Small Groups Handbook

A resource for current and prospective leaders and coaches

THE SUMMIT CHURCH
I. Introduction

We are so excited that you have decided to use this resource. We’ve spent a great deal of time and energy trying to make this a tool that will help you succeed in your role as a small group leader. We’ve spent many years serving as small group leaders and draw on that experience throughout this handbook. Here’s what you can expect as you go through this resource:

First, we will walk through our philosophy of small groups here at the Summit. After all, what we believe determines what we do. In the “Foundations” section we cover core principles every small group needs to be built on. We summarize our foundations in three words: Up, In, and Out.

Next we will cover what happens in the course of a year in small group life. In this “Practice” section we will discuss The Wheel, and the Small Group Calendar. This will probably be the section that you come back to the most throughout the year.

The third section gives an overview of our small group structure. We know clarity in your expectations as a group leader gives you confidence in carrying them out. In this section we will walk through the role descriptions of a group leader, a groups coach, and of our pastors. You should leave this section with a good working understanding of how the Summit Church is structured to care for its people.

The last section is designed to help you get started. Maybe you are reading this as you are thinking about planting a group. This section will help you know the next steps to take. If you are already leading a group, this section will show you the next step to take to develop the leader you will be sending out of your group to plant a new group in the near future.

In the appendix you will find the things we really want you to know, but didn’t fit cleanly into one of these four sections. In the appendix are things like the leader application, a small group commitment, a primer on how groups support church planters, and more. Everything in the appendix will be referred to as you walk through the handbook.

We hope this resource serves you on your mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

The Summit Small Groups Team
II. Small Group Foundations
Every small group will in time develop its own unique personality and culture. This section is designed to give you the foundations that your group culture can grow around. Regardless of how the group is made up, these principles should guide your life together as a group. Up, In, and Out are the three words that summarize the three core principles guiding small group life.

**Main Idea:** Small groups nurture our worship of God

**Small groups should experience worship in community.** A small group’s first focus must be on God himself. Since we are created in the image of God, our relationship with him is the foundation of our relationship with others and creation (Gen 1:26-27). A healthy small group is one that always points one another to a greater view of who God is and who we are in light of who he is. We believe prayer is a means of grace whereby we can believe God on behalf of one another. We believe Scripture is God’s primary revelation to man about Himself (2 Tim 3:16-17). We believe it revives the soul and is rich in what it offers each of us (Ps 19).

**Small Groups center their relationships & practices on the gospel.** We love God because he first loved us (1 Jn 4:19). We love and relate to one another in response to his love for us. We believe Christian growth is not growing beyond the gospel but deeper into the gospel.

**Main Idea:** Small groups care for one another as a family

**We are created for community.** Since we are made in the image of a Trinitarian God, we can only image God fully while in community (Gen 1:26-27).

**We are saved into a family.** In Christ we have been called to a family of believers, not an individual salvation (Jn 13:34-35, Heb 10:25). The most common metaphor
used to depict the church in the New Testament is a family. So small groups care for one another as a family.

**Community is not optional.** Given the weight of importance God places on living in unity together, the believer must not think of community as a program but as a family.

**Community is messy.** People sin. We recognize as we engage in family life with one another we will hurt one another at some point. This is why we choose to believe the gospel every day as it gives us the power to practice forgiveness and reconciliation together.

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**Main Idea:** Small groups reach lost people together with the gospel

**Small groups make disciples who make disciples.** (2 Tim 2.2) The small group does not exist for itself but to live on mission together to advance the kingdom of God in the places where they live and work. Small group members engage non-Christians with the gospel through personal relationships, local outreach, and church planting around the world.

**Small groups are God's demonstration of community.** (Jn 13.34-35, 17.21) God created the church to put his love for people on display. By observing and experiencing the gospel as it is practiced between Christians, non-Christians encounter Jesus in a real and tangible way. Small groups must intentionally build their gatherings in ways that are welcoming to non-Christians.
III. Small Group Practices

This section is designed to clearly define the expectations of a Summit Small Group. After all, clarity in expectations creates confidence in execution. You will probably want to have a pen or keyboard up as this section is made for you to build your own group action plan as you go through it.

Small group leaders are much like unit leaders in an army. Their job is to look after the people entrusted to them, and to lead them towards a common objective. Our common objective is to make disciples. This section lays out how we put our small group foundations laid out in the previous section into practice in the life of your group.

The Wheel

Spiritual growth is a pretty abstract concept. “The Wheel” is simply a guide to help the small group leader come up with an action plan for the spiritual growth of his/her group. It does this by surveying what the Bible says a disciple’s life should look like and then putting all of that into five categories. We measure the health of a small group by the way it is balancing the five ‘spokes’ of group life laid out on the wheel below. In the appendix you will find a “Small Group Action Plan” for you to use to put all of this together for your group. As you go through this section here are some things to keep in mind:

- **Spiritual Formation takes time.** Do not attempt to expedite the relationship building process that is necessary to live out all areas of group life. Also, the material covered here will take 12 to 18 months for a group to fully dig into. So if you feel overwhelmed, take a deep breath and remember you are engaging in long-range planning.

- **Spiritual Formation is intentional.** The Wheel is not a set of observations, but a set of action steps. In light of the gospel, we are called to live out our faith not just think about it. Small group leaders MUST be intentional to implement different elements of the Wheel, and employ wisdom enough to know when.

- **You are not alone.** As you will see in Section IV, every small group leader has a coach who is responsible for looking out for the leader. In most cases, this coach is an elder of the Summit Church. Utilize your coach. Your coach is your best resource as a small group leader—do not neglect him or her!
These five spokes and the gospel hub give structure to how a small group practices our foundations of ‘Up, In, and Out’ from Section II. Together, the practices below create the standard expectations for every Summit Small Group. Be warned: This will seem like a lot. And if you were to try and do it all at once, it would be. This should happen one “spoke” at a time over the course of the first 12 – 18 months of the life of the group. And while we believe this represents the balanced life of a disciple, we recognize every group will emphasize different aspects of discipleship at different times. In fact, we encourage it.

