



## Christ Church Leader Guide

*He who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. – Matthew 23:11-12*



Thank you for taking the time to explore this Christ Church Life Leader guide. The purpose of this document is to provide some insight and information about what it means to be a leader in ministry, mission and discipleship.

## What is a LifeLeader?

Some people are very confident about leadership. They are leaders in their workplace, in the military, in their communities – they are comfortable with stepping up into leadership roles. Others are not so sure. They are ready and willing servants but don't see themselves as leaders.

Consider the notion that leadership is "an influence process – any time you are trying to influence the thoughts and actions of others toward goal accomplishment [...] you are engaging in leadership." (The Servant Leader, Blanchard and Hodges, 2003) If you are reading this document, chances are extremely high that you are a leader!

In our families, our workplaces and social lives, to be a leader means that we are responsible for creating safe and productive environments where people can be and do their best. We want our spouses to be supported and successful, we want our children to thrive and grow strong, we want our colleagues to achieve their individual goals while also meeting the organization's objectives.

Within the church, our leaders create environments for people to develop and grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ. Whether leading a project, guiding a ministry program, organizing an event or facilitating a small group Bible study – the overarching objective is to help others grow in their walk with God!

# Purpose of Life Leaders

## #1 - Build disciples for Christ

The number one purpose of Life Leaders is to build disciples for Christ. *Paul taught the Corinthians that some plant the seeds, others water them, but God makes them grow (1 Corinthians 3:6).*

Group leaders have the privilege of creating environments in which seeds of faith are planted and watered in the lives of those they lead, while trusting God with the growth. Our leaders play a pivotal role in helping us achieve our mission to lead people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ!

## #2 – Support the Church

The second purpose of Life Leaders is to support the unity, vision and direction of the Church. God created us to be in healthy relationship with each other and these relationships act as the glue holding a church together. Life Leaders have the responsibility of making sure that their ministries, missions and small groups are working in concert with the overall vision and mission of the Church to worship, connect and serve.

To be a LifeLeader is to be a humble GC<sup>2</sup> servant following the Great Commandment and the Great Commission!

# Life Leader Strategies

There is no doubt that God is moving in our midst at Christ Church. In terms of width, each month worship attendance breaks records and our kids and youth ministries are bursting at their seams! In terms of depth, the number of small groups has doubled in the past 18 months and people are plugging into church serve, local serve and world serve opportunities.

In our 2011 Life Leader Forums, a group of our church leaders came together and looked at what we can do to support what God is doing here. The following strategies were identified:

## 1. Communication

- a. Keep people informed often and early
- b. Really, really listen to each other
- c. Keep people consistently informed about events and opportunities

## 2. Prayer

- a. Pray for each other
- b. Pray for our pastor and church staff

## 3. Invite & Invest

- a. Personally invite people to connect and serve
- b. Practice situational awareness 24/7 to plug others in
- c. Find your own leader successors
- d. Plug in older youth and young adults as emerging leaders
- e. Make people feel equipped and empowered

## 4. Attitude & Behavior

- a. Practice accountability with love
- b. Maintain enthusiasm
- c. Clear, intentional communications
- d. Apolitical
- e. Be content with church and our lives to be a reflection of Christ
- f. Serve with joy and gladness (or else per Deut 28)
- g. Maintain confidentiality

## 5. Organizational health

- a. Church is an organization; employ good business practices
- b. Develop and support clear vision and mission
- c. Maintain perspective about where your project or ministry fits within the overall church picture
- d. Maintain connection and synergy between small groups and main church body

Nearly as important as knowing what we SHOULD do is knowing what we should NOT do. The following is a list that the 2011 LifeLeader Forum participants created for what we as leaders can do so snuff out God's flames at Christ Church:

### 1. Pride

- a. Let egos and pride get in the way
- b. Turf mentality over ministries
- c. Self serving leaders rather than servant leaders

### 2. Negative Attitude

- a. Not serve with joy and gladness per Deut 28
- b. Criticism very destructive; words are weapons
- c. Allow gossip or dissention
- d. Resistant to change; "this is the way we USED to do it!"
- e. Protecting turf

### 3. Approach to New People

- a. Stick to cliques and friends
- b. Not welcome new people

### 4. Leader Skills

- a. Dictate rather than facilitate
- b. Be insensitive to new believers
- c. Overdo, over push, over preach
- d. Abuse communication channels
- e. Push political views

## Authentic Community

As we think about we can do and what we shouldn't do, we need to be intentional about what type of church community we are building.

As Paul taught, only God can bring someone to Himself, but we can help provide a fertile growth environment by providing a *predictable environment of authentic community and spiritual growth*. What does this mean? It means that no matter where a person at Christ Church plugs in, they can trust that they will be welcomed into a community of believers founded on accountability, belonging and care.

*The dictionary definition of authenticity is not false or copied; genuine; real; having the origin of unquestionable evidence.*

Rick Warren in his book Purpose Driven Life reminds us to avoid being a church where we wear masks or pretend. He writes that real fellowship is genuine heart to heart gut level sharing. It is honest. It reveals hurts, feelings, failures, doubts, fears, weaknesses - it asks for help.

