life experiences have you walked through (positive/negative) that God could use/is using to help comfort others?

Are there ministries/organizations that you'd like to be a part of, or issues you'd like to work to end, but don't know how or where to start?

Share what you think may be your top three burdens with the group.

KEY COMPONENTS OF GROUP TIME

SMALL GROUPS ENGAGE WITH THE BIBLE, PRAYER, AND ONE ANOTHER FOR LIFE CHANGE.

In Acts 2:42, Luke describes how the early church was engaged in the **apostle's teaching, fellowship, and prayer**. These are the key components for creating an environment where people can **connect relationally** and **take next steps spiritually**. Here is what a typical rhythm looks like for group time...

- **Fellowship Time (20-30 minutes):** Spend time laughing and welcoming new people.
- **Group Discussion (45-60 minutes):** Discuss whatever the text or study is for the week and how you can apply it to your life.
- **Prayer (10-20 minutes):** Finish up by praying for one another.

FELLOWSHIP IS THE GLUE THAT HOLDS YOUR GROUP TOGETHER DURING THE TOUGH TIMES AND IS THE FOUNDATION FOR EVERYTHING ELSE.

You and your group will only be able to go as deep as your relationships are; it's the foundation for everything else that happens in group life, so beginning with fellowship and spending time here is important. This time will look different depending on your groups culture, but here are some practical ways to start:

- **Icebreaker** - Depending on your personality, you may have an icebreaker handy to get started, it's a great way for new people to get to know your group members or something fun to do with those who have been with you for years.
- **Food** - It's always good to have snacks like grapes or fruit, chips and salsa, finger foods, and drinks. It helps people to open up and let their guard down.
- **Chairs** - Arrange the chairs in a circle so that everyone can face each other. Being able to look at someone and make eye contact encourages conversation.
- **Celebrate milestones** - Celebrating birthdays, anniversaries, when someone has a baby, celebrating life events together makes people feel loved and celebrated.
- **Rotate where you meet** - You get to know people on another level when you go to their home.
- **Share what's going on in life** - Take time to talk about what happened in life this week, something you're looking forward to next week; just give space and time for people to talk about what's going on in life.
- **Share contact info** - This encourages the group to reach out to each other.

FACILITATING A GROUP DISCUSSION THAT'S CONVERSATIONAL WILL LEAD TO TRANSFORMATION, NOT JUST INFORMATION.

When you meet weekly, you will **facilitate a group discussion** where people can encounter Jesus and experience life change. Here are **five key elements** of a life-changing discussion:

WORD-CENTERED

Life-changing discussion starts and ends with God's living and active Word. We believe that the Bible is sufficient and relevant for all issues of our life (Heb. 4:12). The group may use a book study but it will always be word-centered.

CONVERSATIONAL

Life-changing discussion focuses on facilitating a conversation, not teaching a Bible lesson. Better learning and connection are accomplished when people are able to ask questions and share their personal insights and experiences.

AUTHENTIC

Life-changing discussion happens when people are real with themselves, with God, and with others. We foster this authenticity by providing a safe environment where people can be honest and transparent.

APPLICATION-FOCUSED

Life-changing discussion focuses on application because the measure of maturity is not information, but obedience. Healthy Bible discussion doesn't just answer the question "What does the Bible say?" but it also helps people answer, "How does this personally impact my life today?" That is why we end each discussion by helping people identify a personal, relevant, and practical step they can take to grow their faith.

NEWCOMER-FRIENDLY

Life-changing discussion should always consider the person who is joining for the first time. We want to eliminate any barriers that would prevent new people from participating.

By focusing on application, it allows non, new, and mature believers to engage in conversation together. When you combine this with an Acts 2 type of fellowship, you can provide a life-changing community where non-believers, new believers, and mature believers can belong. Small Groups create a place where people come just as they are, and meet Jesus just as He is. Our groups are open to anyone at any time, and we create an environment where everyone is welcomed and accepted.

THE GROUP SHOULD SEE PRAYER AS A MINISTRY, NOT JUST THE BOOKENDS TO A MEETING.

Each time you meet, your group should spend time praying to God about God and about each other. You can finish your time allowing everyone to share something **specific** and **personal** that the group can pray for. Here are a **few things to consider** around your prayer time...