1. Gospel: The Hub
Description: The Christian life is a joyful response to who God is which is most clearly revealed in what he has done for us in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The gospel is the center of the Christian life, not just the beginning. The gospel fuels discipleship.
Small Group Practices:

1. Gospel Fluency – Every small group member should become familiar speaking the gospel story and should gain experience filtering life decisions through the gospel. The question “how does the gospel inform this” should be asked and answered often in conversations among group members.

2. Gospel Stories – One of the greatest practices a small group can do to get to know one another better and develop gospel fluency, is to share life stories
together. Each group member takes 15-20 minutes to share their spiritual journey and how (if they are Christians) they came to believe the gospel. While this could be done over the course of two to three gatherings, it is best suited for an overnight retreat together—a great thing to consider doing 3-4 months or later into the life of the group.

How to write your Gospel Story

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1: Background</th>
<th>What kind of “faith” environment did you grow up in? What kind of family situation? These things play major roles in who you’ve become no matter what age you were when you come to faith.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 2: Spiritual Mile Markers</td>
<td>Each of us has moments and relationships we look back on that were significant in our spiritual journey. What were the big ones for you? Maybe it was a church event, maybe it was a friendship with a pastor or mentor or friend, maybe conversations with a relative. Pick the top two or three and write them out. These can be both before and after you became a Christian.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 3: Conversion</td>
<td>The point here is to focus on what finally led you to cross the line of faith. This will have some ‘story’ aspect to it, but should be more focused on the change of belief you experienced. Try to articulate the gospel message in this step. If you do not yet believe the gospel message, talk about what is keeping you from doing so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4: Today</td>
<td>We are never finished on our spiritual journey. And our lives are certainly not perfect at any point. What is God teaching you now? What is God calling you to do next in your life?</td>
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</table>

Remember these stories should be told in about 15-20 minutes. In the “Small Group Plan” you will have the chance to plan out when your group could do Gospel Stories.
3. **Recommended Resources:**
   1. *Living the Gospel Centered Life* by Sam James Institute
      - Format: Live Course / Length: 6 sessions
      - Comments: Taught by Summit pastors most semesters. Considered the 101 course in the Sam James Institute.
   2. *Gospel Revolution* by J.D. Greear and Spence Shelton
      - Format: Video-Based Study / **Length:** 8 sessions.
   3. Living in the Gospel by Summit Church
      - Format: Written Study / Length: 6 sessions.
      - Comments: Covers the Wheel in depth over 6 sessions.
   4. *Gospel* by J.D. Greear
      - Format: Book / Length: 288 pages
   5. *The Gospel in Life* by Tim Keller
      - Format: Video-Based Study / Length: 8 sessions
      - Format: Book / Length: 178 pages
      - Comments: A great book to read with an individual outside of your regular gathering to begin putting the gospel into practice in everyday life.

2. **Prayer & Bible Intake**
   The pursuit of God by getting to know him through the Bible. The scriptures are the Word of God. The more we learn and apply the scriptures to our lives the more we become the disciples God has called us to be (2 Tim 3:16-17).

**Small Group Practices:**

1. **Bible study and discussion**
   Because we believe the Bible is the Word of God, we believe there is nothing better for small groups to engage together. While group members may decide to read another book together, it will only be in addition to its primary focus on the Bible. Typical Bible study discussions can last anywhere from 30 to 60 minutes or more. Discussion is best when the group members are able to interact with the Scripture before you gather.

2. **Aligning with the weekend worship services**
   To help group members learn the Word of God, the Summit creates small group studies that align with the weekend sermon. These are posted the Thursday prior to each weekend unless otherwise notified. These are excellent resources to help dig deeper into the message from the weekend. We encourage your group to study along with the sermon preached on the weekend. This cultivates unity among our small groups, among families whose members are in various groups, and in vision and purpose at our campuses. During alignment series (explained in the “calendar” section) we
publish multi-week studies for your group to go through together.

3. Prayer
We say regularly that prayer is our means to believe God on behalf of one another. God has given us prayer as a means to exercise belief in, and reliance upon, himself as our good and sovereign God. Small groups should cultivate strong, Bible-rich prayer lives. If we had to choose between calling a small group a Bible study or a prayer group, we’d call it a prayer group. Some things to try in your group:

**The Prayer Note Card:** As everyone arrives, hand them a notecard. During the course of the gathering have them write down the 2-3 things they want group members praying for this week. When you move into your time of prayer, exchange cards with one another and use them to pray.

**Single Gender Sub Groups:** Sharing a ‘prayer request’ often involves sharing personal matters. Dividing the group into smaller, single gender groups will foster the intimacy and trust necessary to break through to more transparent relationships.

**Structured Prayer:** People often do not know where to begin when it comes to praying, especially out loud. Utilize guided prayer tools like the A.C.T.S. model (adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication) to help people pray. Go online to sji.summitrdu.com for more resources on how to pray.

**Prayer Night:** Devote an entire small group night to prayer. You can model it after one of our prayer gatherings at the church by using prayer points and also praying for the needs of your group members.

4. **Recommended Resources**
   1. **The Devotional Life by Sam James Institute**
      - Format: Live Course / Length: 6 weeks
      - Comments: Taught by Summit Pastors as a core competency of the Sam James Institute
      - Format: Live Course / Length: 6 weeks
      - Comments: Taught by Summit Pastors as a core competency of the Sam James Institute
   3. **Dig Deeper: Tools for Understanding God’s Word by Nigel & Sach**
      - Format: Book / Length: 162 pages
      - Comments: An introduction to Bible study methods
   4. **Living by the Book** by Howard Hendricks
      - Format: Book / Length: 349 pages
      - Comments: Best used as a companion guide for the leader when the group decides to walk through a book of the Bible
   5. **A Praying Life** by Paul Miller
      - Format: Book / Length: 280 pages
3. **Community**  
Christian community means your life and faith are not kept to yourself. It is lived out in gospel-centered relationships with other believers who encourage, exhort, and correct one another.  
**Small Group Practices:**

**Member Care and Accountability**  
This varies widely as every group has unique care needs. The group should be intentionally seeking out ways to care for one another. Small groups are the place where you are cared for and care for others. That means celebrating in seasons of joy, mourning in seasons of loss, and carrying one another’s burdens. For Summit Small Groups this means intentionally investing into the lives of others in your group, sharing in pain as it comes, actively fighting sin together and celebrating what God does in your lives. **Remember, small group is a community, not a meeting.**

