



Leader's Guide

My Bayside Group Coach

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Group Leadership

We appreciate you!

The Lord of the harvest has chosen you, appointed you to lead and that your fruit would remain and anything you ask the Father in His name, He will provide it to you. So if you feel less than confident about your “yes,” know that you are actually in partnership with the Lord Jesus and He has provided the Holy Spirit to help you as you lead others in these spaces. We are so thankful for your willingness to help others grow in their relationship with God and provide a space for His church to grow in biblical community.

The Purpose

The purpose of groups at Bayside is to create environments where people can enter into community, find family, practice “one anothering,” and grow into a deeper relationship with God our Father. This is disciple-making; helping others to know Jesus, follow Jesus, love Jesus, becoming more like Jesus and help others do the same.

You Matter!

In Exodus, we see God has his hands full in trying to pull together a nation set apart for his Holy purposes. There is a lot going on. But one thing comes through this book with respect to Moses and how God interacts with Him. He considers the thoughts and feelings of Moses. God has to build trust in Moses. He helps him to overcome fear, learn to organize his energy, manage complaints, and deal with rebellion. God gets very personal with him, calls Moses into his presence to be alone with Him. And so it is with us, we need those alone times in the counsel of Almighty God. Lean into your relationship with the Father first, he cares for you.

Remember your own soul care. Soul Care is you taking regard to the health and care of your mind, emotions, and the decisions of your will. To allow the Lord to care, heal, and speak to your heart to live in freedom. It looks different for everyone, but simple and pure devotion to Christ, means you are in the Word, praying and worshiping. *As you prepare your group time, internalize the lessons for your own benefit and you will see how it will benefit your group. Spend time with your coach who is there to encourage you.*

Forms of Leadership

Leadership can take on many forms: teaching, guiding, encouraging, counseling, coaching etc. As a group leader, co-leader, host or facilitator, we want to keep your role simple. For each semester you lead, you will be responsible for creating a welcoming environment, inviting people to join your group and focus on the relationships in the group over the material. We want you to be prepared with the material, but most importantly focus on building community.

Group Leader: *Group leaders will have fulfilled all leadership requirements which include completing the 3-step Growth Track, Freedom Group, Freedom weekend event, & the 2-part Bayside Leader Training.*

Whether you lead a study or an activity, you should set the tone, pace & atmosphere for biblical community where we listen and care for each other and move towards unity. We ask that you plan a **service project** and at least one **fun social event** outside of the group time because serving and having fun are great ways to learn about each other and grow in community. Another simple tool is the “Get to Know” questions, because the curriculum isn’t the goal, people are the goal.

Group Host: *You will have fulfilled part of the leadership requirements which include completing MyBayside and MyFamily in the Growth Track, and attending the Global Leader Training.*

Group Hosts are a type of Leader in Training. These individuals should be actively growing in their leadership and in doing so they should work on observing how to teach a specific curriculum and fulfilling the remainder of the leadership requirements. Group Hosts are those interested in leading and trying it out, or only choosing to help with a larger mid-size group. While the Leader leads the study, or activity, you may be called upon to facilitate discussions or help in other ways depending on the nature of your group. Behind the scenes, you may be asked to help with the seating, lighting, room temperature, or you may help plan the group service projects and social events.

All our leaders are responsible for the care of the people God places around them. The Leader cares for the entire group. Group Hosts care for the portion of the group that is assigned to them.

Your Ministry Leader or Coach: Your Ministry Leader or Coach are well-equipped and trained to serve & encourage you on a more personal level. They are there to encourage and be a resource for you as you lead your group. They are essential to the health and success of our groups. We want to be sure you are cared for and supported, that is why we recommend setting up regular meetings with them.

Leader Responsibilities

Prepare and Lead your group meetings - Familiarize yourself with the topics, prepared questions, worship, room setup, etc. Read any announcements or notices from your coach or campus leadership to provide to members.

Attend All Training Meetings at Your Campus - This would consist of but not limited to think like regular huddles and special events for leaders. Stay connected with your Coach & Group Director for knowing what’s upcoming for you as a leader or host, at your campus.

Track the Needs of Group Members - You will often be the first line of spiritual defense in the lives of your group members. It will be your responsibility (along with your host) to keep in touch with the spiritual pulse of the people in your group.

Communicate Special Needs Up-Line to Your Coach and/or Pastors - It's possible that some issues will surface in your group or in a member's life that are beyond your experience, expertise, or comfort zone. In that case, communicate your concerns up to either your coach or one of your campus group staff members for guidance or additional help.

Complete Weekly Attendance in Planning Center Recording attendance is very important! They not only help us track who is in a group; they also help the pastoral staff keep an overall pulse on the groups as a whole. Planning Center will notify you 10 minutes before your group's start time via text and it will be easy to take attendance from your phone. This helps us as a church to care for the sheep well and to know the status of our flock.

