

SOUTHBROOK CHURCH  
**Community**Groups

Leader Training Manual

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Welcome to Community Groups	3
Our Identity	3
Our Mission	3
Groups Leadership Team	4
Pastoral Care	4
Discipleship Model	5
Discipleship Map	8
Role of Community Leader	9
Group Leader Resources	10
Top 5 Characteristics of a Healthy Group	11
S-E-N-D	11

# WELCOME TO COMMUNITY GROUPS

Thank you for partnering with us and joining us to be disciples who make disciples!

*Community Groups are the primary environment to connect in authentic biblical community and live out the one another in scripture..*

We are excited to see how God will use your gift of leadership as you make disciples!

## OUR IDENTITY

We exist to glorify God by **making disciples** who make a **big deal of Jesus** where we **live, learn, work, and play.**

Our mission involves going into the community to reach those around us and throughout the world who are far from Jesus, as well as walking with those who already know Him. Through the ministries of Southbrook, the needs of broken people, homes, families, marriages, and those struggling through addiction have been met. People come and are equipped to live out the life-changing, life-transforming message of the Gospel.

## OUR MISSION

There are many ways to define this command of Jesus. We feel the following definition is simple and clear. A disciple is a fully devoted follower of Jesus. Disciple-makers are disciples who help others become fully devoted followers of Jesus.

This includes three elements:

- Reaching non-believers (Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8)
- Growing believers (Matthew 28:20; 1 Peter 2:2)
- Equipping everyone to do the same (2 Timothy 2:2)

As we become more like Jesus, the natural outcome is that people will begin to see more of Jesus in us. Our focus shifts from self-centeredness to Christ-centeredness. We move from wanting a name for ourselves to making a big deal of the name of Jesus (John 3:30). We have no desire to be a holding tank. Our desire is to be a launching pad. We want to be a church that equips people to make a big deal of Jesus. The most important ministry that happens every week doesn't happen when we're gathered together on Sunday. The most important ministry happens as we scatter to where we LIVE (home, street, neighborhood), LEARN (school, university), WORK (boss, employees, co-workers), and PLAY (hobbies, parties, and vacation).

## **GROUPS LEADERSHIP TEAM**

Our leadership team is available to you for support, encouragement, and development. Let us know how you are doing and how we can pray for you.

**Groups Director** - Raina Newman, rnewman@southbrookchurch.com, 704-307-9966

**Discovery Group Leads** - Warren & Cindy Barber, warrencbarber@gmail.com & cindybarber0626@gmail.com

**Mixed Groups Leader & Participant Coaches** - Vito and Debra D'Attoma, dattoma2004@gmail.com

**Men's Groups Leader Coach** - Vito D'Attoma, vitodat@gmail.com

**Men's Groups Participant Coach** - Phil Watts, phil.watts@frb.gov

**Women's Groups Leader Coach** - Susan Smith, smsmithsb@gmail.com

**Women's Groups Participant Coach** - Ashley Grant, ashleygrantsb@gmail.com

## **PASTORAL CARE**

Each Group Leader will be assigned to a Pastor. Our Pastors are here to provide shepherding and care to our Group Leaders and Group members. When necessary, please get permission to share any confidential information with the Pastors from your Group members.

## DISCIPLESHIP MODEL



# Discipleship @ Southbrook

Discipleship is the lifelong process through which we become more like Jesus. As we engage in **Discipleship Environments**, the Holy Spirit accomplishes a work of **Inner Transformation** which is authenticated by **Outward Expression**.