**RHYTHMS OF Intentional Community**  
The difference between a Bible study and a community is the intentionality you put towards being in one another’s lives. We want to challenge you to look at the rhythms of your life and consider how you can do some of your routines with other people. For example, you already attend worship service on the weekend. Why not sit with your small group and hang around after? You already eat dinner every night. Why not eat with others in your group once a week? The idea is not to put more meetings on your calendar, but to do what you already do…with others. These two calendars represent the distinction between a Bible study and an intentional community.  
**Bible Study**

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<th>Sunday</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Bible Study</td>
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**Intentional Community**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
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<th>Wednesday</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worship Service</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bible Study</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dinner Night</td>
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**Small Group Commitment**  
A small group commitment is an excellent tool to help build a set of clear expectations for everyone involved in the group. We highly recommend these, especially for new groups. We have placed an example small group commitment at...
the end of the small group handbook. You can also use the small group action plan as your commitment.

**Hangout Nights**
A great starter to building informal rhythms into your group is to schedule some hangout nights together. Let those take the place of a normal Bible study time once in a while and use those times to have fun together!

**Small Group Retreat**
There is nothing like an overnight retreat together to help bond a group of people together. Stories and meals are two of the strongest adhesives in community life. These are by no means required, but we regularly see more satisfaction in group experiences from members who have been on a retreat together.

**Recommended Resources**
- *Why Small Groups* by C.J. Mahaney
  - Format: Small Group Study / Length: 6 sessions
  - Comments: A great resource for clarifying what it means to practice community together.
- *People of God* by Spence Shelton and Trevor Joy (available May 1, 2014)
  - Format: Book / Length: 288 pages
  - Comments: This book lays out the theology, philosophy, and some methodology behind the Summit’s small group ministry.
- Small Group Action Plan
  - Format: Workbook / Length: One small group gathering
  - Comments: Simply working through the small group action plan together as a group can give a sense of unity and momentum around where you will be heading together. In essence, the small group action plan can serve as your group commitment.

**3. Evangelism & Mission**
From Scripture, we see that God has given all believers the power (Acts 1:8) and the mandate to be a witness of the gospel. That means each person in your small group has a role to play in God’s evangelism plan. In fact, your group is potentially the best evangelistic tool you have. When non-Christians get to see Christians interacting and living the gospel as they speak it, the likelihood of them believing goes up considerably. Here is what this means for your group:

1. **Make the group accessible to Non-Christians:** Consider how you can create low risk environments where Christians and non Christians can interact. Our standard protocol is that there are no closed Summit Small Groups.
Exercise: 3 x 3
Have each member of the group make a list of 3 non-Christians they can pray for 3 times each day. Trade lists and pray for one another’s lists during different weeks.

Exercise: Dinner Nights
Every so often, the group could plan dinner nights that are intentionally informal and easy to bring non-Christians to. This is a simple way for non-Christians to get to know other Christians.

2. **Local outreach**: We ask every small group member to be engaged in serving the poor and oppressed in your city with the love of Christ. Small Group leaders help catalyze this aspect of discipleship among the group members. A good small group leader will probably delegate this area to someone else in the group who can focus on mobilizing group members.

Get Started: Summitrdu.com/localoutreach

3. **Support a church planter**: We believe the best thing for any city, town, or community is a thriving local church. We ask every small group to support (prayer, going, caring) one of our church planters. Our church planting team will work with you to establish a relationship and explain more about how we support our planters.

Get Started: Contact your small groups coach for instructions on how to connect to a church planter. For security reasons we cannot publish our planters’ names or our process of connecting you to them.

4. **Recommended Resources**
   a. *Operation World* by Jason Mandryk
      i. Format: Resource Book / Length: 978 pages
      ii. Comments: This book looks at every people group and shows you how you can be praying for God’s grace towards them. A truly incredible resource, and a great tool to help your group begin to engage a people group.
   b. *Let the Nations be Glad* by John Piper
      i. Format: Book / Length: 288 pages
      ii. Comments: An excellent introductory read on the theology behind the missional mandate of the local church. Best leveraged during a mission-focused series or time of year.
   c. *When Helping Hurts* by Corbett and Fikkert
      i. Format: Book / Length: 275 pages
      ii. Comments: An important work that helped to shape how the Summit approaches local outreach ministry.
4. Generosity & Stewardship

Christians give generously of their time, resources, money, and energy as an act of thanksgiving for all God has given us. Our generosity does not flow from legalistic obligations, guilt, or fear. Rather, it flows from the life-altering realization that God was exceedingly generous with us by sending his Son to die for us, and all we have is a gracious gift he has given us. As a small group we are generous with our:

1. **Time** – We are not a meeting once a week, but a family who is doing life together. While it may be difficult at first, we believe sacrificing our time for one another likely makes the most significant impact on the quality of our relationships. Informal time together is the secret key to most great friendships.

2. **Talent** – We look for opportunities to serve one another and our community with the talents God has given us. This may be any number of things from renovating a house, to helping out with a tax return, to fixing a meal. The point is we are readily looking for opportunities to serve one another.

3. **Treasure** – Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Small Groups encourage giving generously to the local church, and to one another as any has need. Leaders should also leverage our stewardship training resources to help group members. Courses like Financial Peace University are designed to help your members organize their financial lives so they can live with money not as a liability but as an asset for their life and ministry.

4. Recommended Resources

   - **Financial Peace University**
     - Format: Live Course / Length: 9 weeks
     - Comments: This is an excellent course for those looking to organize their financial situation and learn how to steward their finances as God intends.

   - **Treasure Principle** by Randy Alcorn
     - Format: Book / Length: 128 pages
     - Comments: A great introduction connecting the gospel to stewardship of our resources. A good starter for someone in the group who has never tithed before.

   - **“The Generosity Matrix”** by J.D. Greear
     - Comments: A helpful article written by Pastor J.D. that will help you and your group think through the different biblical truths we must hold in tension as we consider gospel-centered generosity.

   - **Money: God or Gift** by Jamie Munson
     - Format: E-book / Length: 113 pages
• Comments: Thoughtful book and small group resource to point your heart, your treasure, and your life to the source of all joy, goodness and love: Jesus. Designed to be read and studied over the course of three weeks as a small group study through Luke 12.