Visit Members in the Hospital When a crisis or major illness hits, we want you to know that you are empowered to spring into action with your group. As a small group leader you need to be sure that you and others from the group are available for prayer and support. Utilize your co-leaders or host to arrange for meal trains or other ways to practically help those in need.

Who are you Leading?

Anyone that signs up, shows up and anyone you can drag there...right?

It's about the Invitation. First, people in your group do not have to be Baysiders! Invite your friends, neighbors, family, co-workers! This is the call to the new testament church in scripture and the overall power of "biblical community." Who do you know that might benefit from being in community? Reach out to them. Keep reaching out to them. A personal invite goes a long way! Also, let your group members know they can invite friends to the group at any time!

During the year Bayside has 3 launch seasons, Spring, Summer and Fall we use 1-2 weekends to highlight the Groups Ministry and encourage people to join groups. However, word of mouth is the most effective way to communicate that we have room in our Groups for anyone and everyone. Whenever you are with others, let them know how much you enjoy being in a group and ask them if they are having the same experience, as if they should! And if they are not in a group, invite them. "Are you in a group? Would you like to be in mine?" We encourage you and your members to use these questions to keep the community wide open for whoever God may bring.

Note: You need to work on your roster as if it is an invitation list. Typically less than 50% of people on the roster actually attend. Some get cold feet and need your encouragement, a call or text. Others may have signed up for several groups and have chosen to attend another group. It is important for you to discover who is on your roster and remove any who have decided not to come.

It's all about the People! You are leading people. People with stories. Most stories are epic, long journeys. Some are just beginning full of anticipation, some have been through tough roads, and some are victors. Know their stories. In this way, God can cause your leadership to become relevant and life changing.

WHO is actually Leading?

Remember, you are not alone, God is actually leading this thing! So let's talk with Him!

Prayer is simply talking to God. Moses is a great picture to remember the power of prayer for us. He would talk to God about his fear of leading, and God was so kind to that request he provided him with Aaron to co-lead. He intercedes for his people, the Israelites and every time God would listen and respond to Moses and to those Moses was leading. God hears your prayers as well!

Set aside time to go to God about your group. Each week different needs will arise in your group. Ask the Lord how he wants you to pray for them. Ask Him how he might want you to encourage them. Ask God for good questions to ask them, as Jesus asked the perfect questions to reveal and heal the hearts of many.

Group Prayer: Guide your group in prayer. Some may not know how to pray. Open and close your group time with simple prayers. You can ask for volunteers to pray, but be ready to do it yourself if others are too nervous. Remember, You are modeling for them how to pray when you do this. Also, Try to avoid a laundry list of prayers. You can consider launching a text thread for prayer requests so that it keeps this time of prayer simple and approachable.

If members are not familiar with prayer, consider sending them one of the Equip videos on Prayer.
equip.mybayside.church

Group Guidelines

Group Guidelines or “Covenant”

For your first meeting, cover these Group Guidelines

Note: Any time someone new shows up is also a good time for a quick review of these suggested guidelines.

Bayside Groups: Our Basic Purpose

Bayside Groups exist to develop in us a heart of discipleship. This reminds us that we are always a disciple, and we can be used to disciple others. Each group is an environment and model of biblical community centered around Jesus, the study of God's Word, and the unifying of the body (see Hebrews 10:24-25; Romans 8:29).

Sharing

Each week, we will create space to get to know one another, share what is happening in our lives, and learn more about Jesus. Initially, this will include some prompted "get to know questions." Our prayer is that after the first few weeks, this will become more personal as the group feels safer and more comfortable to share as brothers and sisters in Christ. This is what discipleship looks like

Study

Each week we'll review and reflect on God's Word that relates to the previous weekend's sermon or in the curriculum we are studying. Our objective is towards growing together, internalizing the truth in our hearts, and living out our faith daily. We want to grow in experiencing God's love and presence as well as demonstrating God's love towards others in our relationships. This is what discipleship looks like.

Support

Each week, we'll explore what it means to take care of one another as Christ commanded (see John 15:9-13). We will demonstrate care towards each other as we listen to each other's needs, meet each other's needs if possible, and encourage one another by “spurring one another on” (Hebrews 10:24-25) in prayer, words of encouragement, and actions. This is what discipleship looks like.

Five Marks of a Healthy Group

For our group to be healthy, we need to:

1. Focus on spiritual growth as a top priority (Romans 8:29);
2. Accept one another in love just as Christ has accepted us (Romans 15:7);
3. Take care of one another in love with good boundaries to not become someone's savior (remember they already have one), counseling (talk to your Groups Coach or Director if someone may need additional support such as this.) or taking inappropriate responsibility for solving the problems of others (John 13:34).
4. Treat one another with honor & respect in both speech and action. Lead with a “No-Condemnation” (Romans 8:1) posture by an equal balance of Truth & Grace.

