



Small Groups Facilitator Training

Helping People...

Know God >>>> Find Freedom >>>> Discover
Purpose >>>> Make a Difference!

TRAINER VERSION

Name: _____

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The goal of this training is to equip and empower you to successfully facilitate a HISplace Small Group.

WHY SMALL GROUPS EXIST

Small Groups have one, simple purpose—to bring people together. We believe God created us to live in community with others and only then can we experience the full life He intends for us.

We believe life change happens in the context of **RELATIONSHIPS**.

Meaningful relationships can be hard to find, and Small Groups exist to make life-changing relationships relevant and accessible.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 – 9 Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. 10 If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble. 11 Likewise, two people lying close together can keep each other warm. But how can one be warm alone? 12 A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken. New Living Translation (NLT)

HISplace Family Church Small Groups Model

At HISplace Family Church, we believe our church must grow **LARGER** and **SMALLER** at the same time.

We grow larger to reach as many people as possible with the life-giving message of Jesus. We gather in Small Groups to build community and care for people.

HISplace Family Church is a church **OF** Small Groups, not a church **WITH** Small Groups.

We base our Small Group model on the early church as described in the Bible in the book of Acts. In Acts, you can read about the tremendous growth of the first church in Jerusalem, where small group meetings in homes helped lay the foundation.

Acts 5:42 - And every day, in the Temple and from house to house, they continued to teach and preach this message: “Jesus is the Messiah.” NLT

Small Groups offer people:

1. A place to CONNECT.

1 Corinthians 9:22 - Yes, whatever a person is like, I try to find common ground with him so that he will let me tell him about Christ and let Christ save him. TLB

We were not made to do life alone. God created us for community, and Small Groups provide a place to connect with others, share life, and grow in faith together.

2. A place to PROTECT.

1 John 3:16 - We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. NLT

It is through life together our that problems become smaller, and God uses others to bring support and encouragement to our lives. Small Groups become a place where others don't just know your name, but care about what is happening in your life and want to support you in your spiritual journey.

3. A place to GROW.

Proverbs 29:17 - As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend. NLT

We believe every person is created with God-given potential to make a difference in the world. Small Groups are a place you can grow with others to become more like Jesus and reach the potential God has put inside you.

WHAT A SMALL GROUP LOOKS LIKE

Your Life is Your Group

At HISplace, we use a **FREE-MARKET** approach to Small Groups. This means we want people to gather together based on the things they enjoy and are important to them. Essentially, the things you are already doing in your life are the things that can make up your Small Group!

Free market facilitators form their group around their **GIFTS** or **INTERESTS**.

From sports groups to lunch groups, mom groups to student groups, Bible study groups to creative arts groups, our groups are as varied as we are.

All groups fall within one of eight hubs:

- Men
- Women
- Marriage and Family
- Students
- Financial
- Freedom
- Outreach
- Prayer

Group Structure

Groups meet throughout the year in three semesters.



Groups meet **WEEKLY** during each semester.

Groups meet in a variety of places like homes, parks, restaurants, coffee shops and office buildings or online.

New groups start every semester making it easy to build community and enjoy different types of groups.

No matter what your group meets about, each meeting should be made up of four things:

1. CASUAL FELLOWSHIP.

Laid back time for group members to talk and get to know each other.

2. ACTIVITY or DISCUSSION.

This will vary based on what kind of group you're leading. It could be an activity like Frisbee or outreach or a discussion about a book or Sunday message.

3. PRAYER.

We want you to begin your meeting is with prayer for our church. Specifically engage the group to pray that we would help people Know God (guests and salvations through in-person and livestream services); Find Freedom (pray over small groups); Discover Purpose (pray that people would attend Growth Track and discover their unique purpose); and Make a Difference (pray for our Dream Team). Please also pray for church leadership and our givers.

Ask for prayer requests from group members and pray for them at the end of each group meeting. Celebrate the answers together as well!

4. SPIRITUAL COMPONENT.

This is what differentiates your Small Group from your neighborhood supper club. Whether it's through activities or discussion, always find a way to include the Word of God. This can be as simple as sharing something God is teaching you with the group or talking about a verse you read that week.

Small Groups are not a place for:

- Business
- Offerings
- Unapproved materials or speakers
- Controversial topics

Your Role as a Small Group Facilitator

God has a part for all of us to play in the church, and Small Group Facilitators come alongside the pastors and staff of HISplace to help care for people.

Ephesians 4:11-13 - Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. NLT

The primary role of a Small Group Facilitator is to help group members MOVE ONE STEP in their walk with God.