YOUR ONE

As a Small Group, we want every member to identify one person in their life who would benefit from a group like this. Someone who doesn't know Jesus, isn't involved in church, and lives near you. As a group, you can encourage each other to pray daily for that person, invest weekly in that person, and invite them to your group's monthly Hangout Night. Praying for your ONE during group time is a great way to keep this in focus.

GROUP PRAYER

Some in your group may have never prayed out loud in a group setting before, so start slow and don't force it. As a leader, you can model simple prayers for the group and then encourage others to pray. You can ask one to pray for another or break into small groups to pray, doing this allows the Holy Spirit to work in them.

PRAY GOD'S WORD BACK TO HIM

If you study the prayers of the Bible, you begin to notice that the prayers God honors and answers are those that repeat his promises back to him. We don't just want to read through the Bible, but pray through the Bible. Help your group make it a discipline that every time you read the Bible, to go back and pray through what you've just read. God's revealed Word provides the content and trajectory for our prayers. Pray the commands from the passage you just studied, asking God to help you obey. Praise God for truths revealed in the passage, thanking him for who He is and how his power, his love, and his grace are revealed. Let the Scriptures guide how you pray.

Tim Keller, in his book [Prayer: Experiencing Intimacy and Awe with God](#), describes this method of meditating on a passage by understanding the instruction of the text (what does the text demand of me?) and then turning it into thanksgiving (how does this truth lead me to praise or thank God?), confession (how does this truth lead me to confess and repent?) and petition (how does this truth prompt me to appeal to God?). Providing your group a simple grid to **move from the study of God's Word to praying God's Word** will broaden your groups prayer life.

We glorify God through our prayers. We get through difficult times through prayer. We change as our prayer life grows stronger.

SHARING RESPONSIBILITY

AS A LEADER, YOU WANT TO FIND WAYS TO GIVE AWAY MINISTRY AND EMPOWER OTHERS.

Hosting and leading small groups should be a team approach. For the sake of the leader's health, we don't want any individual to have all the responsibility, but instead share it with other capable members. A good leader creates opportunities for people to use their gifts to contribute to the group. **Small group is not a group of people with a gifted leader, but a leader with a group of gifted people.**

Here are **four different roles** recommended for every group:

FACILITATOR

The Facilitator leads the group discussion weekly. This role may be done by one person or by a couple. The important part of this role is that the leader facilitates a discussion rather than teaching a lesson. We want as many people to participate in the discussion as possible. As people contribute to the discussion, it creates a sense of belonging and it helps them better process what they are hearing.

HOST

The Host opens up their home for the group to meet. They also think through their living spaces and design them in a way that accommodates the group and fosters connection. An example would be reorganizing the living room to create one big circle to facilitate discussion better.

COORDINATOR

The Coordinator focuses on organizing and communicating with the group. If your group has a snack list, the coordinator organizes whose week it is and sends reminders. They also communicate with the group about what is coming up this week. If the group meets online, the coordinator can set up and send out the link each week.

HANGOUT NIGHT LEADER

The Hangout Night Leader helps the group get involved in your Hangout Night(s). This includes planning activities that are welcoming to new people and encouraging current group members to invite their ONE. The Hangout Night Leader should be familiar with the Hangout Night purpose and ideas covered in this guide.



IT'S NOT JUST YOUR GROUP, IT'S THEIR GROUP TOO."

FELLOWSHIP ICEBREAKERS

ICEBREAKERS ARE A GREAT WAY TO OPEN UP FELLOWSHIP TIME

- If you were to take a 10-day trip in a car with your family or friends, what would they most likely hear you complain about?
- If God put you completely in charge of creating heaven, what would it look like?
- If you didn't have to worry about making a living, what would you most like to do for the rest of your life?
- Describe your dream vacation. Who would it be with, where would you go, and what would you do?
- If you could live in any other time period, past or future, what period would you choose? Why?
- What tv programs do you dvr?
- What motivates you most to go to work each day: money or personal satisfaction? If money were not an issue, would you still keep your job?
- If someone gave you enough money to start a business of your own, what kind of business would you start?
- What is the best imaginable thing that could happen to you during the next five years? How do you think you would handle it?
- If you knew that tomorrow would be the last full day of your life, how would you spend the day?
- How would you describe yourself (without mentioning anything about what you do for a living)?
- What is the most important goal in your life right now? Will your life change in some way if that goal is reached? If so, how?
- What social situations tend to make you flustered and nervous? Why?
- If money were no object, what fun thing would you like to do?
- What were your very first impressions of your spouse or best friend?
- What's the weirdest thing you've ever eaten?
- What is the best vacation you've ever had?
- If you could ask God one question, what would it be?
- If your house was on fire and you could grab only three things before leaving, what would they be?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

OUR GOAL IN SPIRITUAL GROWTH IS NOT THE TRANSFER OF INFORMATION, BUT TRANSFORMATION.

