



Small Group Field Guide

Church of the Nativity
20 E. RIDGLEY ROAD
TIMONIUM, MD 21093

Getting Started Checklist

Role	Name
Leadership Coach	
Small Group Leader	
Co-Leader	
Apprentice Leader	

Meeting Day	Meeting Time

Group Members

Coordinator Name	Role

Why We're Here & What We're Doing at Nativity

Church of the Nativity

Vision

Making Church matter by growing disciples who are growing disciples among disconnected Catholics in North Baltimore, and influencing churches elsewhere to do the same.

Mission

Love God. Love Others. Make Disciples.

Strategy

To accomplish Vision and Mission:

1. Gospel message
2. Weekend experience
3. Focus on newcomers
4. Encourage everyone to take their next step

CIRCLE TIP

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind...Love your neighbor as yourself.”

MATTHEW 22:37, 39

“Go make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

MATTHEW 28:19-20

Next Steps

The heart of our church is to become growing disciples, who are giving the whole of our lives to God, not merely checking off boxes or going through the motions. So we are always challenging and encouraging the members of our church to take the next step that is the next step for them.

SERVE- We have been given unique gifts and talents by God. Using our gifts to serve in **Ministry** and **Missions** creates environments for others to experience God's presence on campus brings God's love to other communities locally, nationally and internationally.

TITHE- We seek to honor God in all areas of life, and this includes our finances. As stewards, not owners, of the resources God has given us, we are called to **sacrificial giving**, which means percentage, progressive giving to the local church and the poor.

ENGAGE- We believe faith grows in a circle. In **Small Groups**, we grow in fellowship and relationship with one another, God, and in ways we cannot grow on our own. Small Groups are where our big church gets small.

PRACTICE- We know God wants us to live lives of integrity and virtue that stem from our personal relationship with Christ. We strive to practice **daily prayer**, **Scripture reading**, and full participation in the **Sacraments** to receive grace for our faith growth.

SHARE- We want others to experience the life-changing message of the Gospel. Our strategy is to "**Invest and Invite**". That simply means we invest in the relationships we have with people in our lives, and when the time comes, invite them to church with us.

One More Reason Our Church is Amazing: Adult Small Groups!

“And all who believed were together and had all things in common.” **ACTS 2:44**

Vision

Generations upon generations will come to know, love, and serve Jesus Christ.

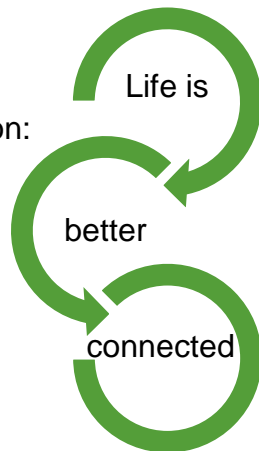
Mission

Creating Small Group environments where disciples can grow.

Strategy

To accomplish the Vision and Mission:

1. Leadership Development
2. Resources
3. Encouragement
4. Events



CIRCLE TIP

"For where two or three have gathered in my name, I am there among them."

MATTHEW 18:20

"For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations."

PSALM 100:5

How Do I Do This?

Becoming a Great Leader

Lead As You Follow!

Christ is the true leader of each Small Group. He is the one around whom our circles are gathered. As we follow Christ and grow in our relationship with Him, as spiritual leaders we will lead others into encounters with God. Small Groups are one of the means we use to help each other draw closer into a personal relationship with Christ, learning to rely upon Him, turn to Him and integrate Him into each moment of our daily lives. As we grow in discipleship, we change – and our lives bear witness to that change.

Leadership Matters!

As we lead others, we will be helping them find their purpose and identity in Christ. We serve as role models for our group members and call others to transformation and into leadership. Leaders change the atmosphere and cast vision and that encourages the group to go deeper in discipleship and to move outward in service. Small Group leadership is a ministry, approached with a servant's heart. Becoming an effective leader is a journey – one that constantly challenges us to grow and evolve!

CIRCLE TIP

"For even the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as ransom for many." **MARK 10:45**

3 Ways Successful Leaders Grow



1. Partnership

"No Leader will ever lead alone!"

2. Director of Small Groups
3. Co-Leader
4. Leadership Coach

2. Encouragement and Information

We have many resources:

3. Our website – see Small Group Tools
4. Weekly encouragement email
5. Social media - Facebook and Twitter
6. Mobile Tools
7. REVOLVE - events where leaders gather to learn and grow together

3. Growth and Development

The 5 L's of Leadership:

- Listen - Leaders are great listeners
- Learn - Have the desire to learn more about your faith and inspire the group
- Love - Leaders love because it's all about relationships
- Lead - Lead with intention
- Laugh - Laugh and enjoy the process

CIRCLE TIP

"Be Strong and Courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged. For the LORD your GOD will be with you wherever you go."

JOSHUA 1:9

Who Does What?

Roles and Responsibilities

No Leader will ever lead alone! As a leader, you will have a Leadership Coach, Co-Leader, members, and resources.

At Nativity, leadership is an intentional process, guided by five simple actions:

1. Listen
2. Learn
3. Love
4. Lead
5. Laugh



Relying on these principles, we revolve with Christ as our center, and we grow as we cycle through these principles.

CIRCLE TIP

"But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit."

TITUS 3:4-7

Role Call

Who's who?