### The **Discipleship Environments** we prioritize



#### **LARGE GATHERINGS**

God-Exalting Worship  
Gospel-Centered Teaching

#### **SMALL GROUPS**

Understanding and Applying  
the Truth of God's Word

#### **PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP**

Knowing and Experiencing  
God Individually

### The **Inner Transformation** we pray for



#### **SALVATION**

Accurately Understanding  
and Genuinely Responding  
to the Gospel

#### **SURRENDER**

Embracing the Lordship of  
Jesus in Every Area of Life

#### **SACRIFICE**

Denying Self for the Sake  
of God's Kingdom

### The **Outward Expression** we practice



#### **GROWING**

Spiritual Habits  
Accountable Relationships

#### **INVESTING**

Extravagant Generosity  
Sacrificial Service

#### **GOING**

Sharing the Gospel  
Making Disciples

At Southbrook Church, you'll find many opportunities to grow as a disciple and make a big deal of Jesus where you live, learn, work, and play. We understand that knowing where to start can be a bit overwhelming. To help with this, our Discipleship Model clearly outlines the framework for discipleship at Southbrook Church.

### **1. WE PRIORITIZE DISCIPLESHIP ENVIRONMENTS.**

#### **Large Gatherings (primarily our weekly service)**

In our weekly services, we are intentional about creating an environment of **God-Exalting Worship**, which prepares our hearts to receive **Gospel-Centered Preaching**. If we are going to grow as disciples and be equipped to live as disciples, we must not forsake gathering together as a body of believers. (Psalm 99:5; 138:2; 1 Corinthians 1:23, 2:1-2; 2 Timothy 4:2; Hebrews 10:24-25)

## **Small Groups (Community Groups & Discipleship Groups)**

### **Community Groups**

Spending time with a smaller group of people is essential to discipleship, because it's there that we can develop a better understanding of the truth of God's word and how it applies to our everyday lives. We offer a wide variety of Community Groups aligned with our "Groups Strategy", including men's, women's, mixed – and Discovery groups!

(Acts 2:42-47)

Community Group Leaders play a vital role by intentionally identifying, developing, and launching new leaders to go and lead their own groups. Community group leaders have the mindset to not just maintain groups, but to release leaders to start new Community groups.

### **Discipleship Groups**

Where as all of our environments provide an opportunity for spiritual growth, we feel the greatest maturity as disciples happen in smaller groups of 3-5 people. We call these Discipleship Groups. In these gender specific groups, the Bible is read regularly, prayer is practiced, sin is confessed, and the lost are prayed for by name. These groups meet weekly for a period of 9-12 months. After this time, each member of the Discipleship Group will multiply their influence by starting their own group.

### **Personal Relationship**

Large gatherings and small groups are vital to discipleship, but discipleship doesn't depend on those things. If it did, we'd be in trouble when circumstances prevented us from participating for a time. At its core, discipleship is about knowing and experiencing God individually, so we encourage everyone to pursue a vibrant personal relationship with God. (Revelation 3:20, John 15:5)

## **2. WE PRAY FOR INNER TRANSFORMATION.**

We can't make ourselves become more like Jesus. But when we prioritize discipleship environments, and then pray for inner transformation, we invite the Holy Spirit to do what only He can do: transform us! The inner transformation that takes place as we become – and then grow as – disciples is marked by:

**Salvation** – salvation takes place when we accurately understand and genuinely respond to the Gospel. Although salvation occurs on a specific day, the Gospel continues to shape everything about how we live each subsequent day. (Acts 2:37-38, Philippians 1:27)

**Surrender** – the decision to put our faith in Jesus is one of surrender. That one-time decision plays out over the rest of our lives, as the Holy Spirit shows us areas of our lives in which we still need to embrace the Lordship of Jesus. (Colossians 3:5-10)

**Sacrifice** – as we become more like Jesus through the Holy Spirit's work of inner transformation, our priorities and desires become more aligned with His. We therefore develop a willingness to deny ourselves for the sake of God's Kingdom. (Luke 9:23)

## **3. WE PRACTICE OUTWARD EXPRESSION.**

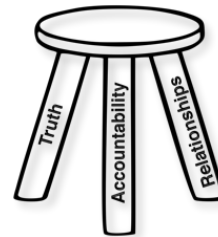
### **Growing (spiritual habits and accountable relationships)**

Establishing healthy **spiritual habits** is one of the most important ways we grow as disciples. For most people, spending regular time with God in prayer and Bible reading is the primary way they pursue a

vibrant personal relationship with God. Many other spiritual habits, such as meditation, fasting, silence and solitude, are also helpful.