What stood out to you most from the text?

What does this text teach me about God and his character?

What does this text teach me about fallen humanity that requires the grace of God?

What do I see about the church or life in the people of God?

How does this text point to Christ?

What do I need to know?

Is there a promise to claim?

Is there a truth for me to believe?

Is there an action or attitude to avoid or embrace?

Is there a principle to apply?

Is there something I need to confess and repent from?

A GREAT ONLINE GROUP

BIBLICAL COMMUNITY IS BIGGER THAN JUST A PHYSICAL GATHERING, IT'S INTENTIONALLY CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER.

Sometimes, it's just not possible to meet together in person, but Biblical community is bigger than just a physical gathering; it's what happens when we intentionally come together to speak life, encouragement, and truth into each other's lives. Now, more than ever, that type of community is needed. **When you are a small group leader, you are not just leading a meeting, you're leading people.** In a time when people feel overwhelmed, anxious, or confused, you have opportunities to care for your group, even if your time together doesn't look like it always has. Technology makes it easy for a leader to let your members know they are cared for and not alone. While we should continue with the key components of group, here are a few things to consider...

1 PICK YOUR PLATFORM

We live in an increasingly digital world, which means that your opportunities to stay connected are almost limitless. Here are a couple of the options for groups to meet together online:

- Zoom
- FaceTime
- GroupMe
- Google Hangouts

3 BE FLEXIBLE

Remember that the priority in this time is the people in your group. Even if it doesn't go perfectly, as long as your group feels heard and cared for, that's most important. You may not make it to curriculum every time, it might be that your group just needs to take time to update you about life or needs, and that is perfectly ok.

2 COMMUNICATE THE PLAN

Let your group know where your digital meet-ups will take place, have them create a free account if possible, and collect their contact info.

Once you are set on the medium you want to use, let your group know the schedule you will keep. Allow for a grace period as people get used to meeting digitally, but as long as you are there for each other, that's what matters.

4 PROMOTE MUTUAL CARE

Once you get a handle on how everyone in your group is getting on, pay attention to the different needs that arise. One of the benefits of living in community, even if that community is distant, is that we have each other to lean on when we are in need. Do what you can to use the resources in the group to help out those who have needs.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

THESE WILL BE DISCUSSED DURING ORIENTATION

What excites you most about creating a life-changing community at Center Pointe?

How has Biblical community helped you through the peaks and valleys of life? What was the greatest impact for you?

How comfortable do you feel facilitating a group discussion as described on pg. 14? What are your strengths and growth areas?

Thinking of yourself, are you more of an extrovert or an introvert? What makes you comfortable getting to know others in a group setting?

How can spending at least one week "serving" together and one week "partying" together affect the relationships within your group?

As you think about your own life, what are the next steps in your spiritual journey?

Who are you currently praying for God to open a door to share the Gospel with?

Who could you point to in your life that has made the greatest impact in your faith?

NOTES

WE BELIEVE LIFE-CHANGE HAPPENS IN SMALL GROUP WHEN EVERYONE TAKES STEPS TOGETHER.

Everyone has steps to take and taking them together is what group life is about. When Jesus gave the great commission to his followers, he said, **"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."** In this commission, there's an understanding of what God is teaching us through His Scripture and then an obedience from us to follow it.

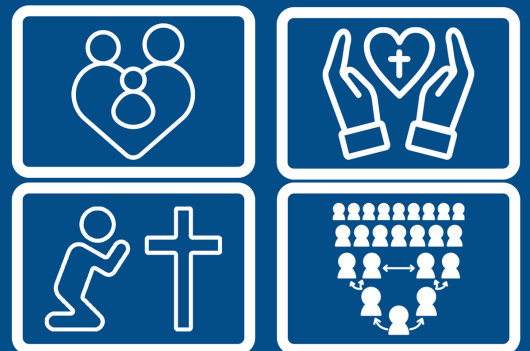
You cannot follow Jesus by standing still. What God wants for all of us is to take "next steps" in our faith. Even though we are all different and those next steps may look different for all of us, there are some spiritual "must have's" for every believer. At Center Pointe, we have four values that we live out at the three levels; the corporate level, group level, and individual level. These are the core values that mark spiritual maturity, the four we are for.

