

## SMALL GROUPS

**PURPOSE:** Small Groups at The Gate serve the purpose of community, shepherding, spiritual growth, development and encouragement of gifts, and body life health.

**DEFINITION:** To be a small group, the group must possess all the attributes in the “same” column below. Small groups will share things in common, but also have plenty of space for variances.

SAME	DIFFERENT
A group may not get to all these each week, but all of these aspects should be present on a regular basis.	These are the areas groups have freedom to look and function uniquely.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studying of the Word</li> <li>• Discussion/Sharing</li> <li>• Ministering one to another, use of spiritual gifts</li> <li>• Prayer</li> <li>• Worship (If you cannot worship weekly, aim for 1x a month)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calendar/Schedule (Some groups will only last 8 weeks and be done. Others will be more ongoing.)</li> <li>• Content</li> <li>• Target demographics (Moms, Young Marrieds)</li> <li>• Location</li> <li>• Meal/no meal</li> </ul>

### COMMITMENT FROM SMALL GROUP LEADERS:

- Leaders will provide basic pastoral care.
- Leaders will facilitate Acts 4:2 *They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*
- Leaders will commit to keeping the group open unless at max capacity space-wise.
- Leaders will intentionally equip and give space for other leaders to grow and develop their leadership skills within your group. (Some of these leaders should be given the opportunity to start their own groups.)
- Leaders will rightly tether their group to the body, supporting and encouraging participation in other ministries (Freedom Immersion, Men’s, Women’s, Prayer, Events...).
- Leaders will communicate our collective value for formation. They will encourage participation in Main Gate, even if that means they miss 8 weeks of small group.

### LEADER REQUIREMENTS:

- Leaders are to be men/women of godly character.
- Leaders are to be regular participants in The Gate and equipped through leadership training.

**GROUP CONTENT:**

- Sermon series content will be provided 2 times a year. Each segment will include 8 weeks of content. Use of this content may be optional.
- Groups can choose to:
  - Read/study a book of the Bible together. This can be as simple as someone reading and then the group all discussing what the scripture reveals about God's character and how everyone relates to the passage. Or this can be more structured with someone taking on more of a teaching role.
  - Biblical studying of a topic.
  - Going through a book together.
- When considering content for a group prayerfully ask, "What is God saying to The Gate right now? How do we partner with that message in our group?" If a group is more topic/need based, this will apply less (such as a marriage group or inner healing group), however, it should not overshadow what God is currently moving on/speaking to The Gate.
- Communicate clearly the group's content to Small Group Pastor before launching.
- Communicate clearly the group's content to the body so participants know what they are signing up for. (Small Group Pastor will help with this.)
- We will provide a couple general small group questions that are helpful no matter what content you are studying, such as "What does this reveal of the character of God?"

**COMMUNICATION STRATEGY:**

- Since there will be more variety in small groups, it will be essential that detailed information is provided on the website/church app regarding each group.
- Small group leaders are responsible to provide and keep up to date all information with Small Group Pastor.

**PROMOTION STRATEGY:**

- Small groups will be talked about on a regular basis.
- Small Groups will be pushed 3x a year where we encourage everyone to sign up. This will still take place ideally when we are launching a new sermon series.

**SMALL GROUP SUPPORT:**

- Small Group Leaders will receive support from the Pastoral Care Team and from the Small Group Pastor. The Pastoral Care Team will specifically address if anyone in their group needs added tending. The Small Group Pastor will provide assistance in shaping leadership teams (including worship), content development and resourcing, trouble shooting, and pastoral tending of leaders.
- A member of the pastoral staff will visit each group from time to time as a way to support, encourage, and build up each group.
- We will provide ongoing 5-fold influenced mentoring and resourcing for small groups. Some of the topics we will cover include conflict, pain, grief, prayer, gifts, teaching, releasing new leaders.