5. Character
From the moment of our salvation, God is working in us and through us to bring our lives more and more into conformity with the perfect character of our Lord Jesus Christ. In small group this means we challenge one another to press the gospel deep into relationships like marriage, work, and parenting. Prepare yourself for difficulty: People are flawed, and when imperfect people gather, things get messy. Address the issues, pray together, show one another grace and grow together in the gospel.

Exercise: Small Group Accountability
Small group members call one another away from sin issues like anger, pride, lust, and fear and towards the security of our identity in Christ. Small groups should have a regular practice of confession of sin among its members.

SAMUEL WESLEY’S ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONS
Early in the 18th century, Samuel Wesley (brother of John Wesley) formed a religious society with regular small-group meetings. Called “Band Societies,” these single-sex groups were designed to facilitate mutual accountability. All who wished to join were required to answer the following questions as evidence of justification and an accompanying desire to grow in God:
Have you peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ?
Do you desire to be told of your faults?
Do you desire that every one of us should tell you, from time to time, whatsoever is in his heart concerning you?
Consider! Do you desire that we should tell you whatsoever we think, whatsoever we fear, whatsoever we hear, concerning you?
Do you desire that, in doing this, we should come as close as possible, that we should cut to the quick, and search your heart to the bottom?
Is it your desire and design to be on this, and all other occasions, entirely open, so as to speak everything that is in your heart without exception, without disguise, and without reserve?
After joining, group members could be asked the preceding questions “as often as occasion offers,” while the following questions were asked at every meeting:
What known sin have you committed since our last meeting?
What temptations have you met with?
How were you delivered?
What have you thought, said, or done, of which you doubt whether it be sin or not?

We aren’t suggesting you need to replicate the Wesley brothers’ questions, but we are saying get beneath the surface to your real spiritual life. Honest, transparent
exchanges between friends on how the gospel is taking root are the foundation on which healthy small groups thrive.

**Recommended Resources**

- **Wesley’s Accountability Questions** (see above)
- **The Pursuit of Holiness** by Jerry Bridges
  - Format: Book / Length: 179 pages
  - Comment: A great read on spiritual formation
- **Gospel Centered Marriage Series** by Brad Hambrick
  - Format: Live Course or Video Teaching / Length: 5 sessions
  - Comment: An excellent gospel-founded approach to building a healthy marriage.
- **Humility** by Andrew Murray
  - Format: Book / Length: 64 pages
  - Comments: This is a good resource for any believer to learn what it means to grow into the image of Christ.
- **The Mark of a Christian** by Francis Schaeffer
  - Format: Book / Length: 63 pages
  - Comments: A short, clear treatment on the centrality of love in the Christian community.

**A WARNING ON USING THE WHEEL**

Warning: The enemy would use such an exercise to make you feel shamed and condemned by God. If that happens, run away from this exercise quickly. Think of this more like a workout program than a beat down. In a workout you feel pain, but it’s worth it because you desire the end result of a healthier life. A workout with no results is just a beat down. Nobody likes a beat down.

Each Wheel spoke is accompanied by three categories of questions designed gauge the health of a believer in that area. These questions (or some version of them) represent gospel conversations we must be having with one another on a regular basis.

- Where are you?
- Why are you there?
- What can we do to help you grow?

1. **Where are you?** Your response should be drawn from the concrete evidence seen in your life. For example, it is hard to be self-delusional about how strong your prayer life is if you have not prayed in a month. Some of the evaluation questions are open-ended and others on a 1-10 scale and others are. While such a scale is not perfect, it does provide a simple starting point to move on from.

2. **Why are you there?** This question is intended to connect your actions with your beliefs. The goal is to remove the “dream” one has about oneself and deal with the reality of what one believes at a practical level. For example, one may say they believe in the great commission, but over the last year they have not told the gospel message to anyone. The goal is to reveal that something else (maybe comfort, security, pride) is dictating their daily life more than the gospel. At this stage you
must understand that your actions flow from your true beliefs. This is the key question. Remember, these actions we are talking about are signs of a renewed heart and mind. *Why* is the most important question to lead you towards gospel-centered life change.

3. **What can we do to help you grow?** This question is to help you with action steps towards growing in belief and action according to the gospel. Question 1 observes one’s actual life in Christ. Question 2 reveals what one’s true motivation is. Each week’s group discussion includes a chance for you to answer this question in your group time.

**The Small Group Calendar**
The Summit Church intentionally manages the calendar to reflect a partnership relationship with small group leaders in making disciples of the people of the Summit Church. The small group year runs from August 1 to May 31, comprising 40 weeks. Those 40 weeks break down as follows:

- **Alignment**: Two to three times each small group year the entire church will align itself around a particular book of the Bible or Wheel spoke. Small group materials will align with weekend sermons. All small groups are requested to use materials provided by the Summit during an alignment series.

- **Wheel**: The Wheel provides a guide for the group leader to determine where his/her group needs to grow. During the Wheel seasons, a group CAN study along with the materials given out on a weekly basis that coincide with
weekend messages. However, the group is encouraged to pray and consult with their elder over what area of discipleship they need to focus on together. *Ex: if the group has few who know how to share their faith, a study in evangelism is in order.*

- **Miscellaneous:** We set aside 8 weeks recognizing there will be times where the group doesn’t meet together for their weekly gathering for whatever reason. Maybe you all go to a baseball game together or something. Sick kids, unexpected trips, and snowstorms are a few more examples. “I had a kickball game” is not an example.
IV. Support Structure

The Summit leadership pipeline exists to provide ongoing pastoral care to the leadership of the Summit Church. This care includes personal discipleship as well as support in your role carrying out the mission of the Summit Church. Our hope is for this to be an organic model that allows room for growth and flexibility in mission implementation while ensuring mission drift does not occur as we grow as a church.

The Structure

We have identified 4 levels of involvement in Summit Small Groups.
Every group has a Leader//Every Leader has a coach*// Every Coach is either an elder or overseen by an elder. For more on these roles see the Leadership Pipeline and Appendix F

The Pipeline Process

To ensure the group is ready to plant a new group, the group leader should be regularly discipling small group members towards the end of planting more groups in their local community. The pipeline gives time windows and materials to work through to carry out this discipleship process.