“**YOU CANNOT FOLLOW JESUS STANDING STILL.**”

As you work through the series of videos teaching these core values, you will see in each video how important these foundational values are but also ways to incorporate these into your group time.

Also, as you work through these videos, we encourage you to ask God to reveal steps that you can take in your own life.

THE FOUR WE ARE FOR



THRIVING FAMILIES

Family was God's original plan to represent His Kingdom on earth. No family is perfect, but every family has purpose. We will help families live out their full potential because when they thrive our community thrives.

Demonstrated by...

- Every member's family being engaged in an age appropriate group at Center Pointe.
- Each family being committed to having intentional faith conversations at home.

How have you or your family been impacted by community? What are some ways you as a leader can create a welcoming environment for others to join?

What are the challenges for parents today in having intentional faith conversations at home? How can the people in your group help with this?

Who or what are the major influences in our families lives? How are these influences shaping our kids and ourselves?

UNCOMMON GENEROSITY

All of life is a gift from God and our time, talent, and resources find their ultimate purpose when they are used for His Kingdom to bless others. We will leverage all we have to help people experience the unconditional love of Jesus and enjoy the selfless life to which we're called.

Demonstrated by...

- Every member is serving on a serving team at Center Pointe.
- Every family shows patterns of growing in generosity.

How do you feel God has gifted you to serve others? How has serving others impacted them? How has God worked in you by being generous in this way?

Jesus taught on money more than He did Heaven and Hell combined. Why did he emphasize this so much in His ministry? How does your view of finances play a role in your walk with Christ?

When we understand that all the resources we have are given to us by God for His purposes, it changes the way we see them. What would next steps look like for you in Uncommon Generosity?

TRANSFORMATIONAL PRAYER

Continually and authentically engaging with God empowers us to act with conviction and to rest fully in His truths. We will be a church like the first church that is completely dependent on the power and provision of the Holy Spirit.

Demonstrated by...

- Every member is committed to praying for their “one” and their church.
- Every member is growing in their dependence on God through prayer.

In reflecting on your personal prayer life, how would you describe it?

What are the biggest obstacles you face in having a regular quiet time with God? What routines or disciplines have you developed in your time with God?

How would you articulate to someone the need to have a quiet time with God? How might you help someone see the need for doing this regularly?

DISCIPLE MAKING CULTURE

Every Jesus follower is called to be a disciple maker in order to unleash a gospel movement in our community. We will equip people with the tools and resources to live out the mission of Jesus to “go and make disciples.”

Demonstrated by...

- Every member is growing in God’s word as a disciple.
- Every member looks for opportunities to share the gospel where they live, work, and play.

How would you describe the spiritual rhythms of your life?

How have you seen God work in your life over the past year to make you look more like His Son?

Who have you shared the gospel with lately? Who is your "one"? When you look at your most travelled paths, who has God placed in your life to share the gospel with?

NOTES



SMALL GROUP LEADER

ORIENTATION

CENTER  POINTE

LEADER GUIDE OVERVIEW

SMALL GROUPS AT CENTER POINTE ARE LIFE-CHANGING COMMUNITIES THAT EXIST TO HELP PEOPLE CONNECT RELATIONALLY AND TAKE NEXT STEPS SPIRITUALLY.

WHY GROUPS AT CENTER POINTE?

As followers of Jesus we are called to come together and worship but God also created us for community - both with Himself and with each other. Small groups are the way to foster both of these relationships. Our goal is to not just have meetings together each week but the life-changing community that we see clearly in the Bible. **We believe that it's in small groups where someone moves from Center Pointe being somewhere they attend, to somewhere they belong.**

KEY COMPONENTS OF GROUP TIME

In Acts 2:42, Luke describes how the early church was engaged in the apostle's teaching, fellowship, and prayer. These are the key components for small group time.

- **FELLOWSHIP** - This is the glue that holds your group together and is the foundation for everything else in group.
- **GROUP DISCUSSION** - A life-changing discussion that's conversational and focuses on application more than information.
- **PRAYER** - Praying specific, personal prayers for each other and praying God's word back to him will deepen your group's prayer life.