We believe it is impossible to grow as a disciple apart from **authentic biblical community**. The Bible tells us that we were never meant to live life alone; we were created for relationships. At Southbrook Church, Community Groups are the primary means through which we establish **accountable relationships**. A healthy Community Group is made up of 3 equally vital components:

- **Truth** - All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- **Accountability** - And let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds. (Hebrews 10:24)
- **Relationships** - Having so fond an affection for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us. (1 Thessalonians 2:8)



### **Investing (Extravagant Generosity and Sacrificial Service)**

Jesus had a lot to say about money. Of all the things that compete for our attention and affection, money is among the most dangerous. This is why Jesus said, "Where your treasure is there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:21) This verse makes it clear that what we do with our money doesn't just indicate where our heart is. It also determines where our heart goes. If we truly want to develop a heart for the things of God, we've got to give our money to things that are close to God's heart.

The Bible tells us that the church is the primary vehicle of taking the Gospel to the world (Matthew 16:18). This is why we believe the local church is the priority when it comes to our giving. Seeing that God is the owner and we're the stewards, healthy disciples are to practice **Extravagant Generosity** when it comes to giving. This is not the only place we're to give. We believe it's the place to start. Our giving should be regular, generous, and sacrificial. (Proverbs 3:9; John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 8:2-3; 9:6-8; 1 Timothy 6:18)

The body of Christ (i.e. the Church) will never be a fully functioning body without every member doing their part. This is why it is so important that each and every one of us finds a place to serve within the walls of the church. Because God has gifted each of us, we glorify Him and bless His Church through **Sacrificial Service**. There are plenty of opportunities to serve inside Southbrook Church. Our primary serve opportunities and needs are on Sunday morning. Therefore, we encourage everyone to worship one service and serve one service. There are additional ways to serve.

To learn more, visit our website. If you're not sure how God has gifted you, you can take a Spiritual Gifts test at [southbrookchurch.com/serve](http://southbrookchurch.com/serve) (Mark 10:45; Colossians 1:29; Philippians 2:5-8; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27).

