

Christ Church Discipleship Coach Guide

[The one] who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts [oneself] will be humbled, and [one] who humbles [oneself] will be exalted (Matthew 23:11–12).

Discipleship Coaching Philosophy and Vision

If you are exploring this guide, you are currently discerning or have decided to respond to a call to serve as a **discipleship coach** at Christ Church. As the flock continues to grow, vitality in leadership becomes necessary. To make a concerted effort to be fully invested in developing and equipping our small group and home group ministry for fruit-bearing mission, we need to seek coaches who can identify the potential in both current and new discipleship leaders.

The starting place for a discipleship coach begins from our 1993 vision: “A place where every believer will be equipped to use their spiritual gifts in ministry at home, work and play . . . A place where every believer will be nurtured and disciplined into spiritual maturity through Bible study, retreats, seminars and small groups.”

Discipleship coaches should be individuals who have led groups here at Christ Church or who have served in such a capacity in a previous place of ministry. This journey begins with a simple phone call or email to Pastor Ryan or Pastor Tony, followed by a conversation around what is found in this guide in addition to any questions you may have. Following this time, you will be assigned one to three small or home group leaders. The focused ministry of these individuals is to implement missional vision, aligned with Christ Church’s Worship-Connect-Serve values, in order to mentor communities who seek to reflect these values in their lives together.

Your role would include, but is not limited to:

- Mentoring one to three small/home group leaders.
- Helping to develop resource ideas based on group dynamics.
- Serving as a sounding board about facilitating groups, speaking into conflict or disagreement, and maintaining appropriate and healthy boundaries.

Think of your role as a sort of “missional leader” (see Mike Breen/3DM resource, *Leading Missional Communities*) tasked with “mobilizing God’s people to join his redemptive work in the world” (pg. i).

Our collective vision is for these groups to see themselves not solely in ministry to the church, but also in the world. Looking back to life in the early church, we witness the intimacy with which men and women planted communities designed to meet the broad array of needs from social to spiritual. In Acts 2, we learn of the earliest believers who “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (Acts 2:42).

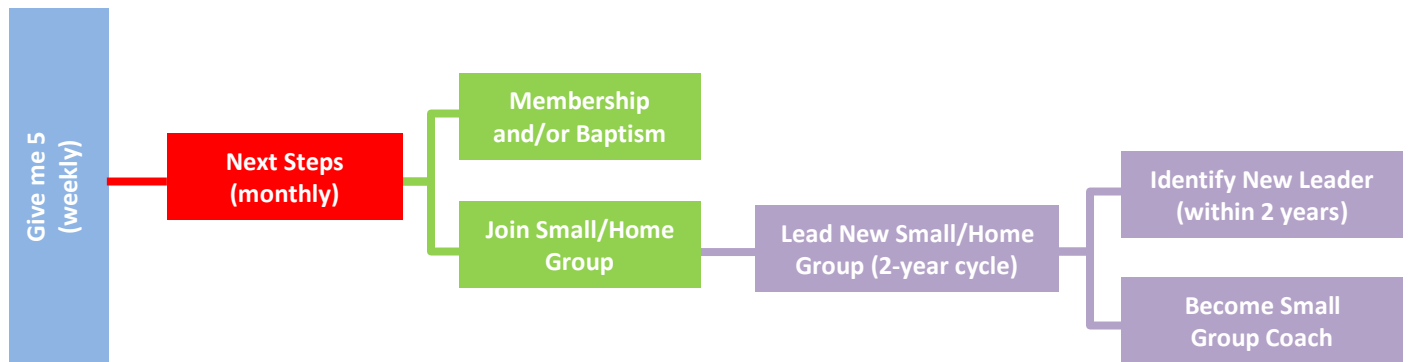
Mike Breen captures this vision through an **UP** (relating back to God through Christ and by the Holy Spirit), **IN** (relating to one another), and **OUT** (relating back to the community and world)

model that we believe grounds the purpose of why we live out discipleship through community groups, whether they are in homes, the church, or the community. We encounter what I refer to as **three attitudes** in the ministry of Jesus himself, who modeled a life of prayer to and with God, who fostered hospitality within communities, and who called us to serve the communities on the fringes.

When meeting or speaking with your small group leader, we ask that you use these attitudes to inform the following sorts of questions (not limited to these):

- **UP**—How does Scripture fit into your time? Do you bathe your time in prayer? Have you considered implementing singing or an abridged form of worship as part of your gathering?
- **IN**—Have you thought about incorporating a communal meal? Are people in the group encouraged to get together beyond the regular meeting space?
- **OUT**—Is there a service opportunity that speaks to the group? Would the group consider serving together in the context of Christ Church, in the community, or in the world?

Discipleship Pathway



Coaching Expectations

The above image represents the discipleship pathway we have developed here at Christ Church, beginning with the initial point of contact through **Give Me 5**, a connection experience through **Next Steps**, followed by the logical step of joining a community.

Meeting/Accountability with Your Small Group Leaders—We ask that you schedule a minimum of two conversation times with your leader(s) to address some of the topics and questions covered here and beyond. This is a time for you to discern where the growth points are with a particular leader and how you might best be a resource to them.

Identifying Leaders—One of the premier tasks of any small or home group leader is to identify the season where a group is ready to break into smaller groups or to identify a new leader. As disciples, we are constant learners. Growing ministry begins with developing the gifts of others to further the good news of Jesus Christ to transform the world. As a coach, you should regularly check in with your leaders in terms of whom they have identified as well-rounded candidates to lead new groups in the life of Christ Church. We do not want to burn out leaders nor do we want to limit their depth of involvement to one group for more than two years. When leaders get stuck in a particular ministry or group for an extended period of time, they

can become stale, their groups can lose dynamic energy, and they don't experience growth themselves.

Resource Awareness—While we encourage our small group leaders to seek and engage with resources that will meet needs from within the collective spiritual interest of groups, we recognize that there are times when groups are uncertain about how to proceed from a content standpoint. As a coach, you should familiarize yourself with the latest book studies available as well as sound topical online resources such as *Patheos* and *Sojourners* that offer a variety of conversation starters around faith-based issues and spiritual growth.

Communication—Intentional mentoring is a cornerstone for equipping new leaders. It is essential that a coach establishes a rapport with their assigned leaders to a point where they can offer constructive feedback and direction as deemed appropriate. A good idea would be to establish this agreement/covenant in your first meeting time.

Community Care—The associate pastors are the primary contact for needs around pastoral counseling and visitation. Please refer to them when a need or crisis arises and make them aware of any emotional/spiritual needs that may require care or attention that surface in your coaching conversations. Additionally, our Christian counselor works closely with the associate pastor to address specific clinical needs that may arise. Beyond staff, we have a team of Stephens Ministers who are trained to listen to you and pray with you during difficult seasons in your life. An extension of our care team makes meals, offers weekly prayer, and is willing to provide bereavement support in the event of loss. Ensure that your small group leaders are aware and know of these resources.

Scope of Coaching Tools and Resources

Support Networks

Christ Church Discipleship Team

- Associate Pastor
- Associate Pastor, Online Campus
- Discipleship Coordinator (logistics, scheduling, resources)
- Ministry Analyst (data, attendance, metrics)

Communication Systems to Discuss with Your Leaders

- Personal Invitation
- Fellowship One Metrics
- Using Christ Church Social Media (adhere to Christ Church guidelines)
- Christ Church Website
- Email
- Media/Video as appropriate

Additional Resources

- Small and Home Group Guide
- *Leading Missional Communities* (Mike Breen and 3DM)
- Table Talk Sessions (throughout year)