SMALL GROUP RHYTHMS

- **GROW TOGETHER** - Small Groups meet weekly to hang out, discuss God's word, and pray together.
- **PARTY TOGETHER** - Small Groups choose at least one week in the term to host a Hangout Night as a strategic way to build relationships and invite new people.
- **SERVE TOGETHER** - Small Groups find creative and strategic ways to serve the city at least one week in the term.

SHARING LEADERSHIP ROLES

A part of good leadership is empowering others to use their gifts. Hosting and leading a small group should be a team approach. Here are a few roles to consider:

- **FACILITATOR** - Sharing the role of leading the discussion helps identify new leaders.
- **HOST** - Rotating homes allows those with the gift of hospitality to host.
- **COORDINATOR** - Let a member with the gift of administration organize and communicate with the group about details.
- **HANGOUT LEADER** - Let a member lead the planning and communication of the Hangout Night each term.

FAMILY GROUPS

OUR GROUPS ARE FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY, SO WHAT HAPPENS WITH THE KIDS?

At Center Pointe, we have many different types of groups; men's groups, women's groups, student groups, but we also want to have groups that welcome the entire family. We want our family groups to be a place where the entire family is welcome and not a barrier for some to be a part of biblical community.

Here are some **suggestions** for our family groups...

- Each family gets their own childcare.
- Use the homes of two members who live close to each other. Have your group meet at one home and then have childcare at the other home provided by a babysitter or rotating group members.
- Dedicate one room in the house for childcare and bring a babysitter to the meeting place. Each family can contribute money for childcare costs
- Rotate two or more members out of the small group on a weekly basis to provide childcare in another room of the house. In this way there will be no cost to the group. But never rotate out a married couple; instead send two women or two men so that relationships are built.
- Make your group a family group where children are allowed to play in the same room as where you gather. This works best when the children are small and not likely to catch on to much of what's said. Or older kids can participate with the group. The positive side is that families learn together; the negative is you need to limit adult talk or use of adult humor.
- High school students from the church could provide childcare as their ministry project. This is an excellent way to team up with the youth ministry and give teens a chance to serve.
- Trade childcare with other small groups. If your group meets on Tuesday, partner with a group that meets on Thursday to provide childcare for each other.

 **IF COMMUNITY MATTERS TO US,
NOTHING WILL STOP US FROM GATHERING.**

CO-LEADER ROLE

WE WANT EACH OF OUR GROUPS TO HAVE A LEADER AND A CO-LEADER, NOT JUST FOR MULTIPLICATION AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT, BUT TO CARE FOR YOU, SO THAT YOU'RE NEVER LEADING ALONE.

Leading a small group is definitely rewarding but can also be challenging as well. Praying for your group, preparing for your group, keeping in touch with your group members, and investing in them outside of group time can at times be a little overwhelming. That's why we say that you should "never lead alone". Our groups are designed in a way that each member has opportunities to serve the group and that our group leaders have a co-leader to invest in and rely on. **Here are a few things around the co-leader role...**

- **A co-leader provides built-in emergency backup.** Everyone has one of those days when you have to work late or you have to beat a deadline or your kid gets sick. With a co-leader, you already have backup. While there may be a number of people in your group who could lead the discussion, your co-leader is ready, willing and able to help at the last minute. It would be a good idea to let them lead once in a while even when it's not an emergency.
- **A co-leader benefits from the lessons you've learned.** As a group leader, you will learn some lessons the hard way. Don't let those lessons go to waste. As your co-leader is learning the ropes of small group leadership, share your experiences and include them in the learning. When they make a mistake, help them process what happened and what they should do next time. You've learned more than you probably give yourself credit for. Share your knowledge.
- **A co-leader shares the ministry.** In the Bible, the Apostle Paul had many ministry partners over the years. Timothy, Titus, Barnabas and Silas among others were there to encourage and help Paul. You and I are no better than the Apostle Paul. We all need someone in our corner to share the ministry. After your group gets together, you and your co-leader can debrief. As you evaluate how your group time went and how the members of the group are doing, your co-leader will give much needed insight and perspective on the group.
- **A co-leader prepares for future group multiplication.** Eventually, your co-leader will lead a group themselves. You play a big part in helping them be ready to take the leader role.

CARE AT CENTER POINTE

THREE LEVELS OF CARE AVAILABLE TO THE FAMILIES OF CENTER POINTE

General Care is the foundation for care and is provided by and for the members of the church, with training and oversight. This care occurs as the body of Christ lives out the 59 biblical “one anothers” found in the New Testament. General care occurs at weekend worship services, small groups, and wherever else the church gathers. Another form of general care is marital and premarital mentoring.