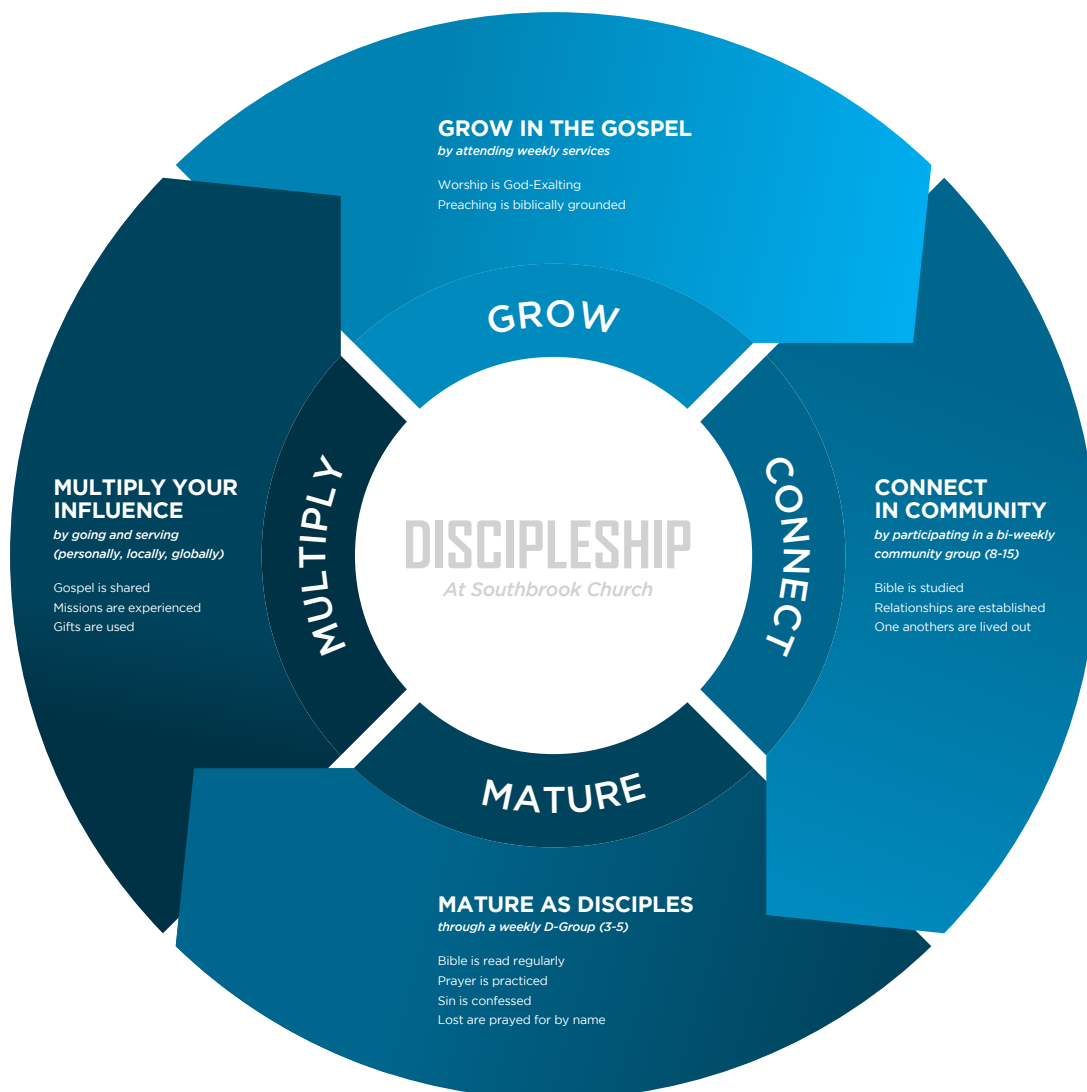
## Going (Sharing the Gospel and Making Disciples)

The command to “make disciples” (Matthew 28:18-20) is for every follower of Jesus. The statement LIVE, LEARN, WORK, and PLAY is meant to remind us that wherever we go and whatever we do, we’re to be on mission. To always be looking for opportunities to be a **Radical Witness** for Jesus.

Truth isn’t just learned, it’s also lived. If we’re to grow as disciples of Jesus, we’ve got to make following Jesus a way of life. We need to live with **Prayerful Dependence** on God while living on mission. In our neighborhoods, around the ball fields, at the local grocery store, or halfway around the world, we are giving our life away for the sake of the Gospel. (Romans 5:8; 1 Peter 3:15-16; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; John 3:16)

## DISCIPLESHIP MAP

The **Discipleship Map** is a tool to help assist us on our journey as disciples. It serves to encourage us to never grow stagnant, but to always be growing deeper as disciples as we make disciples.





## **ROLE OF COMMUNITY GROUP LEADER**

Community Group leaders play a vital role at Southbrook! You are held to a high level of accountability and responsibility. You don't have to be perfect, but you cannot take the group anywhere you're not willing to go yourself. We do expect you to commit to grow in your faith and embrace your opportunities as a leader at Southbrook.