5. Encourage one another to keep coming back, keep confidence a high priority among one another, and above all else “guard your heart” (Proverbs 4:23, Psalm 15:1-2, 4b).

Children and Childcare

If anyone in your group has young children, for kindness sake, make sure to communicate your expectations for whether or not children are welcome. Here are some suggestions for childcare. Check with your Director/Coach for other ideas.

- Incorporate children into your group.
- Group members can rotate attending to let children come to their home for the evening.
- Combine the group's resources to hire a sitter. (The children can be at a member's home or in another part of the leader's home.)
- Online connection - If the issue of childcare cripples connection, consider having a Google Meet, or Zoom link available for those that couldn't make it to the group in person.

Leader Tips Before They Come...

Group Sign-ups

Join the mission with an invitation. “Are you in a group?” “Would you like to be in mine?” Take ownership that you are the church. You can lead in communication and do so by communicating often. Watch your email for Group Sign-ups and Requests to Join. Make sure you get everyone's email and phone number. Email your group through the Church Center group manager.

As members request to join your group, please send a short email welcoming them. Respond to their comments or questions, if there are any, and let them know you are wanting to get to know them. Remind them of the day, time and address. If there are any special parking situations or travel directions, make sure to communicate, communicate, communicate those and all details. Clarity is Kindness.

On the day of your group, shoot everyone a quick text saying, “*I'm looking forward to meeting you, or seeing you at group today.*” As life gets busy it's simply a kind gesture to remind them weekly until a good healthy rhythm is built.

Preparing the Environment

You know your home well, but your guests will experience it through new eyes. It's important to create a space that is welcoming and comfortable for everyone. Here are some tips and ideas on how to foster a spirit of hospitality.

- Make sure things are generally clean and uncluttered.
- Provide enough seating, unless revival breaks out. In that case, I don't think anyone will have a problem with standing.
- If you have pets, make sure to put them away.

- Check that the bathrooms are clean and ready for guests.
- Adjust the room temperature.

If your group is not meeting in your home, be sure to arrive at your group's destination early to set up and create a welcoming, warm, and joyful environment. Try to be early enough so that members of the group are not waiting for you. Consider tidying up after to ensure the environment is as welcoming when you arrive, if not better.

First Impressions

First impressions sometimes hinge on small details. As your guests arrive, make sure to greet them personally at the door or before they choose a seat. Use their name if you know it. Try to be intentional with introducing them to the other people in the group. Note: Consider having some music going to create an environment that is welcoming and then you will help remove any awkward silence one may experience or feel.

Start with an ice breaker question or have a light discussion, because the main purpose is to build community and get to know one another.

Group Values in Every Gathering

This is how we build biblical community:

Be Real

Being real refers to two things:

1. Being our real selves
2. Presenting the real message of Jesus.

People today are searching for authenticity more than ever in our culture. They are looking for real love, real hope, real vulnerability, and real friends. This is most likely deep down why they signed up for your group. NOT to gain knowledge, hear more information, or a new teaching or information.

When you as the Group leader or Group host open up about your Highs and Lows, doubts and fears, joys and sorrows, you are modeling authenticity. This is the real message of Jesus, that He meets us in these places. He is a deeply personal God. Vulnerability is your superpower. It can lower defenses and give permission for others to share freely about where they're at—both in life and in their relationship with God. Often this is how genuine friendships are formed. This posture of authenticity and vulnerability will open the door for others in your group to follow your example and be an authentic version of themselves with you.

People may admire confidence and strength, but they **connect deeply** around openness and honesty.

Be Relational

1 Thessalonians 2:8, Paul writes to people in Thessalonica, *“Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God, but our lives as well.”*

As you open up your heart and invite your group into your life, deep and genuine friendships will be formed over time. It’s been said that “none of this works unless God shows up!”

Rely on the Holy Spirit

There are two key areas where relying on the Holy Spirit is crucial:

1. **Prayer** - Praying for the members of your group and the moments of prayer we will have during our group are both critical moments where we are inviting the Holy Spirit to come and do what only He can do. Don’t disregard this powerful gift we have in prayer.
2. **Trust** - We rely on Him week to week in the small group discussion times. Trust Him to guide the conversations and reveal truth in our hearts and lives. Depend on the Holy Spirit to be the one to stir up change rather than relying on your own ideals or persuasiveness.