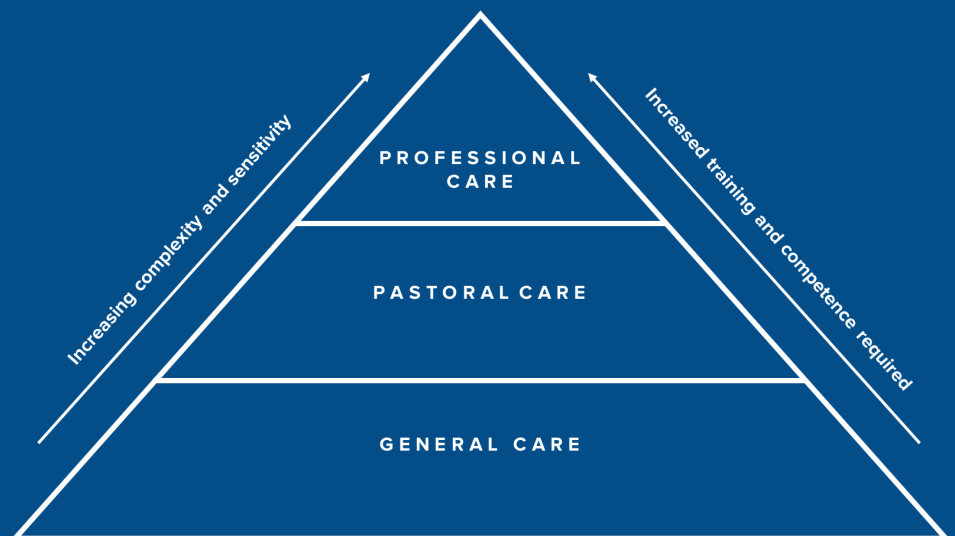
For general care, the small group level...

- is a place to practice the “one anothers” in community
- is a place for one-on-one mentoring
- is a place to share common experiences, struggles and victories
- is a place to rejoice with those who rejoice and mourn with those who mourn
- is a place to point each other to Christ, the gospel and the Word for daily life
- is a place to provide support and encouragement for the efforts that are being made at the pastoral and professional care levels

This is not a place to offer advice beyond what is explicitly prescribed by the Bible. For care needs that escalate beyond general care, **please partner with the pastoral staff.**

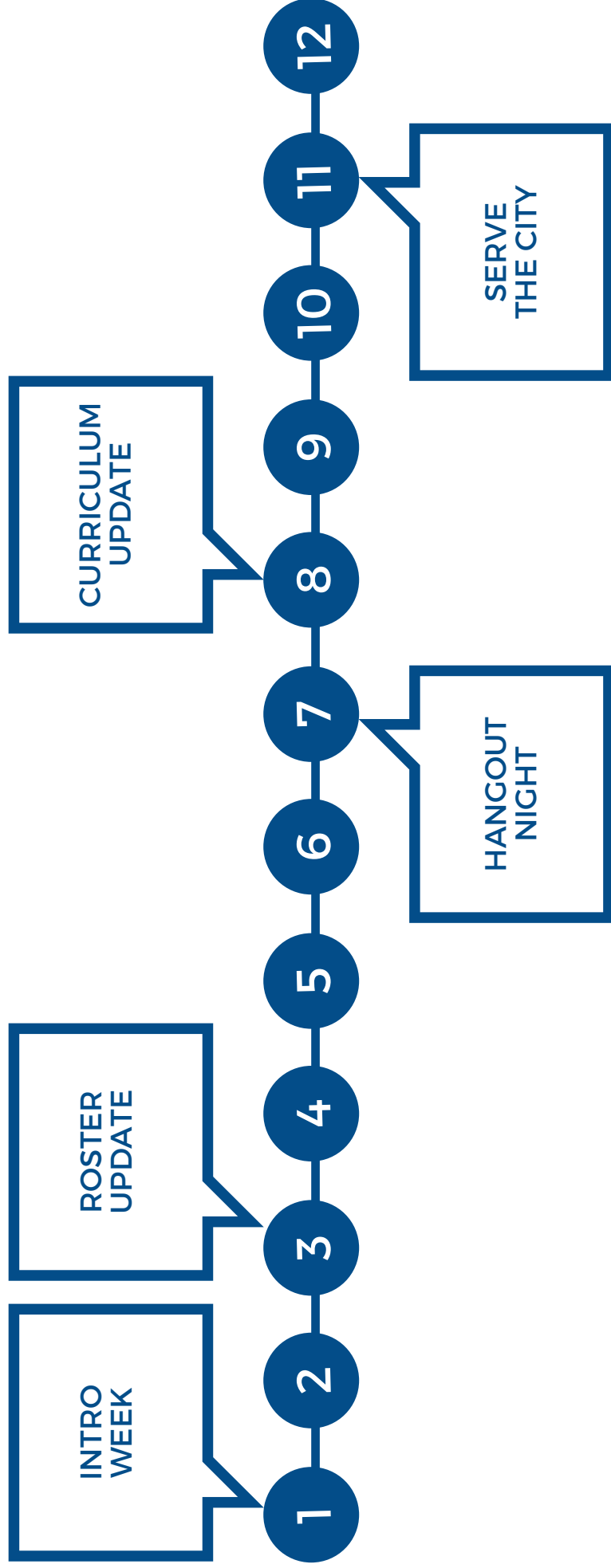
Pastoral Care serves to primarily to provide spiritual direction based in God’s Word and how it applies to one’s life before God. Our pastors will limit the scope of their care to guiding our people spiritually, pointing them to Christ, the gospel and the Word for daily life. As in general care, our Pastors will avoid the use of psychiatric labels or clinical “diagnoses,” to not counsel outside the bounds of general spiritual guidance and to support the work of professional counselors and other mental health providers and agencies as requested.