### **Requirements**

- ☐ Member of Southbrook Church via Discovery Group (signed covenant)
- ☐ Serving Application Process
  - Background checks - conducted every 2 years
  - Child Protection Policy training and sign-off
  - References
  - Interview

### **Qualifications**

- FAITH - Faithful, Available, Intentional, Teachable, Humble
- The profile of a leader - Heart, Character, Skills
- Living life on Mission
- A love for people and helping them grow as a disciple
- Passion to raise up leaders
- Intentional about making disciples
- Good problem solving and conflict resolution skills

### **Expectations**

- **SHEPHERD & CARE FOR YOUR GROUP MEMBERS**
  - You and your Group are the first line of defense
  - Pray for each Group Member daily
  - Invite others to join your Group
  - Be available to serve and lead Group Members
  - Utilize the Group Leader Resources
  - Use SEND (**S**cripture, **E**ncourage, **N**ext Steps, **D**evelop)
  - Communicate expectations to your Group
- **GROUP MEMBER ADMINISTRATOR**
  - Promptly follow through on sign-ups and inquiries regarding your Group
  - Manage your Group Member roster with your Groups Leader Coach
  - Facilitate regular meetings with your Group
  - Be available for a check-in at least once a month with your Groups Leader Coach
  - Promptly respond to the requests of your Groups Leader Coach

- **PROMOTE GROUP SERVING OPPORTUNITIES**
  - Discuss and identify serving opportunities for your Group
  - Attend and help host Groups Connect events
- **COMMIT TO ENGAGE IN REGULAR SPIRITUAL HABITS, TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES AND CHURCH-WIDE INITIATIVES**
  - Consistent in personal spiritual habits, and soul care
  - Attend annual Group Leader Trainings/Meetings (orientation, on-going training, quarterly meetings)
  - Attend Church-wide Leadership Gatherings
  - Model the values of Southbrook Church and ensure that your Group reflects those values in all areas
  - Support and participate in periodic Church-wide initiatives as it involves Groups for the purpose of unification
- **MULTIPLICATION & DISCIPLE-MAKING**
  - Identify potential leaders who can eventually launch their own Group
  - Intentionally develop leaders to equip them to be prepared to lead their own Group
  - Help connect others to Community Groups
- **TIME COMMITMENT**
  - Typically an average of 2-4 hours per week (prep, meetings, reaching out to members, etc.)

### **Stepping Down Considerations**

- ☐ Pray about why you're being led to step down
- ☐ Start a conversation with your Groups Leader Coach
- ☐ Is there a group member that can take lead of your Group?

### **GROUP LEADER RESOURCES**

- Group Leader Email from Raina
- Group Leader Resource Page
  - This is a resource for all Group Leaders to utilize as an equipping tool.
  - Link: <https://www.southbrookchurch.com/group-leader-resources>
  - Passcode: VGresources!
- Southbrook Resource Guide
- Community Resource Guide

## **TOP 5 CHARACTERISTICS OF A HEALTHY GROUP**

1. Commitment (ownership, participation, responsibility)
2. Connectedness (vulnerability, trust, one another)
3. Missional (praying for the lost, serving others)
4. Developing Leaders (investing in others, raising up leaders)
5. Spiritual Growth (accountability, scripture memorization, spiritual disciplines)

## **S-E-N-D**

Throughout the Bible, God made it clear we are to share the Gospel with others. We are made to be sent into the world to bring the good news to all (Matthew 28:19-20) and we are to equip others to do the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:12). We are to teach others just as we have been taught ourselves by someone else (2 Timothy 2:1-2). We have the ultimate privilege and responsibility to offer someone else the same community as we were given! Together, let's **SEND** the members of our Group to make disciples who make a big deal of Jesus where we live, learn, work, and play!

- **Scripture:** "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." - 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Through scripture we get to know who God is and how His Word can be transformational in our lives. God's Word is sufficient, infallible, authoritative, reliable, convicting, and is full of wisdom and promises. Knowing God, understanding, and practicing His Word is so important to our growth and maturity in Christ. Reading, studying and memorizing scripture should be a discipline within Groups and applying the truths of God's word in everyday life.

