



Lighthouse Church
Jersey

**Small Groups
&
Leaders**



Lighthouse Church Jersey

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Small Groups & Leaders

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1. Small Groups Matter

Small Groups are essential for Christian growth. Churches and meetings in homes are a central theme throughout the New Testament (*Ac 8:3, Ro 16:3-5, 1Co 16:19, Col 4:15, Phm 1:2*) and in Acts 2 the early Church had large meetings (temple) AND Small Groups (in homes):

"So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved."

(Act 2:46-47)

Note the joy and life they had, and how the Church grew and thrived as a result. We want to emulate this model as much as we can.

a. Small and large

Jesus led a small group - the 12 disciples. This small group were "discipled" (trained and developed), but Jesus also ministered and related to larger gatherings.

The benefits and purposes of both types of meetings can be seen below:

Small Group	Large Meeting
Close Family bonds and relationships	Larger atmosphere and different experience of the Spirit
Pastoral Care	Input of Teachers and other “5-Fold” gifts
All contribute and get more involved	Emphasis on receiving
Individuals use and develop their gifts	Equipping and training through teaching
Discussion and questions	Listen to learn

We believe that BOTH large and small constitute “Church” and are important, and that a Christian cannot grow properly without being in both.

b. Who’s the Pastor?

A large part of Church leadership involves what the Bible calls “Shepherding or Pastoring”.

A Shepherd Leads, Feeds, Guards and Guides (*Ps 23*).

Jesus is our Chief Shepherd and the best example of what a Shepherd is...

“I am the good shepherd” (Jn 10:11,14)

He leads us, watches over us, guides and feeds us (*Jn 10*) and every Christian must be able to say “The Lord is MY Shepherd” - it is a *personal* relationship.

Jesus also appoints “undershepherds” however. These are human leaders who care for God’s people on His behalf. 1 Peter 5 describes this beautifully, naming these “undershepherds” as “Elders”:

"So as your fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings and as one who shares in the glory that will be revealed, I urge the elders among you: Give a shepherd's care to God's flock among you, exercising oversight not merely as a duty but willingly under God's direction, not for shameful profit but eagerly. And do not lord it over those entrusted to you, but be examples to the flock. Then when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that never fades away."

(1Pe 5:1-4 NET)

The Elders in our Church will give an account to God for how we have cared for the people He has entrusted to us, but we as the Elders also share this shepherding responsibility with the Small Group leaders, so that we can all effectively care for God’s people.

So, who is the “Pastor”? The answer is - Jesus is the Pastor, but He delegates this task to individuals in the Church, and Small Group leaders are a vital part of this task. To be properly cared for and disciplined, you must participate in a small group.

c. We need both

The benefits of having both Small and Large Groups are:

- It follows a Biblical pattern in the structure of our Church life;
- We can be part of something bigger - a movement with momentum, but we can also take more personal ownership and involvement in our Small Group;
- We can have access to the 5-fold gifts of the Body of Christ (Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor, Teacher) in the larger meetings, while also being able to fully use and develop our own gifts as we minister to one another in the Small Meetings;
- There is great power and equipping in the large meetings, in corporate worship and teaching, while we can receive close care and a family bond in the Small.

If you don't have both of these Church "legs" in your Spiritual life, you will probably be ineffective and impaired in your Christian walk and may never reach your full potential.

2. A Small Group Leader

Leadership is God's idea (*Rom 13:1*). He designed leadership to

- Represent Him
- Guide people into His ways, and
- Channel His blessing and power to many

*" there is no authority except from God ... the leader is
God's minister to you for good"*

(Rom 13:1,4)

Leadership is not a route to power. God's leaders are humble servants, rather than lording it over others, or acting as if they're better than others.

When we are in unity together, and the different levels of Church leadership are in place, God's blessing flows from the head to the whole body.

*"Look! How good and how pleasant it is when
brothers live together! It is like fine oil poured on the
head which flows down the beard - Aaron's beard,
and then flows down his garments. It is like the dew
of Hermon, which flows down upon the hills of Zion.
Indeed that is where the LORD has decreed a
blessing will be available - eternal life."*

(Psa 133 NET)

a. Layers of leadership and ministry

There are several levels of leadership mentioned in the New Testament of the Bible:

- Jesus the Chief Shepherd;
- The “Elders” who are the human beings responsible for the Church;
- The “Deacons” who in our Church are the Small Group leaders.
- All of the body ministering to one another

"from Paul and Timothy, to all of God's holy people in Philippi, including the elders and deacons."

(*Phi 1:1 NLT*)

The Elders give account to God for the wellbeing, and care of the Church members (*Heb 13:17*), and the Deacons (Small Group leaders) are accountable to the Elders in this task.