Expectations for a small group coach and small group leader relationship

The Small group coach and leader should be in regular contact and growing relationship. The leader should know that they have the constant support of an elder and a deacon who can aid with spiritual, emotional, and physical needs that may arise in the small group. The coach should know the general health of the small group community, any challenges they are facing, and the dynamics of their particular group.

Key roles of a small group leader

Shepherd. The small group leader is to be the primary pastoral care provider for the people in his group. This means balancing the elements of a healthy small group described above and creating an environment of mutual discipleship among the members of the group.

Recruiter. Since we plant new small groups from existing ones, existing leaders must be the recruiters and trainers of potential small group leaders within their group. As you walk through the pipeline with a member who may lead a group one day, keep your coach up to date about his development.

Disciple. As you grow into leadership here at the Summit we want to continue to call you to a life of obedience to Christ and faith in Christ. Your role as a leader should never be a mere duty. It should be a time of intense, joyful growth for you.
Job Description: Coach

Overview

Purpose
A small group coach advances the mission of the church by shepherding small group leaders towards making disciples.

Practice
A coach knows, cares for, and leads his/her leaders.

Breakdown

- **Knows** - The coach – leader relationship must have a certain level of relational depth to it (1 Thess 2:8), which is why our coach to leader ratio is 1:3.
  - Give them your cell # and email. Be accessible to sit down and talk.
  - Invest in this relationship. Model faithfulness in doctrine and life while with them.

- **Cares** – A coach loves and cares for their leaders (1 Jn 3:16-18)
  - Encourage them by acknowledging signs of God’s grace in their life and in their role leading their group.
  - Be attentive to their questions, ideas, concerns and feedback.
  - Encourage them to get training they need to improve as a leader.

- **Leads** - A coach provides direction, discernment for his/her leaders as they make decisions concerning:
  - Communication: Create a bridge between group and church.
  - Goal Setting: Use the Wheel and small group action plan to diagnose health and implement a plan of spiritual formation for the group.
  - Member Care: Are relationships healthy? Inclusive? Are they shepherding their group?
  - Help leader identify and raise up future small group leaders.
    - How many groups will your leaders plant in the next 12 months?

Summit Small Group Coach Time Commitment  *(estimated)*

- Regular communication: **30 min / week**
  - Review weekly assessments
  - Personal touch (phone calls, emails, texts, etc.)
- Hangout/ Life-together: **2-3 hours every other month**
- Attend EQUIP/Leadership gatherings together: **2-3 times a year**
- Visit each small group once a year: **Varies**
Summit Small Groups Leader Overview

Summit Small Groups exist to make disciples

A small group leader’s role is to shepherd the people towards maturity in Christ by

• Knowing
  o Foster a disciple-making community
  o *Develop rhythms for intentional relationships outside of weekly meetings*

• Leading
  o **Models** a pursuit of Christ in every area of life
    ▪ Prepare for weekly small group meetings which involve Scripture, prayer, worship, confession and repentance
  o **Oversees** *(often through delegating)*
    ▪ Aspects of group life (*meals, communication, local outreach, supporting a Church Planter*)
    ▪ Guide the weekly discussion towards fruitful application of God’s Word
  o **Reproduces**
    ▪ Encourage people to become committed members of a local church
    ▪ Identify and develop future small group leaders

• Caring
  o Pray for individual small group members
  o Mobilize the group to meet one another’s needs
  o Complete the groups health assessment on The City

**Summit Small Group Leader Time Commitment**

• Preparation for weekly meeting: **30-60 min/week**
• Ongoing communication with group: phone calls, emails, etc: **30 min/week**
• Doing life together with your group: **Varies**
• Monthly hangout/Serve: **2-3 hours**
• Attend leadership gatherings: **Twice Annually**

---

1 See the Wheel for description of what this looks like
Leadership Commitment

As a leader of a Summit Small Group, through the help of the Holy Spirit I commit to...

**Love God**
- Spend regular time with the Lord in the Word on my own
- Dedicate consistent time to prayer and reflection on the gospel
- Prioritize Scripture as the final authority for all material discussed
- Yield my heart and character to the transformative work of Christ
- Give generously and regularly of my finances to the Summit, my local church

**Love Each Other**
- Serve as an active and committed member in the life of the Summit Church
- Make leader training sessions a high priority for myself and potential new leaders
- Meet with all group members one on one at least once a year to see how they are doing in their personal discipleship and discipleship of others
- Pray for each individual in my group at least weekly
- Foster healthy relationships among group members, collectively ministering to the needs of the group through close community
- Be a shepherd leader who looks for opportunities to serve and minister to my group

**Love The World**
- Mobilize my group to carry out an ongoing community outreach/service project at least every other month
- Lead the group to be an active example to the surrounding community of God’s love for all people
- Encourage my group to pray for the advancement of the gospel in RDU and around the world
- Support a church planter by praying for them weekly and meeting other needs as they arise

After praying about this and discussing it with my family, I commit to fulfilling the role of a Summit Small Group leader for the following year: ___

_________________________  ________________________
Name (Sign)               Name (Print)

_________________________
Date
V. Getting Started

New Small Groups
From the time you meet a potential small group leader to the time they lead their first small group, this document will walk you through every step of the process. Included are the links to all the necessary resources you will need as well.

- **Application**
  - Have the potential leader enter the application process on The City. Make sure you use tentative language (like potential) so that they aren't promised a position before we check them out.
  - Once they've completed the application, their current small group leader will be prompted to complete a recommendation if one has not already been turned in.

- **Interview**
  - A representative from campus leadership will then sit down with them and go through their application with them using the New Small Group Leader Assessment.

- **Commitment**
  - If the leader is ready to lead, they will go over the Small Group Leader Commitment and sign it.

- **Training/Coaching**
  - Explain coach/leader structure letting them know you are there to walk alongside of them.
  - Have them attend a Turbo Group Small Group Leader Training or address the material with them covered in sections I and II of this document.