Proverbs 27:23 -Know the state of your flocks, and put your heart into caring for your herds... NLT

People in your group will be at different places in their spiritual lives and each person will have different next steps to take. Here is a guide of some next steps you can help people take:

- Start attending Sunday services
- Start reading the Bible regularly
- Start praying regularly
- Be water baptized
- Complete the HISplace Growth Track
- Join the Dream Team
- Start tithing
- Invite a friend or neighbor to church or a Small Group
- Attend a Small Group Leadership Training to become a Small Group Facilitator

How to be a successful Small Group Facilitator:

1. **PRAY DAILY** for the members of your group.
2. Consider partnering with a **CO-FACILITATOR** to help share the responsibility of caring for and leading your group.
3. **CONNECT** with group members outside of weekly meetings through phone, email, text, social media, or face-to-face. Encourage group members to connect with each other throughout the week as well.
4. Have **FUN** through laughter and by creating an enjoyable environment.
5. Respect people's **TIME** by beginning and ending your group on time.
6. **INVITE** group members to attend church services and events with you like HISplace 21 Days of Prayer or serve opportunities.
7. **RALLY** the group around a member going through a crisis. Use wisdom and be sensitive.

The Importance of Prayer

Prayer is a **FOUNDATION** of our church, and it is important for your Small Group.

2 Chronicles 7:14 - Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land. NLT

How to pray for your group:

- Pray for any requests group members share.
- Ask for the presence of the Holy Spirit in your group.
- Pray that God will open people's hearts to hear His truth.
- Pray for authentic community to develop.
- Pray for wisdom and strength to lead your group well.

Confidence as a Small Group Facilitator

If you only do what you feel comfortable doing, you don't need God. God's best is often found outside your comfort zone.

When you serve God and people by leading a Small Group, He will equip you and give you the strength and wisdom to lead well.

Philippians 4:13 - For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. NLT

2 Timothy 1:7 - For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. NLT

When you feel uncertain about leading a group, use Scripture to overcome the lies of the enemy:

1. When you feel like you don't have the time, remember God has **CREATED** you for this, and His timing is perfect.

Ecclesiastes 11:4 - If you wait for perfect conditions, you will never get anything done. TLB

2. When you feel unqualified, remember God has **EQUIPPED** you.

2 Corinthians 3:5-6 - It is not that we think we are qualified to do anything on our own. Our qualification comes from God. He has enabled us to be ministers of his new covenant. NLT

3. When you feel like your past disqualifies you, remember God uses **IMPERFECT** people.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 - 3All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. 4He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. NLT

4. When you feel like you don't know how to help someone in your group, remember **ESPN**:

E: Encourage

S: Share Scripture

P: Pray

N: Next Steps

In fact, every group meeting should contain these four elements.

Leadership Support

As a Small Group Facilitator, you are never alone in creating community. We have pastors, Small Group Captains, and the Small Groups Team who are all working alongside you to invest in great Small Groups at HISplace.

Your Coach

As a Small Group Facilitator, you have a Coach paired with you to help as you need support throughout the semester.

Your Coach's number one priority is to **PRAY** for you daily. Reach out to your Coach if you have a need, prayer request, or concern.

How to create good group dynamics:

- Set expectations.

A key to helping people feel comfortable in your group is to let them know what to expect. Take time to share how the group will flow from week to week. This can include things like explaining the times you will begin and end the group, how discussion or group activities will happen, and how group members can share prayer requests or best engage in the group.

- Follow the 70-30 rule.

Give the members of your group room to speak up instead of doing all the talking yourself. About 70% of talking should come from members and 30% from the facilitator.

- Keep discussion positive.

If conversation takes a negative or destructive turn, guide it back to a healthy place. If someone needs to talk about a sensitive or complex issue, you can follow up with them after the group or call your coach to help you respond well.

- Keep the conversation relevant to everyone.

Remember people in your group will be at different places in their spiritual journey. Be thoughtful when you talk about spiritual concepts or church terms that might be unfamiliar to new Christians or new church-goers.

- Respect boundaries.

Men should minister to men and women should minister to women. A couple may minister to a single person. We want to maintain integrity and purity in our Small Groups. These boundaries will help protect the facilitators and group members from entering into an uncomfortable or inappropriate situation.

Stay Connected

Throughout the semester, respond to your Coach and the Small Groups team about group attendance, potential new Small Group Facilitators, and how members are moving one step.

Starting Your Group

All Small Group Facilitators complete the following steps before starting to lead:

- Become a member of HISplace Family Church
- Complete the HISplace Growth Track
- Attend a Small Group regularly for at least one semester
- Attend a Small Group Leadership Training
- Sign the Small Group Leadership Commitment and Honor Code

HOW TO START YOUR SMALL GROUP

1. Ask God for direction about what group to lead and who to invite.
2. Once you decide on a topic or activity for your group, choose a place and time to meet.
3. Submit your group plans through the form provided for you by email. This is also how your group gets in the online directory at www.hpfc.org so people can find it and contact you to attend.
4. Invite people you know or meet to come check out your group.
5. Pray for God to do great things through your Small Group.