1 Corinthians 2:4-5, *“My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God’s power.”*

Our hope and prayer is that everything we do would rest on God’s power, not on our persuasive words or human wisdom. Thankfully, God uses imperfect people to be a part of what He is doing!

Reproduce by Empowering Others

Empowering others and equipping them to serve Jesus and impact others is a vital part of being a group leader. We do this by inviting group members to participate in things like: leading in prayer, asking them to lead one of the questions, and simply encouraging them to share week to week.

Ask the Lord for his eyes and he will show you those who seem to be energized when you ask them to get involved, or maybe you just see it in them. Having that “I see in you” conversation is a vital way to “call out” the ministry inside of someone. From there, be sure to introduce them to your coach.

Ending Well

Keep people informed on when the group is coming to an end at the semester. You may want to end your group with a party, maybe a pot-luck meal or something fun. This is a great time to reflect with your group on what revelation they received through this semester that has challenged them or changed them. It is very important to consider that you may be the only model of Jesus that people in your group have ever experienced. You may have encouraged them, prayed for them, and celebrated them. These moments cannot be minimized or overlooked how vital it is to the empowering journey of each Christ

follower. As you reflect on this thought, it is very important to understand your voice in your group's life matters at the end so much more than at the beginning. This is why we encourage you to have a conversation towards the end of your group asking them where they feel God is leading them next? (Ex: Finish the Growth track, serve on a team, continue on with the same group, try a different group out.)

In the bonding of the group you can make plans for your next group and invite them to be apart, or it's a great time to see if someone from your group wants to lead a group themselves. Walk with them through that process. We are family, we don't leave one another. In all of these discipleship moments and conversations be sure to keep your coach in the know so they can be praying and assisting you in that process. We are better together!

Planning Center

Introducing Planning Center

Planning Center is a tool that empowers Group Leaders to manage their group(s). Once your group is approved and added to the database you will receive an email from Planning Center letting you know you have been made a leader of the group. You are able to add members and take attendance, and email your members as well as update your meeting times and location if that tends to change. Features allow you to schedule your meetings with notification reminder emails that you can write up and you can also add any resources for your group members. These might include a link to a video, PDF, photos, etc.

As a Group Leader begin utilizing this tool with the following:

1. The link provided will help you to create a password to login.
2. You will be directed to Bayside.ChurchCenter.com You will need your phone to log in, as it will send you a text with a code.
3. If you need to update your profile at any time, you can click on the person icon at the top right of the page.
4. At the top of the page you will be able to view the groups that you are in.
5. All you need to do to view your group is to click on the group's image.
6. Please review your group's settings. If any corrections are needed, you can use the Manage Group on Planning Center button.

Tasks Leaders can do within the system. Prospects can search and view groups in the GroupFinder along with schedule and location.

Leaders can:

- Change time and location
- Easily add and remove members
- Email the group or group text them (include yourself to receive the communication so you have a copy)
- Create your schedule and set up notification emails
- Add any one-off events for any get-togethers outside of your group time.
- Add helpful resources for your group members or to just share with co-leaders.

Watch your email!

Once someone signs up to request to join your group an **email will arrive in your box!** Just click on the button to view your group. You will have the opportunity to add or to add the

person to your group. This is helpful if you are leading a women's group and a man signs up accidentally.

Follow-Up Call or Text

The more you follow up with your members and interact with texts or emails, the more they will appreciate you! It is a very meaningful thing as no one really checks in on people on a regular basis to just see how you are doing.

How do I handle the number of signups for my group?

A great feature of Planning Center is that you can provide your Groups Staff at your campus any capacity limits you might have. They will be happy to enter in that number so that the group will automatically close. Or if you want to close enrollment on a certain date, we can do that as well.

Attendance, very important!

10 minutes prior to your meeting, an attendance reminder will be sent to you. Just open it up and check people in as they come into your group. There is also a place to add any visitors or guests to the group! If you did not meet, there is a place to record that as well. We really appreciate your efforts on this. The Leadership of Bayside desires that people get connected in groups to experience community life and this helps us to see how well we are doing!

How do I apply for a group moving forward? We want to make sure you are successful and have the information you need to lead in future semesters. Each semester you will receive an email from Bayside Groups Team letting you know the semester dates and directing you to BaysideGroups.com to fill-in an application to lead a group. If you are continuing the same group for another semester, we will just extend your group. Please let your staff know so we do not end up archiving your group.

Who do I contact if I have questions?

Always contact your coach first and if they cannot answer your question, they will point you in the right direction.

Group Checkpoint

Group Checkpoint is a way to measure the number of people we have connected in smaller communities within our larger population.

We will choose a date during the semester and email that to you. Prior to that date, all we ask is that you go into your group account and clean up your group roster. Add any new members to your roster. Remove anyone that has not chosen to stay connected.

It's that simple!