- **The City**
  - Campus leadership will set up the new small group in The City and train the new leader how to use The City for small group purposes.
Appendix: Additional Documents

1. Small Group Action Plan
2. New Leader Application
3. New Small Group Leader Assessment
4. Small Group Commitment
5. Leader Toolbox
6. The City

1. Small Group Action Plan

One of the biggest obstacles to great group life is intentionality. The “Small Group Action Plan” is designed to help you intentionally take your small group through the gospel Wheel over the course of about one small group year (August–May). Roughly 60% (24 weeks) of that time can be devoted to the non-alignment portion of this action plan. This plan references the practices and resources laid out in the gospel Wheel section of the Small Groups Handbook. Our hope is that this plan will create many small opportunities to catalyze the spiritual growth of your group both individually and collectively. It is recommended (but certainly not required) to go through them in the order they appear in the action plan. What you will need:
  - A calendar you can write on
  - Any key dates issued to you by Summit Leadership.

Recommendation: The leader should go through this first, then print it and take it to the group to discuss. Set aside a night to talk about it. That night it may feel overwhelming, but remember you are not going to do all of this in one night and some will take less time than others.

Lastly: LIFE HAPPENS, which means your plans you write down here will probably need to be adjusted throughout the year. If, for example, God takes one of your group members through pain or loss, you will devote time to caring for them that you hadn’t planned. That is ok! Just think of adjustment as part of the plan!

1. The Gospel

The gospel is the center of the disciple’s life. Your group will be well served to start with a gospel focus. If your group is new and has never spent time in a study on the gospel, we encourage you to make that a priority early on.
  - Gospel stories: Described in the gospel Wheel, these are 15-20 minute personal stories by each member in the group.
    - **Length:** 2-3 weeks OR one small group overnight retreat
• **Comments**: The goal of this is to teach every member how to explain the gospel through their own story, and to get to know one another. Ideally done after the group has been together for more than 3 months.

**Our group will share our gospel stories together: (dates)**

**Our group will use the following resources to grow in the gospel:**

**When:**
**For how long (8 weeks max):**

**2. Prayer & Bible Intake**
While your group will always go to the scriptures, it is healthy on occasion to focus in on gaining knowledge and skill in understanding the Bible. You may decide to walk through a book of the Bible using a certain method, or study guide. Perhaps you will memorize a passage of Scripture together or build in a few prayer nights.

**Alignment (40% or 16 weeks)**
**DATES issued by Summit Leadership for Bible Study Alignment:**

‘Spokes’ these series will focus on (contact your coach or campus pastor to find out if you don't know):

**Our group will devote itself to God’s word this year by:**
3. Community
Most groups overlook the reality that unless they intentionally learn how to practice biblical community, they will have a hard time becoming the group they want to be. Here is your chance to plan out a time to build community together

**Our group’s regular times of interacting together** *(see Rhythms from Small Group Handbook section II)* **will be:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worship Service together</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bible Study &amp; Prayer</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dinner Night (every other week)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Our group will agree together on a small group commitment by this date:**

**Our group social nights this year will be on these dates:**

**4. Evangelism & Mission**
One of the biggest dangers of a small group is drifting away from the mission of God and into an isolated bubble of relationships. Planning for mission helps fight mission drift. Remember to pace yourself in this area.

**Our group is committed to supporting this church planter:**

**How:**
Ex. (prayer, monthly skype, going in person)

**Our group’s local outreach effort:**

**How can we make our group accessible to non-Christians?**

**5. Generosity**
Christians give of their time, talent, and treasure to one another and those in need. To give of these things, you must assess what you have to give and you must assess needs you can give to.
What skills are represented among our group members?

Do we have, or know of, any needs right now we could mobilize our group members to meet?

6. Character
Small groups hold one another accountable to growing more into the likeness of Christ every day.

As a small group we will challenge one another to pursue holiness by:

How often: Resource (s) we will use:

7. PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER
Once you've worked through all of this, it will be helpful to lay out your next semester on a calendar just to get going somewhere. Below is a sample calendar for you to use in making this happen.
## Sample Calendar - Spring 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>CONTENT (Wheel)</th>
<th>Group Stuff</th>
<th>Church Stuff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Social</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Sermon Discussion – God &amp; Rest of the Week (Character)</td>
<td>Group Member getting married</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>God &amp; Rest of Week (Character)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Small Group Conf Jan 25 – Bring 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Super Bowl Party – BRING FRIENDS</td>
<td></td>
<td>GroupLink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>ALIGNMENT – SENT (Mission)</td>
<td>Skype with Church Planer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Alignment 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Men's Fraternity begins (8 weeks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Alignment 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Alignment 4</td>
<td>GUYS NIGHT this week?</td>
<td>Starting Point Mar 8th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Alignment 5</td>
<td>GIRLS NIGHT this week?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Alignment 6</td>
<td>Skype with Church Planer</td>
<td>SJI Courses Begin March 25 – sji.summitrdu.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Social – BRING FRIENDS</td>
<td></td>
<td>Game night?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Colossians (BIBLE &amp; PRAYER)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Colossians</td>
<td></td>
<td>Starting Point Apr 12 EASTER Apr 20th, INVITE / SERVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Colossians</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>No Group Gathering – EASTER</td>
<td></td>
<td>EASTER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Colossians</td>
<td></td>
<td>SJI courses begin April 28 – sji.summitrdu.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>PRAYER NIGHT</td>
<td>Skype with Church Planter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Colossians</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Colossians</td>
<td>Last Gathering before summer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>MEMORIAL DAY – SOCIAL?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Covered this semester:** Character, Mission, Prayer & Bible Intake  
**For next semester:** Gospel, Community, Stewardship & Generosity
2. New Small Group Leader Application

Applicant: __________________________
Spouse: __________________________
Email: __________________________
Phone: __________ Campus: __________

What type of group will you be leading:
Anticipated Start Date:
  • How long have you attended the Summit? __________
  • Are you a member of the Summit? Yes / No
  • If “No,” when do you plan to join? __________
  • Which campus do you attend? __________
  • Are you in a small group? Yes / No
  • Who is your small group leader? __________

1. Character
   a. What is your life story – 60 sec. version?

   b. What is your salvation story?

   c. What are your gifts and talents within the body of Christ?

2. Theology
   a. Simply explain what the gospel is.

   b. How would you describe who Jesus is and what he has done?
3. The Church  
   a. How would you define the church?

   b. What do you think it means for the church to be a community?

   c. What does it mean for you and your small group to be subject to the leaders and elders at the Summit?

