

LEADERSHIP “CHECKLIST”

“Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be, not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.”

1 Peter 5:2-4

Fractals: A naturally occurring phenomenon or a mathematical set that exhibits a repeating pattern that displays at every scale.

- ✓ Every small group needs to be a fractal, exhibiting a repeating pattern in the life of all its members in such ways that it raises up new disciples.
- ✓ The role of the leader in a small group is to see that the practices that rise up new disciples get lived out. Those practices are worship (including prayer/devotional life), fellowship (community building), care, and work (task/service).

The Problem: People new to Ankeny First, as well as those who have called it “home” for some time, from time to time express a common experience within the small groups they either have been invited to participate in (committees, ministry teams, service teams, ...) or those they have sought to be a part of (mission and service teams, music groups, Bible studies, ...). They have not always felt welcomed (a lack of introductions, sharing our stories, ...), received any kind of meaningful orientation to the work of the small group (not clear what happens, when, who does it, ...), or any kind of evaluation (no feedback, thank-yous, insights for what was accomplished and how it links to “the next thing”). **The purpose of this “checklist” is to help leaders see that this takes place** in ways that build people up as disciples (and not make them feel frustrated, fearful or like a failure).

The following list was developed by members of our Church Council. While not every item may apply to all situations/small groups, please consider how it might apply to yours. And **THANK YOU for your leadership** in helping raise up disciples of Jesus Christ!

- ✓ The purpose of every small group is to disciple people in a safe and welcoming environment. How can you best do that in your small group? A good way is to actually ask people.
- ✓ Consider starting with a group covenant that governs the activity, behavior and outcomes of your group. (Check with staff/pastors for examples and resources for group covenants.)
- ✓ Be welcoming (greeting new people “at the door”, have people wear name tags, offer introductions, share individual stories /fun facts that connect people with people).
- ✓ Do not assume everyone knows everyone (especially in our large, three site church). Do not assume everyone remembers everyone’s name/details, even if you have been meeting together for a while.
- ✓ Identify new person’s gifts/talents/interests that may help the rest of the small group accomplish their task/live out a fractal focus. (Perhaps they have the gift of prayer, or care/mercy, or something else that adds to the cause.)

- ✓ Identify individual's preferred contact information (how they best wish to be contacted, via email, phone, ...), and compile that list for everyone.
- ✓ Leaders give out personal contact information so those new and all members know how to get ahold of you.
- ✓ Consider offering mentors/guides to new people, in order to help them get onboard.
- ✓ Always be looking for new leaders, and working to mentor them -- giving people the opportunity to share roles of leadership, according to the gifts.
- ✓ Be clear about the reason why people have been asked to be part of this group.
- ✓ Share the purpose and focus of your small group, and do it with excitement and a sense of how it fits in with the larger purpose (mission) of our church.
- ✓ Set discernable and measurable goals/objectives. ("By the end of this evening we will have accomplished")
- ✓ If you are going off-site to a place that is new and perhaps scary/unfamiliar, properly orient people (here's what we will be doing, where we meet, who will lead us, ...).
- ✓ Begin and end with prayer and include a devotional focus. "Interpret" the work you do through a devotional mindset. (Example: "How was God working through us as we accomplished our task?")
- ✓ Invite people to be praying with and for one another "outside" of the time you meet—"through the week."
- ✓ Consider "follow up" emails ("Thank you for being with us tonight/here is what we accomplished/here is what we said we would do/here are the prayer concerns we said we would be praying over/ ...").
- ✓ Consider the possibility of meeting outside the church buildings, in community settings. It changes and enhances the teamwork of a small group.
- ✓ Consider the possibility of occasionally enjoying "pure fellowship times" together—just for the fun (and fellowship) of it. Consider doing service projects together, to emphasize all four practices of your discipleship fractal.
- ✓ What else??? How about ask your folks?
- ✓ Know that your cluster leaders, staff and pastors are always available as resources for you and your small group.