Preparing for your group meetings:

- Send a message to group members reminding them about the first meeting.
- Arrive early to set up a welcoming environment.
- Consider having name tags available to help everyone learn names for the first few weeks. If you are meeting online do introductions until everyone knows each other.

Conversation

Here are a couple conversation starters to help get people talking as your group gets to know each other:

- How did you learn about our group?
- What are your hobbies?
- What are you looking forward to this year?
- What brought you here?
- What are you hoping to get out of this Small Group?

Thank you for being an important part of creating life-giving Small Groups at HISplace!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How can I recruit people to come to my group?

- Start with people who are already in your sphere of influence (co-workers, friends, and neighbors).
- Find people around you who are new to the church, are new believers, or have shown interest in getting involved.
- Look for people you think you can help realize their potential.
- Ask God to send the right people to your group.

Where can I hold my Small Group?

We encourage Small Groups to meet outside the church building in the places where you like to spend your time. Some of the most common meeting places are homes, restaurants, parks, coffee shops, and office buildings. We also encourage you to consider an online group. They can be very effective.

Where can I find Small Group Curriculum?

We have a variety of curriculum suggestions available to you by contacting your Small Group leader.

Does my group have to meet weekly?

We encourage meeting weekly each semester in order to build genuine relationships.

Does HISplace Family Church offer childcare during Small Group meetings?

You are welcome to choose to offer childcare at your Small Group.

Also, as a Small Group Facilitator, you may become aware of individuals who would like to attend a Small Group, but do not have the resources to pay for a babysitter each week. At HISplace Family Church, we believe that members should not miss the opportunity to participate in a Small Group due to a financial burden.

However, we have found that people have resources for what is important to them. So encourage them to make the small group a priority. If you have an unusual circumstance, please do not hesitate to discuss it with your Coach.

How do I measure if group members are moving one step?

Ask! Make it part of your discussion whether in a group setting or individually.

Here are some great questions to guide your conversation:

- How did you get connected to this Small Group?
- What are you most looking forward to in the group?
- Do you attend HISplace?
- What brought you to HISplace?
- Have you ever been part of a Small Group before?
- What do you feel like God has been doing in your life lately?
- Are you familiar with 21 Days of Prayer?
- What areas of your faith are you hoping to grow in the coming months?
- What are you focused on in your life right now?
- Have you been through the HISplace Growth Track?
 - Do you remember your personality type from the class?
 - Do you remember what your spiritual gifts are?
- Have you ever served on the HISplace Dream Team?
- How can I pray for you?

Everyone in your group will be at different places spiritually. The vision of helping them “move one step” is not to get them to do everything at once, it’s to help identify where they currently are spiritually and offer a practical next step to help them grow.

Here are some examples of next steps you can share depending where a group member is spiritually:

- Invite them to attend a Sunday service with you.
- Share your personal story and what God has been teaching you.
- Tell them about the HISplace website (hpfc.org), Bible reading plans, devotional, and other resources available.
- If they are ready to receive Christ, offer to pray with them.

- Invite them to a 21 Days of Prayer service with you.
- Share how the Growth Track can help them discover their purpose and invite them to attend. Consider attending with them.
- Invite them to consider being water baptized. Invite your Small Group to be there to celebrate anyone getting baptized.
- Share how you find time regularly to pray, worship, and read God's Word and encourage them to make their own plan for time with God.
- Encourage them to learn more about areas like tithing, the Holy Spirit, prayer, and spiritual warfare by attending Growth Track or watching past messages at www.hpfc.org/messages.

What should I do if someone asks a question I can't answer?

It's okay to not have all the answers. Thankfully, we can find guidance through prayer, God's Word, and the Holy Spirit. Encourage them to spend time reading the Bible and praying. Also, let them know that you will do your best to get some information and get back with them at your next Small Group meeting. Do some personal research and call your coach to get advice.

What should I do if someone in my group shares something with me (or the group) that requires attention beyond what I (or we) can provide?

If you encounter a difficult situation within your Small Group, please know that you are not alone. If a member is going through a crisis, you can rally the group around them to provide prayer, encouragement, and support. Use wisdom and be sensitive to the situation. If you are unsure of what to do, don't hesitate to ask your Coach. If they cannot assist you, they will contact church staff.

How can I share stories of life change from the Small Group semester?

We love hearing about lives that are changed through Small Groups. You can share your stories via email to info@hpfc.org

LEADERSHIP HONOR CODE

As an essential part of HISplace Family Church Leadership, you have a responsibility to develop and exhibit mature Christian behavior. This should be the basic premise of your desire to work in a Servant-Leader position here at HISplace Family Church.