4. The Mission  
   a. What is the mission of the local church?

   b. As a covenant member of the Summit, how do you see yourself as part of this mission for our city and our world?

5. Service  
   a. How are you involved in serving at the Summit?

   b. How are you involved in serving our city?

6. Pastoral Care  
   a. A young married couple shows up to your small group with their two year old. You don’t have any childcare arranged. What do you do?
b. One of your group members continues to dominate the conversation every week. Others are increasingly becoming unresponsive in discussion & in overall involvement in group life. How do you handle this increasingly destructive situation?

c. A group member comes to you after the rest of the group leaves one night and tells you he/she is addicted to internet pornography. How would you respond?

*When you have completed this application, please submit it to your Campus Pastor or to the Summit’s Spiritual Formation Staff at tedmonds@summitrdu.com
*Please note an online version of this form can also be found at https://thesummitcity.wufoo.com/forms/small-group-leader-application/
3. New Small Group Leader Assessment

This assessment is aimed to assess and equip potential small group leaders for the purpose of making sure they are qualified and equipped to shepherd and lead a group of people at the Summit. This assessment should only be performed by a Small Group Coach, a Small Group Staff Member, or a Campus Pastor after you have received and read through their application. This document should not be seen by the applicant.

Applicant: ________________________  
Assessor: ________________________  
Date: ______________

1. Character
   a. Life story
      i. Is this person new to the church, grown up in church, been in many churches, a ‘church hopper’, had issues with the church?
      ii. Are there any red flags you see? (Matt 7:15 "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.")

   b. Salvation story
      i. To the best of your knowledge, is this person clearly a regenerated follower of Jesus?

   c. Gifts and talents within the body of Christ
      i. To the best of your knowledge, what are this person's gifts?
      ii. To the best of your knowledge, is this person gifted as a shepherd and leader?

2. Theology
   a. The gospel
      i. Can this person communicate the central message of Scripture and Christianity?

   b. Jesus – his person and work
      i. Does this person understand the person and work of Jesus as fully God and fully man?
      ii. Does this person understand the meaning and implications of the death and resurrection of Jesus?
3. The Church
   a. Definition of the church
      i. How do they view the local church?
   b. The church as a community
      i. Do they understand the church to be a community and family?
   c. Leaders and elders at the Summit
      i. Are they submissive to church leadership? Have they had past issues in this area?

4. The Mission
   a. Mission of the church
      i. Do they agree and align with the mission of the Summit?
   b. Mission at work, in your neighborhood, in your family, and in the city
      i. Do they see themselves as representatives of Jesus in culture?
      ii. Do they see themselves as missionaries in their city?

5. Service
   a. Service at the Summit
      i. Are they serving the church or taking from it?
   b. Service in our city
      i. Are they blessing the city or taking from it?

**Close your assessment time by saying something like this,**
- Thank you for your desire to be a small group leader, and thank you for meeting with me to discuss the possibility of you becoming a small group leader.
- Either myself or our small group staff will follow up with you in the near future about your next steps in the process
- I think you are a gifted person and I’m glad you are a part of our church
- (Close the time by praying together)

**Concluding Remarks:**
As the assessor of this applicant, do you feel this person is mature in the faith, qualified, and gifted to serve at the Summit as a small group leader? Yes / No

Do you think “now” is the right time for them to be a small group leader, or should they wait? Now / Later (if later, how long? ___________)

Other Comments:
4. SMALL GROUP COMMITMENT

LOVE GOD

We will devote ourselves to the word of God by:
- Personally preparing for each gathering
- Coming to each gathering ready to learn from one another.
- Studying the Word of God as our primary focus.

We will devote ourselves to growing closer to God by:
- Daily personal devotions in prayer and Bible study
- Worshipping Jesus in biblical community with our faith family at the Summit Church, and we will make the most of every opportunity to worship weekly at both a Summit campus and our small group meetings.
- Devoting ourselves to growing as a people of prayer this year

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

The church is a family who cares for and challenges one another. We will do this by:
- Trusting one another to make our weekly gathering a high priority in our lives, not easily trumped by the happenings of life.
- Participating in discussion with honesty and transparency
- Intentionally gathering with one another informally to build the level of friendships we need to push one another towards holiness
- Assuming the best with one another, readily confessing sin and offering forgiveness to one another when conflict arises.
- Readily meeting one another's needs as they arise

LOVE OUR WORLD

We live actively as missionaries sent by Jesus to make disciples. We will live on mission together by:
- Committing to pray for non-Christians God has placed in our lives
- Making our small group community accessible to non-Christians
- Serving our local community
5. Leader Toolbox

In this section are some tips and suggestions for Summit small group leaders when planning how their group is going to use their time together, what type of questions they want to ask, and what to focus on within their group. This is not a set way of doing things but helpful when leading a group.

Standard Group Meeting Format

Section (Time)

I. Welcome (10-15 min)

II. Announcements (5 min)
   - Anything from Summit small group office pertinent to your group
   - Scheduling of future group events / meeting places etc.

III. Ice Breakers (10-20 min)

IV. Study Time (30-45 min)

V. Prayer Time (20 min)
   - Put this before the study time if you are having trouble “fitting it in” at the end.

* Honor the time of your group members. Try to have everything done in around 1.5 hours. It is OK if you do not get to everything each night. The more you get to know one another the more you will be able to be flexible with time.

** Many groups will share a meal together as well. This can take place as frequently as each meeting or as infrequently as a few times per year. The breaking of bread together as a group is a key ingredient to growing closer to each other and creating a sense of community.

Practical Tips for Great Discussion

1. Be sure there is sufficient lighting and the room is comfortable.

2. Remove physical and visual distractions (i.e. pets, turn TV off, etc.).

3. Arrange the seating so that everyone can see each other. Have everyone seated on the same level. A circular arrangement works well.
4. Try to plan ahead to prevent interruptions from young children, pets, telephone, etc.

5. Begin and end ON TIME.

6. Be dependable. Demonstrate integrity. If you say you will discuss something later, make sure you do. Little things build trust.

7. Don’t be afraid of silence. Give people time to answer. If they have a puzzled expression, restate your question (don’t answer it yourself).