Professional Care exists when the care needed exceeds the training and expertise of the pastors. Reasons for professional care could include chronic or extreme anxiety, depression, mental illness, danger to self or others, and trauma.



TERM SCHEDULE EXAMPLE

12 WEEKS - GROW, PARTY, SERVE TOGETHER



GROUP ADMINISTRATION

WE WANT OUR SMALL GROUP LEADERS TO FOCUS ON LEADING, SHEPHERDING, AND CARING FOR THE FAMILIES OF CENTER POINTE. THAT'S WHY THERE ARE ONLY TWO ADMIN TASKS EACH TERM.

CCB ROSTER UPDATES (WEEK 3)

Each group has been entered into CCB, the software system Center Pointe uses for all church information, events, planning, and communication. **We ask that during week three of each term, the leader updates their group roster in CCB.** This update should reflect the people who are actively involved in your group. There may be some who have had to take a break from group life for a term, you may have others who have only been a part of your group once or twice during the term, these are common with small groups. It's important though that your group roster reflects only those who are actively involved. That allows for us to reach out around opportunities for community to those who need it and it gives the church an opportunity to see how many are involved.

If you have questions on how to update your roster or are new to CCB, please reach out to your Small Group Leadership Team.

CHOOSING A CURRICULUM (WEEK 8)

One of the ways our small group leaders shepherd their group is by choosing a curriculum for their group. There are tons of options to choose from, book studies, video based series, or any of the 66 books in the Bible. The key to choosing curriculum is to understand the needs of your group. If you lead a young couples groups who are new to parenting, then a parenting study may be a great way to grow together and build relationships. If you are leading a group of people who have been walking with Jesus for a long time, maybe consider an inductive study of scripture. The goal is to understand where your group is at spiritually and if there are any felt needs in the group that can be addressed.

We ask that during week eight of each term, the leader updates their group's study information in Planning Center. This gives the Small Group Leadership Team the opportunity to publish a catalogue for the next term, to review the curriculum, and to support you if needed in choosing it.

If you are new to small group leadership, we encourage you to do a **CLOSER LOOK** study. This study uses questions provided to take a closer look at the Sunday sermon.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

THESE WILL BE DISCUSSED DURING ORIENTATION

Have you ever been a part of a group where you didn't feel like you could open up?

What is the difference between teaching and facilitation? How could teaching a group negatively impact the growth of your people?

What are some ways as a leader you can support someone else's spiritual growth? What are some examples of next steps in spiritual growth?

When you think of the **CARE** model here at Center Pointe, what are some examples you have experienced that would escalate from general care to pastoral care?

What are some ideas you have around mobilizing your group to **SERVE THE CITY**? What are some challenges you think you may have?



CENTER POINTE

CHRISTIAN CHURCH