The “Chief Shepherd” (Jesus)

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Appoints “Elders” to lead

→ →

Appoints “Deacons” to help

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All are “ministers”

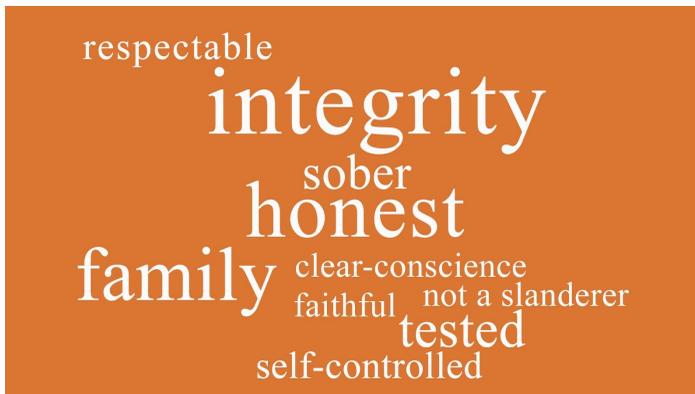
"He gave some apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry... so the whole body grows, fitted and held together through every supporting ligament. As each one does its part"

(*Eph 4:11-12,16*)

b. The essential Qualities of a Small Group leader -

Small Group leaders (called "Deacons" in the Bible) are mentioned in 1Timothy 3:8-13

"deacons must be well respected and have integrity. They must not be heavy drinkers or dishonest with money. They must be committed to the mystery of the faith now revealed and must live with a clear conscience. Before they are appointed as deacons, let them be closely examined. If they pass the test, then let them serve as deacons. In the same way, their wives must be respected and must not slander others. They must exercise self-control and be faithful in everything they do. A deacon must be faithful to his wife, and he must manage his children and household well. Those who do well as deacons will be rewarded with respect from others and will have increased confidence in their faith in Christ Jesus."



Note that these are almost all CHARACTER requirements...not ABILITY requirements.

Contrary to what some people think, a Small Group leader does not need to be a highly qualified theologian, a great public speaker, or a huge extrovert.

You will simply need to LOVE the people in your group, FOLLOW the Church leaders' guidance, and HOST the group meetings.

It is a great adventure to be a Small Group leader and there is a great increase in your confidence and faith as a result.

c. What does the Small Group Leader do?

- **Commit** - you are part of our Church (you agree with our vision values and beliefs) and you recognise and respect the Elders' as the leaders who will give a final account to God for this Church one day.
- **Care** - Love the people and create a safe, stable and welcoming environment where they can flourish;
- **Coordinate** - there is some organising needed in keeping the group going. Having a plan, communicating the plan and sticking to the plan will help;
- **Communicate** - You will need to be able to communicate with the people in your group AND with the Church leaders to minimise misunderstandings. Share with the Group what the Church leaders are saying, and tell the Church

leaders what the group are feeling and how they (and you) are doing.

- **Cooperate** - The Church leadership will provide training, support, resources and they will be available to help you. You will simply need to cooperate with this training and leading, and speak up when there is something you don't understand or want to discuss.

3. How to lead the Small Group - step by step

~ PREPARATION ~

- a. Attend leader training (about 1 hour once every few months)



- b. Gather a list of names and contact details for the group - Setting up a Whatsapp group is a good option.



- c. Set the date and time and venue of the meetings - weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly



~ IN THE WEEK OF THE MEETING ~

- d. Attend Church on Sunday - the sermon will be the subject of the group discussion in the week.



- e. Read the weekly leader's email message that will include some instructions and a short video (10-15mins) that is based on Sunday's Sermon and can be played in the group.



- f. Make sure you can access the video for the group.



~ ON THE DAY OF THE MEETING ~

- g. Ensure the venue is ready for the meeting - that time and space and privacy is adequate. You can delegate the venue / hosting and the providing of refreshments to others too if you plan ahead.



~ THE MEETING ~

- h. Welcome people in when they arrive and have a time of light discussion and just "hanging out" together. Make people feel loved and welcome.



- i. Watch the short video together - it will be no more than 15 minutes long, will be a summary of Sunday's sermon, and will end with a few discussion questions on the screen.



- j. Discuss the questions. Allow people to talk, and try to bring everyone into the conversation. You don't need to have all the answers, you shouldn't do all the talking, and it's OK for people to express different opinions and views. This time can be between 20 and 60 minutes long.



- k. Ask everyone one by one what they need prayer for. Pray for each one. Encourage the group to pray for each other, but if they aren't able, then you can pray.



- l. Announce info about future meetings, admin, any social events and/or upcoming Church activities.



- m. Try to end the meeting on time - usually no later than 9:30pm - 10pm.



~ AFTER THE MEETING ~

- n. Send a quick message or make a call to Gregg / the Church office about how the group went - Who was there? Any good or bad things that happened? Any help you may need.



Thank you for all you do for the Lord!

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"And let us take thought of how to spur one another on to love and good works, not abandoning our own meetings, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and even more so because you see the day drawing near."

(Heb 10:24-25)