8. Inject humor! Laughter disarms people and builds bridges. Meaningful discussion often follows laughter.

9. Before your first (or next) discussion, share with all participants how they can contribute to a healthy learning process.
   a. By being willing to change their beliefs and opinions
   b. By being open to new perspectives
   c. By resisting the temptation to argue merely for the sake of argument.

10. Incorporate emotion. Life and truth are not solely cognitive; introduce the affective dimension to your discussion.

11. Take notes on personal issues that are revealed in discussion, and bring them up again at appropriate times.

**Summit Small Group Leader Checklist:**

As a Summit small group leader, the amount of things put on your plate can seem rather daunting at times. So, we have put together a little checklist for you to help make things a little easier. The actions on this list should take you roughly 1-1.5 hours on a weekly basis, and some of these will be done less often than that. Some of these are questions to help guide you in your discipleship of your group members.

- Complete the Small Group Health Assessment (on The City).
- Are your people members of your group on The City?
- What service project(s) is your group doing?
- What are you teaching and who is teaching?
  - Any person regularly teaching must go through leader training with the Summit Church.
- What has God done in the lives of your group members and in the life of your group as a whole?
- Names (first name only is ok) of non-believers you and your members are praying for and sharing Christ with.
- How is your group supporting your missionary?
Asking Good Questions

The key to good discussions is good questions.

I. Tests for Good Questions
   • Is it clear?
   • Does it stimulate thought?
   • Does it draw focus to the issue?
   • Does it call more for an exercise of judgment rather than the ability to recall facts?

II. Common Pitfalls to Avoid When Creating Questions
   • Questions with a “right” answer. Instead, choose open-ended questions where there are several possible answers.
   • Questions with a “yes” or “no” answer. They leave no room for discussion.
   • Questions that imply or assume an answer.
   • Questions that are too long to be remembered.
   • Compound Questions – ask only one question at a time.
   • Either/Or Questions. These limit the choice to only 2 options that they might not have chosen in the first place.

III. Use Follow-Up Questions
   The following questions typify follow-up questions that can be used in most discussions
   • What did you mean by that?
   • Could you give us an example?
   • Where would we find that in the Bible?
   • How does what you are saying relate to what we said previously?
   • If that is true, what are the implications for _________?
   • Could you define that term?
   • How could we apply that in our own church?
6. Group Leader Instructions

Communication can be the greatest asset or liability in small group ministry. We want to make sure communication channels are clearly defined and information is effectively disseminated. “The City” is a tool we use to help us communicate as a leadership team. Below are some simple processes to help you set up and function well in The City. They include:

1. Group Set-up  2. Inviting People to Your Group  3. Tracking Group Health

Before getting started with the processes of using The City as a small group leader, it is important to familiarize yourself with leader responsibilities:

- Group leaders must invite appropriate staff and important lay leaders to both The City AND their appropriate groups.
- Group leaders must create initial content (topics/events) including a Group Information topic that is ALWAYS featured at the top of the group topic list (after posting the topic, click the star in the top right corner).
- Group leaders are responsible for continual content creation. (Suggested 1-3 posts per week).
- Group leaders are responsible for the communication and engagement of/to the participants in their group.
- Group leaders are responsible to maintain the group’s integrity, atmosphere, and alignment with the gospel, in the (hopefully unlikely) event of a need for content/response moderation

1. Group Set Up

1. The first time you go to your group page (see the “Groups” icon on the left), your group-specific email options will display. Choose either “Daily Digest” (one daily combined email) or “New Things” option, whichever you prefer.
2. As a leader of your group you will have access to certain leader tools. These tools are accessed through five icons located on the top right of the group page. (See arrow below.)
3. Click on the Tools button (the hammer and wrench). *The Tools button will take you to a screen with multiple tabs.*

4. Fill in the appropriate information under the Name & Info tab. Please **DO NOT CHANGE THE NAME.** This name is specific to our Summit search processes. Thanks!
   a. The **Description** shows up on your public group page so it should be whatever you’d like people to know that generally describes your group.
   b. The **Custom Message for New Invitations** is a message that will automatically go to someone who is invited to your group. Something to the effect of: “I’m glad you’re joining our small group! I’ll be contacting you again soon with more information.”
   c. Please fill in the **Ideal Size** box with whatever your desired maximum group size is. If you don’t know, then twelve is a good default. This helps us keep track of how “full” our groups are. Though it says optional, it’s probably the most important field on this tab so please don’t forget to fill it in!
   d. Click Update to save.
5. Fill in the appropriate information under the Address tab. This information is crucial for both getting new people into our groups and data tracking.
   a. Change the **Privacy Setting** from Private to Public.
   b. Insert the **physical address** of where your group will be meeting.
   c. Click Update to save.

6. Fill in the appropriate information under the Tags tab. This information helps us categorize your group. Be sure to click update to save.
2. Inviting People into your Group

Regardless of your role in a group, you have the ability to invite people to join your group in The City.

To Send an Invitation
1) On the group page in the icon tray, click  
2) Click + invite someone new.
3) Choose whether you're inviting people who are already In The City or Not in The City.
4) Depending on your previous selection, do one of the following:
   - When inviting someone already In The City, start typing a name in the Users by Name field, and select the person you'd like to invite. Then add a message and click Invite them.
   - If you invite someone who is Not in The City, type their email address in the appropriate field. Then enter a message and click Invite this Person.

If you aren't the leader of the group, the leader has to approve the invitation before it is actually send. Before you know it, though, your group will be one person bigger.

Things to Remember
- Whether inviting new or old City users, you can invite more than one person at a time by separating their names with commas.
- When someone outside The City is invited to join a group, The City automatically invites them to the group that sent out the invitation, the campus that group is a part of (if applicable), and the church group. When they accept the one invitation and create a new City Profile, they're instantly enrolled in all those groups.
3. Tracking Group Health

As a way to keep in touch with their coaches as well as collect health and involvement information, our small group leaders are asked to fill out a Small Group Health Assessment after each small group meeting. The information you provide in this assessment will only be visible to your specific small group coach.

To Assess Your Group:

1) From your group page, click the Icon Tray.
2) Click Assess the health of your group.
3) Record the total attendance and first time guest attendance for your small group event.
4) For each question, select the right color-coded health level for the given subject.
5) Provide any added information you’d like for each selection.
6) When you’re done responding, click Submit Assessment.