**Accountability** – A true servant leader is not concerned with being in control or standing above those in the group or ministry. A servant leader remains humble and stands underneath others to support them, encourage them and help them be successful in their spiritual journey. It is the role of the leader, however, to lovingly and consistently encourage accountability. Going back to Rick's definition of real fellowship, a leader cannot shy away from having honest, gut level discussions about honoring commitments, speaking the truth, avoiding gossip, and modeling Godly behavior with those in his or her sphere of influence.

**Belonging** – As Christ Church has matured in recent years, there has been a renewed emphasis on – simply put – being friendly. It does no good to put hospitality systems in place to greet people who are new to our church if we don't really embrace them, get to know them, walk alongside them and make their entire families feel like they belong. In other words, we don't want our church to be a building that people go to on the weekends; we want our church to be a family to which we all *belong*. This means that leaders must go out of their way to be inclusive and inviting. Keep your eyes out for new people, or just anyone you don't already know for that matter! Ask them questions about themselves and help them to plug in.

*Care* – We have a wonderful care system at our church. Our Congregational Care Pastor is there for our people when they are in the hospital or in crisis. We have a skilled Christian Counselor who provides clinical counseling. Our Stephen Ministers are well trained to provide prayer and listening support to those going through difficult seasons in their lives. Our volunteer care teams make meals, take people to doctor appointments, and send cards of encouragement. Take note, however, that these 2 staff members and approximately 15 volunteer servants number can only scratch the surface of caring for over 700 people in our congregation!

LifeLeaders need to be on the lookout for those in need and help mobilize “grassroots” energy in their groups or ministries to support and care for each other. As the church continues to grow, this is going to become more and more important.



# Leadership Tools and Resources

After the LifeLeader Workshop and in addition to this Guide, you are not left alone to manage your area of God-chosen responsibility! Below are some tools and resources at your disposal:

## Support

- Christ Church Staff
  - Staff Advocates
  - Senior Leadership Team
- Each other!

## Communication Systems

- Personal Invitation
- Fellowship One for Life Group leaders
- Facebook | Christ Church page – USE WITH CAUTION
  - Monitored by Communications Team
  - Use discretion in posting pictures, video, comments
  - Suggestion for separate Life Leader page with controlled Friend list
- Email – USE WITH CAUTION
- Communications Request for Promotions
- Website
- Christ Church “business” cards
- SignUp Genius – online volunteer management tool
- Planning Center – worship planning and Hospitality volunteer tool

## Resources

- Life Leader Guide
- Life Group Guide
  - Predictable, repeatable Life Group foundation
  - Tips and resources for starting a new group
  - Five “conversations” recommended for new group bonding and ongoing health
  - Life Group Covenant

- Sharing Spot
  - Shared library – WEALTH of studies, books, reference materials
    - Life Application materials in T5A
    - Bible Study materials in T5B
  - Limited budget to buy additional shared materials
  - Life Groups can donate used studies and books for others to share
  - Suggestion that groups submit reviews / recommendations on specific studies
  
- Church Website
  - Become familiar with all pages
    - News & Events
    - Worship, Connect, Serve
    - Home page features
    - About Us
  - Resources | Life Leaders
    - Life Leader Guide link
    - Life Group Guide link
    - Sharing Spot link
    - Leader Covenant
  - Resources | Spiritual Gifts Assessment
  - Resources | Event Forms & Checklist
  - My ChristChurch

# Where do you fit?

As with many volunteer-led organizations, 20% of the people do 80% of the work. So it has been with Christ Church. As a result, you may be leading a function that you were “drafted” into for a long time; however, is it an area for which you are gifted or best suited?

When we lead in areas for which we were designed, we excel and we attract other excellent people because they want to be part of something that is going so well. When we lead in areas that are not aligned with our gifts, the result is not as high quality, and therefore we do not attract the best people that the church has to offer.

Take a moment to reflect objectively on your church leadership experience and answer the questions below. Now is the time to think about shedding those areas that you may not be well suited for and allow someone else who is gifted in that area to shine!

## Personal Leadership Inventory (Stanley, 2003)

1. What are the areas in which you are serving as a leader?	
2. What do you do that is almost effortless from your perspective but seems like a daunting task to others?	
3. In what arena do people consider you the “go-to” person?	
4. What do you enjoy about your current leadership role(s)?	
5. What do you wish you could delegate to other staff or volunteers?	
6. What do you do that	

elicits the most praise and recognition from others?	
7. What environments do you look forward to working in?	
8. What environments do you avoid?	
9. What kind of advice do people seek from you?	

## Credits

Much of this LifeLeader Guide is based on input from the series of three Christ Church LifeLeader Forums held in 2011 as well as ideas and materials such as North Point Community Church's Community Group Leader support materials, Andy Stanley's book entitled Next Generation Leader, Multnomah Books (2006) and The Servant Leader by Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, J. Countryman (2003)

