

USING THE MINISTRY CIRCLES MODEL

Every member has a part to play in the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-16; Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27). The same is true in our small groups and Sunday School classes—**healthy groups do not depend on one or two people for everything**. They develop the gifts and abilities of all who are in the group. Healthy churches are constantly developing new leaders, and our primary groups ministry is the best “leadership pipeline” as we invite individuals to serve the group and community together. Remember, **you are not asking group members to “take a job,” but to “take a step of discipleship”** as they serve Jesus, their group, and others who need Jesus or a church family.

Role descriptions are intentionally short to avoid overwhelming or guiltting group members. You will need to help group members visualize the specifics and connect their jobs to the big picture mission of the church and the group. Some potential ministry roles & descriptions:

MISSION

- **Outreach** (engage group members in reaching out to invite those who need Jesus and/or a group like ours; provide tools and encouragement for the group to pray for and share their faith with those who need Jesus)
- **Service** (involve the group in projects/ministries to meet needs and share Christ)

DISCIPLESHIP

- **Prayer** (lead the group to pray for each other, our church family, and other needs; help group members develop their own prayer life by involving them in various kinds of prayer as appropriate)
- **Teacher** (guide the overall teaching plan for the group as led by church leadership; teach and facilitate Bible study on a regular basis with the goal of group members growing in their daily walk with Jesus)
- **Co-Teacher** (teach and facilitate Bible study on a regular basis with the goal of group members growing in their daily walk with Jesus)
- **Micro Groups** (lead a group of 2-6 at another time for deeper discussion and accountability)
- **Kids/Youth Ministry Teacher** (continue to minister to the adults serving in other areas of the church)

COMMUNITY

- **Member Care** (keep members from falling through the cracks when absent or need care)
- **Greeting** (welcome everyone to the group; give special attention to newcomers to connect them to others and make sure they are invited to upcoming group events)
- **Fellowship** (a few who plan group get-togethers, monthly nights out, s'more festivals, etc.)
- **Attendance** (record attendance each week, get info from and introduce guests, love data and people)

DIRECTOR/COORDINATOR

- **Coordinator** (work with all to encourage and facilitate healthy group functioning in Mission, Community, and Discipleship; communicate as needed through the week and get the group sessions started each Sunday)
- **Communication** (keep everyone informed via Facebook page, emails, text, phone, bugle, smoke signals, etc.)



USING THE MINISTRY CIRCLES MODEL (CONT)

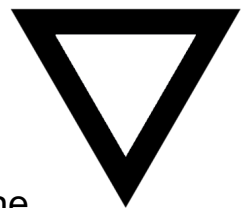
The big idea behind the Ministry Circles model is that everyone in the group will add their name to one of the circles under one of the roles, AND will be empowered to lead the group in that specific area. **The roles may be adapted for your unique setting, but a balanced emphasis on Community, Mission, and Discipleship is healthy.** Based on the size, desires, and needs of your group, you may have more than one person in some roles working as a team.

This model likely means your Teacher will have less time than in a traditional group or class, so work out a new “ideal” schedule in advance of implementing the strategy. Your group time might look something like this:

- Outreach/Projects/Fellowship/Care Team discussion – 15 minutes
- Bible Study – 35 minutes
- Prayer – 10 minutes

In a best-case scenario, a Teacher will integrate other leaders as part of the lesson/discussion. For example, a lesson about starting spiritual conversations may end with three tips from the Outreach leader and a story from a group member who used those tips to share the gospel with a neighbor. In this way, leaders truly function as a team and the body is strengthened.

The “**floating**” **Starting New Groups triangle** reminds members that reaching new people for Jesus requires creating new places for them to connect. In general, when a group has been together for two years or more it is difficult for a newcomer to really become a part of the group. As established group leaders cultivate a missional/ pioneering/entrepreneurial culture, God will call out a few to launch a new group to reach new people. New groups should be started by resilient leaders at strategic times to reach a defined group in the church or community.



If you'd like to talk through the Ministry Circles Model or want help in presenting it to your Sunday School or Small Group leaders, contact the Texas Baptists Discipleship Team via the contact form at the bottom of the webpage txb.org/discipleship.