



New Story Church Small Group Leader Application

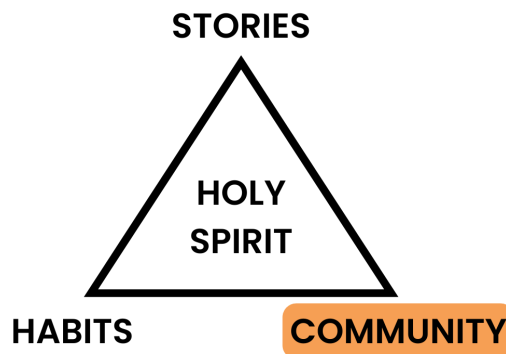
Leading a Small Group is a great honor and responsibility. At New Story, we want to honor God and our church by selecting leaders who have the character, knowledge, and skill to effectively pastor others. While we do not expect our leaders to be perfect, we do expect them to be a model for other Christians to follow (e.g. 1 Cor. 4:16-17; 1 Thess. 1:6-7).

Please carefully read the Small Group Leader Role & Responsibilities (pp. 1-2), the New Story Core Doctrines (p. 3), complete the application (p. 4-6), sign the last page (p. 6), and return it to the Pastor of Spiritual Formation & Community Life. Thanks for your interest and willingness in leading a Small Group!

Small Group Leader Role & Responsibilities

At New Story, we see the Small Group leader as the pastor of their group. At its core, pastoring is “nurturing a culture of Christoformity.” A culture is comprised of the beliefs and behaviors characteristic of a group of people. So, in other words, as a Small Group leader, the goal is to create and nurture a culture within the group where people are learning to be with Jesus, become like him, and live like him. We refer to this process as spiritual formation. A simple definition of spiritual formation is “the process of being formed into the image of Christ for the sake of others.” While there are many facets to spiritual formation, we believe that community is a non-negotiable element in the process. The purpose of Small Groups at New Story is to foster environments, or communities, where spiritual formation can take place.

Model of Formation:



So how can a Small Group leader do this effectively? Lead out of their own growth, their own spiritual formation. The most important work of a Small Group leader is taking their own spiritual formation seriously, living with great intention to abide in Christ. The only real metric to determine whether a group is healthy and growing is the posture of the leader toward their own growth. Minimally transformed leaders will always produce minimally transformed people doing minimally transforming ministry.

Beyond tending to your own spiritual formation, here are seven key responsibilities we believe will keep you and your Small Group on track:

1. **Focus on Jesus.** Small Groups aren't community for the sake of community. The purpose of Small Groups is life transformation through encounter with the risen Jesus as we do life alongside others committed to following him.
2. **Create an environment.** We want Small Groups to be welcoming, warm, and safe spaces where people feel comfortable engaging in discussion and sharing about their struggles and wounds without being judged. Sharing a meal is always a good thing too!
3. **Facilitate participation.** Small Groups aren't just a Bible study or a social group. We want these to be environments where people learn about and practice spiritual disciplines together.
4. **Care for the Group.** The primary way that we can meet many needs for people in our church is through our Small Groups (e.g. prayer, meals, financial assistance, house or car issues, etc.). Additional support and resources are always available through our elders, pastors, and Care Team.
5. **Cultivate relationships.** Within Small Groups, relationships are central and key to life transformation. God transforms us through life-on-life relationships with others who are pursuing Christ.
6. **Coordinate serving.** We don't want our Small Groups to become "naval gazers," we want them to also be attentive to the needs of communities in which we live. Once a semester we want our Small Groups to serve together in our communities.
7. **Give away responsibility.** Look for opportunities to hand off leadership and responsibility, especially to potential future small group leaders. Specifically, we want you to identify someone who could be a co-leader and invest in that person(s) to a greater degree than the rest.



NEW STORY CHURCH

NEW STORY CORE DOCTRINES

1. The Bible is inspired by God and the final authority in faith and life.
2. There is one God who exists in three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man.
4. All of humanity is spiritually lost and without hope apart from God's special intervention.
5. The only solution for our spiritually lost state is to be reconciled to God through Jesus Christ, whose death and bodily resurrection make a relationship with God possible.
6. This new relationship with God is a free gift, by grace, and it is offered to all who put their faith in Jesus Christ. It cannot be achieved by good works nor is it given according to race, status, or ability—salvation is through faith alone and by grace alone for all eternity.
7. Jesus Christ will physically return to judge both the living and the dead and to establish his kingdom forever.



NEW STORY SMALL GROUP LEADER APPLICATION

Qualifications

On a scale of one to ten (1 = not at all; 10 = mastery),

How comfortable do you feel communicating the overarching story of the Scriptures? _____

How well do you feel you have mastered the core doctrines of the Christian faith? _____

How confident are you of your ability to clearly share the Gospel with someone else? _____

Describe your past small groups experiences:

Have you ever been trained in how to teach, preach, or lead a discussion? If so, please describe your experience:

Above Reproach

Many of us have pasts that we are not proud of, either because of our own choices, or because of other people's choices. Thankfully, the Lord forgives, forgets, and restores us to health. We want to be sure that you are in a healthy (restored) place regarding the past. These questions may require you to recall painful occurrences. We ask for this information because it is essential in providing the highest level of protection for you and for the vulnerable people you will be serving.

Yes or No Have you ever been the subject of church discipline or asked by church leadership to leave?

- Yes or No Have you over-indulged in alcohol, taken illegal drugs, or been treated for any type of addiction in the past 12 months?
- Yes or No Have you ever been divorced?
- Yes or No If you are married, have you cheated on your spouse?
- Yes or No If you are single, are you currently engaged in sexual activities?
- Yes or No Have you ever been charged with a sexual offense?
- Yes or No Have you ever been charged with illegal business practices?
- Yes or No Have you ever been convicted of a felony?
- Yes or No Do you have any psychological conditions (anxiety, bi-polar, depression, etc.) that might affect your ability to teach or represent New Story?

If you marked "Yes" to any of the above, please explain here:

Levels of Affirmation & Conviction

Our church is truly a mixture of backgrounds, denominations, political persuasions & cultures. We love this and want to nurture this but not at the expense of Truth. We ask that all of our teachers do the following:

- Be in full agreement with our core doctrines. These are laid out in our Core Doctrines.
- In significant matters of interpretation & matters of church practice, agree to submit to the position of the Elders and not promote a contrary position. This would include issues like: the practice of sign gifts, male only eldership, definition of marriage, et al.
- In additional matters where there have been a variety of views held by equally sincere, orthodox Christian groups, allow for a plurality of views. This would include issues like: worship styles, specifics of end times, persistence of sign gifts in the church age, forms of baptism, et al.

- Yes or No Are you in full agreement with the New Story Core Doctrines?
- Yes or No In matters of interpretation & practice not specified in the Core Doctrines, are you willing to submit to the position of the Elders and not promote a contrary view?
- Yes or No Are you willing to allow for a plurality of views on issues that are not covered in the above statements or are specifically deemed a matter of personal conscience by the Elders?

Short Answer

Is there anything (especially doctrines, political positions, interpretations, strong opinions, etc.) that you would like the Elders to know about before you begin publically representing New Story as a small group leader?

Please explain the Gospel:

Please share how you came into a relationship with God:

I affirm that the above is true and I will let the Elders know if for any reason I do not feel like I can meet the qualifications of a small group leader outlined above.

Signature: _____ Date: _____