*"I know of no other single practice in the Christian life more rewarding, practically speaking, than memorizing scripture....No other single exercise pays greater spiritual dividends! Your prayer life will be strengthened. Your witnessing will be sharper and much more effective. Your attitudes and outlook will begin to change. Your mind will become alert and observant. Your confidence and assurance will be enhanced. Your faith will be solidified." - Chuck Swindoll*

- **Encourage:** "Therefore encourage one another with these words." - 1 Thessalonians 4:18

The word "each other" translates to *allelon* in Greek and it is used 58 times in the New Testament! We were created to do life with *one another* and we aren't meant to do life alone. We are to care for one another (1 Cor. 12:25), pray for one another (James 5:16), love one another (John 13:34), serve one another (Galatians 5:13), build up one another (Romans 14:19), and much more! Encouraging members of your group may look different from one person to the next.

Here are just a few ways you can encourage one another:

- Reach out to ask for prayer requests and praises
  - Share a devotion/scripture/article during the week
  - Send texts/emails/voice messages/handwritten notes
  - Share wins and celebrate
  - Encourage all members to live out the “one anothers”
  - Empowering members to reach out to others in Group
  - Commit to praying for one another
  - Invest in one another
- **Next Steps:** “And he said to them all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.” - Luke 9:23

To become a disciple of Jesus we have to deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Jesus. Taking the next steps to follow Jesus may look differently for everyone because each person will be on their own spiritual journey. However, the primary next step would be to be a part of a Discipleship Group. Help encourage the members in your group to take their “next step”!

Here are practical examples of *Next Steps* you can help them take:

- Be a part of a Discipleship Group
  - Attend Sunday services
  - Pursue Salvation
  - Sign up for Baptism
  - Attend a Discovery Group
  - Give
  - Serve
  - Go on a Missions Trip
  - Seek an Accountability Partner/Mentor
  - Invite others
  - Disciple others
  - Pray regularly
  - Read Bible regularly
  - Seek to know God & His Attributes More Fully
  - Increase in Knowledge at the Work of Salvation in Our Lives
  - Start a Community Group
- **Develop:** “and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. ” - 2 Timothy 2:2

We are always looking to pass on what we have been taught to faithful people who can serve as leaders.

Developing an apprentice starts with asking them to lead alongside you:

- **Model:** Have your apprentice watch as you do the ministry, just as Jesus did with his disciples (Matthew 9:32-38). Let them see a highly effective group leader in action.
- **Mentor:** Ask your apprentice to take over some responsibilities or lead various aspects of your group as you watch, assist, correct, and encourage - again, just as Jesus did with his disciples (Matthew 10:1).
  - **KNOWLEDGE** - What is it that we need you to learn?:
    - How to care for your group
    - How to facilitate a group
    - How to lead through difficult conversations
    - How to have healthy conflict resolution
  - **EXPERIENCE** - Five steps to develop your apprentice:
    - Step 1: I do. You watch. We talk.
    - Step 2: I do. You help. We talk.
    - Step 3: You do. I help. We talk.
    - Step 4: You do. I watch. We talk.
    - Step 5: You do. Someone else watches.
  - **COACHING** - Questions to ask when “We talk”:
    - What did you observe?
    - How did this step make you feel?
    - What could be done better or differently next time?
    - What can I do to help you successfully lead through the next step?
    - How can I pray for you?
- **Motivate:** Speak life into your apprentice and encourage them to act on the potential that God has placed inside of them and allow the Holy Spirit to move. (Matthew 16:16-19).
- **Multiply:** When you feel like the apprentice is in a good stage to step out of the apprentice role and into one of complete leadership, start making the transition into a new season.
  - ☐ Notify the Groups Leader Coach
  - ☐ Map out timeframe of the transition
  - ☐ Celebrate with Group
  - ☐ Repeat and raise up the next leader