The Small Group Leader

- Models the habits of a healthy Small Group
- Is a member and a minister of Nativity
- Navigates the group meetings
- Monitors and promotes group health
- Participates in Small Group Leadership Development Events and encourages Co-Leader, Coordinators, and Members to do the same
- Shares leadership responsibilities

Co-Leader

- Models what the Leader does and assists in leading

Members

- Show up consistently, continue to grow in Faith, and look to take their next STEP.

Coordinators

- Coordinate group activities: timer, social, snacks, missions etc.

Leadership Coach

- Mentors 2-8 Small Group Leaders



Leaders: Deep Breath. Let's Go!

Getting Started

Before Each Group Meeting:

- Pray
- Preview materials and the discussion questions
- Leader or Co-Leader communicates to confirm location and attendance

During Each 90 minute Group Meeting:

- Fellowship for approximately 10-15 minutes
- Open in prayer
- Introduce and watch the material
- Lead a discussion referring to weekly questions as a guide - questions are guidelines only
- Announcements and upcoming events
- Close in prayer

CIRCLE TIP

"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

MATTHEW 11: 28-30

Getting Started Continued

First Meeting

- Pray before group arrives
- Have materials ready: Bible, DVD, questions, etc.
- Pray as a group
- Have everyone introduce themselves - be creative
- Ask someone to collect everyone's contact information including birthdays
- Discuss a plan for upcoming meetings
- Distribute Small Group Covenant and discuss (download from website)
- Use the remaining time for DVD series and discussion questions
- Pray with group to conclude the meeting - be sure to add any intentions and prayers needed

CIRCLE TIP

Get to know your members!

"You are the salt of the earth and the
light of the world."

MATTHEW 5: 13-14

Information and Resources

Resources

- Our website: www.churchnativity.com
- Mobile Tools
- Weekly Newsletter

Keep Connected on Social Media

- www.facebook.com/nativitysmallgroups
- www.twitter.com/cn_smallgroups

Contact for More Information

Director of Adult Small Groups

Susan Aldridge

410-252-6080 ext. 102

saldridge@churchnativity.com



Welcome to Mobile Tools

How do I use this new nifty tool?

1. Mobile Tools is not an App, it is a website that will format for all types of devices. On a desktop or laptop, you can simply bookmark the website. On a cell phone or tablet, click your sharing icon to save either as bookmark or save it to your home screen.
2. Mobile Tools can be accessed using any device with an Internet connection.
3. If you already have an existing Church of the Nativity User Account, your Username and Password will allow you to access to Mobile Tools.
[churchnativity.com/mobiletools](https://my.churchnativity.com/mobiletools)
4. Don't have an account?
<https://my.churchnativity.tv/portal/login.aspx>.

[churchnativity.com/mobiletools](https://my.churchnativity.com/mobiletools)



Mobile Tools Continued

Use this great tool to help manage your group.

It allows you to:

- take attendance
- see your member's contact information
- submit prayer request
- obtain care for your members when needed



churchnativity.com/mobiletools



Members: You Matter!

Discover your purpose

Attendance. Sometimes you need the group and other times the group needs you. In order to feel the difference, showing up is all you need to do. Transform your life and just show up weekly!

Bring your Bible and a Journal. Small Group is where the rubber hits the road. It's all about application of the Word of God. So bring your Bible and take notes so you remember what inspired or motivated you!

Committed Growing Disciple with a Purpose and a Plan! **Living in the Truth** in Jesus Christ, the whole of God's truth has been made manifest. "Full of grace and truth", he came as the "light of the world", he is the Truth. "Whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness." The disciple of Jesus continues in his word so as to know "the truth [that] will make you free" and that sanctifies. To follow Jesus is to live in "the Spirit of truth", whom the Father sends in his name and who leads "into all the truth". To his disciples Jesus teaches the unconditional love of truth: "Let what you say be simply 'Yes or No.'" **CCC 2466**

**Attendance + God's Word =
Commitment**

3 Healthy Small Group Habits

1. Prayer

- Pray together weekly
- Pray for your members
- Pray for each other



2. Authenticity

- Be honest
- Be non-judgmental
- Be willing to examine your relationship with God
- Be humble

3. Commitment

- Support the Vision and Mission of Church of the Nativity
- Attend meetings regularly
- Share life's joys and challenges through our faith
- Conduct meetings with respect for our Catholic tradition while remaining open and welcoming to those of all faiths
- Accept the ongoing challenge to "invest and invite"
- Encourage each other to grow in our faith

CIRCLE TIP

If we pray, we will believe; if we believe, we will love; if we love, we will serve.

MOTHER TERESA



ALL SCRIPTURE QUOTATIONS OUTLINED HEREIN ARE TAKEN FROM LIVE YOUTH BIBLE CATHOLIC EDITION NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION CATHOLIC EDITION, COPYRIGHT © 2009 BY OUR SUNDAY VISITOR CURRICULUM DIVISION.

NO PART OF THIS BOOK MAY BE REPRODUCED OR RETRANSMITTED IN ANY FORM OR BY ANY MEANS, ELECTRONIC OR MECHANICAL, INCLUDING PHOTOCOPYING, RECORDING OR BY ANY INFORMATION STORAGE AND RETRIEVAL SYSTEM WITHOUT PERMISSION IN WRITING FROM THE AUTHOR.

COPYRIGHT © 2014-2015 JACKIE GUIDERA, DIRECTOR OF ADULT SMALL GROUPS ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.