

How to lead

Disciple-Making
Small Group

Small Groups are communities of 6-10 people that are centered on Jesus, and designed to grow and multiply.

They meet at different times throughout the week and are places where scripture is opened, prayers are prayed, meals are eaten and community is built.

Small Groups have been a foundational part of church life ever since Jesus started one and commanded His followers to do the same.

At Open Heaven, they help us love God, love each other and love the world. Ultimately, they help us make disciples who establish heaven on earth.

— *Here is how to lead a Disciple-Making Small Group* —

Values

Jesus Centred
Everyone Serves
Discipleship
Community
Mission & Multiplication

John 14:6
1 Corinthians 12
Matthew 16:24-26
Acts 2:42-47
Matthew 28:16-20

There are a number of ways to structure a Small Group meeting in order that it's full of purpose, reflects the values and easy to lead and reproduce.

This model is called the four W's.

The Four W's...

Welcome

Worship

Word

Witness

Top Tip

If you're a new group, you might want to spend more time investing in this area to build relationships and community.

Welcome

Sets the tone for your time together. This helps people feel relaxed, included, connected to one another and focused on the time ahead.

Examples: sharing food, playing games, sharing highlights/lowlights of the week, stories of seeing God on the move.

Welcome
Worship
Word
Witness

Top Tip

Don't compromise on this section if there are curious or exploring people in the group; worship and spiritual encounter is inviting

Worship

Invite God's presence. This puts Jesus at the centre of your time together and sets the expectation that the Small Group will be a place of encounter.

Examples: communion, sung worship, silence, speaking out scripture (Psalms), artwork.

Welcome
Worship
Word
Witness

Top Tip

If we're not careful, this section can quickly just become an intellectual exercise.

We want the Word of life to transform us. Consider carefully how we allow scripture to inspire challenge and bring revelation to our lives.

Word

Invite the living word to transform us with its truth. This ensures we grow in our understanding of the Bible and who God is.

Examples: Discovery Bible Study, Lectio Devina or other Bible reading tools.

Welcome
Worship
Word
Witness

Top Tip

The role of the group is to empower us to be sharing God with friends and those around us. We need to be filled with the Holy Spirit to be carriers of His fire.

Witness

Focus our attention on sharing our faith and making disciples. It moves us to look outwardly and to put our faith into practice.

Examples: host an Alpha, mission on the streets, opening up your home for friends, keeping each other accountable in sharing our faith or prayer for our frontlines.

The Role of a Small Group Leader

Carry the vision for the Small Group

Raise up new leaders

Encourage everyone's contribution

Form and build community

Be an active part of Open Heaven

i.e attend gatherings and key events

Receive support and access training

Pastoral Care

In Small Groups, lives are shared. Part of that will include the role of pastorally caring for one another. There is a limit to what support a Small Group can offer pastorally (e.g. support for birth of a child, a stressful week, a new job can be covered by the Small Group, whereas support for shocking life events such as death / divorce requires greater support outside of the Small Group). We have a Pastoral Team at Open Heaven who can help in such occurrences.

As a Small Group Leader, you may or may not be the person who takes a lead on pastoral care in the group, however, it is your responsibility to ensure that the support is in place. You can contact your Small Group support to get this care in place.

Small Groups are also a place where safeguarding concerns can occur. Please follow our [Safeguarding training process and procedures](#). Our website has all necessary information.

You were never designed to do this journey alone.

There's a pathway for you that
will help you become more like
Jesus and make other
disciples.

The Bible Project
Bible for Life
Enduring Word

[Helpful Resources](#)