While serving the Body of Christ as a leader at HISplace Family Church, you pledge to present a good appearance at all times. In both attire and behavior, you should strive to demonstrate Biblical standards in all situations.

As Christians, the way we present ourselves to others is of vital importance to the way others perceive Christ. Our conduct should never be an embarrassment to Christ, but should exemplify the best qualities of a mature believer and Servant-Leader.

Exemplifying the highest moral commitment, HISplace Family Church leaders are to maintain a disciplined life of Bible reading, prayer and fasting. You must also refrain from such things as:

- Profanity – Matthew 15:10-11; James 3:7-12; Ephesians 4:29
- Smoking or chewing tobacco – 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Philippians 1:20
- Gambling – Proverbs 15:27; Proverbs 28:20
- Indulging in much wine or alcoholic beverages – Ephesians 5:18; Galatians 5:19-21
- Dishonest gain – Hebrews 13:5; Proverbs 15:27
- Illegal drugs – 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 1 Peter 5:8
- Pornography – Romans 6:12 – Philippians 4:8; Galatians 5:19-21
- Sexual immorality – Ephesians 5:3; Colossians 3:5
- Gossip and division - Proverbs 11:13; 16:28; 20:19; 2 Corinthians 12:20
- Any behavior which might cause Christ to grieve and others to stumble – 1 Peter 4:3-4
Ephesians 4:26-27; Ephesians 5:3-5; 15-18

By providing an example in speech and action, we encourage others to grow in Christ and become Servants/Leaders themselves. This is a way of life measured by the heart and commitment of each leader of HISplace Family Church. We should regard it as an essential part of our development, not as an imposition or restriction.

Leadership Commitment

1 Timothy 3:8-10 - The same goes for those who want to be servants in the church: serious, not deceitful, not too free with the bottle, not in it for what they can get out of it. They must be reverent before the mystery of the faith, not using their position to try to run things. Let them prove themselves first. If they show they can do it, take them on. No exceptions are to be made for women—same qualifications: serious, dependable, not sharp-tongued, not overfond of wine. Servants in the church are to be committed to their spouses, attentive to their own children, and diligent in looking after their own affairs. Those who do this servant work will come to be highly respected, a real credit to this Jesus-faith. MSG

Qualifications

- Sincere, worthy of respect, and of a good reputation.
- Tithe regularly to HISplace Family Church.
- Have a genuine desire to serve and minister to other people.
- Able to lead, motivate, and teach other people.
- Able to create positive group dynamics, and deal with conflict resolution within the group.

HELPFUL SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

At HISplace Family Church we believe ministering through the Word of God is the most powerful way to care for people. As you pray over a Small Group member, try inserting that member's name in the Scripture to make it more personalized.

As a leader, we encourage you to find and memorize at least three Scriptures, which will equip when you are walking someone through a tough situation as well as give you strength as a leader throughout the semester.

Here is a list of powerful Scriptures that you can apply to any situation:

“And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” Mark 12:30-31 NKJV

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Philipians 4:13 NKJV

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV

My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts,” says the LORD. “And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts. Isaiah 55:8-9 NLT

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him. 1 John 5:14-15 NIV

No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against you in judgment you shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is from Me,” Says the Lord. Isaiah 54:17 NKJV

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all

occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. Ephesians 6:10-28 NIV

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28 ESV

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago Ephesians 2:10 NLT

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11 NIV

You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father. Matthew 5:14-16 NIV

No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:39 NLT

Stay away from the love of money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, "I will never, never fail you nor forsake you." That is why we can say without any doubt or fear, "The Lord is my Helper, and I Am Not Afraid Of Anything That Mere Man Can Do To Me." Hebrews 13:5-6 TLB

Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand. Isaiah 41:10 NLT

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7 NIV

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. James 1:2-4 NIV

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NIV

So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ. Romans 10:17 ESV

One day the apostles said to the Lord, "We need more faith; tell us how to get it." "If your faith were only the size of a mustard seed," Jesus answered, "it would be large

enough to uproot that mulberry tree over there and send it hurtling into the sea! Your command would bring immediate results!” Luke 17:5-6 TLB

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. Hebrews 11:1 NIV

If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. James 1:5 NIV

Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety. Proverbs 11:14 ESV

So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. Romans 8:1-2 NLT

“Come now, let us settle the matter,” says the Lord. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. Isaiah 1:18 NIV

Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14 NIV

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- Illegal drugs – 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 1 Peter 5:8
- Pornography – Romans 6:12 – Philippians 4:8; Galatians 5:19-21
- Sexual immorality – Ephesians 5:3; Colossians 3:5
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Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Please have participants detach and turn in at the end of training.