

Grow Group Leadership Wallenpaupack Church

Purpose

The Grow Group Leadership use their specific spiritual gifts within the Grow Group setting, prepare for and facilitate sessions, and shepherd the members within their group. At Wallenpaupack Church, we offer & participate in grow groups to foster healthy spiritual lives centered around the study of God's Word. In a nutshell: they help members connect and grow.

Specific Grow Group Leadership Roles

- **Leader/Co-Leader:** Facilitates and coordinates an individual grow group
- **Mentor Leader:** In addition to being a leader (usually), the mentor acts as a liaison between the leaders assigned to them and the Discipleship Pastor. The mentor also shepherds their assigned leaders much like leaders do with group members.
- **Leader-in-Training:** Works closely with the Leader, anticipating that they will have a group of their own within a semester or two.
- **Host:** Opens their home/space up for group gatherings and coordinates closely with their leader. In instances where there is a host and leader, the two should be recognized as a team and the leader's shepherding responsibilities may also be shared with the host.

The Scope of Responsibility

- **Policy:** Churchwide Grow Group Guidelines are available. It is the leader's responsibility to know those guidelines and implement consistently across groups.
- **Financial:** There is no cost burden on leaders to facilitate groups. If materials are needed for the chosen study, Wallenpaupack Church will purchase those materials for leaders.
- **Ministry Oversight:** Leaders are responsible for shepherding and discipling the members of their group. Each group can be seen as a micro church wherein each member is encouraged to identify their spiritual gift and use it for kingdom purposes. The leader maintains a balance within their group to ensure that the group is inward focused (taking care of one another), upward focused (spending time in the word, worship and prayer), and outward focused (serving the local church or community in some way). As they facilitate their groups, they recognize that the "study" is meant to be a portion of what the group focuses on, not *the* focus.
- **Time:** Leaders/Leaders-in-Training should spend as much time preparing for a session as they will spend actually in the session (i.e., 2 hours of prep for a 2-hour group) each week. This prep time can include reviewing the materials ahead of time, praying over the time and members, and studying relevant

scriptures. Additional time will vary based on the size of the group and how many are in leadership roles within the group to share responsibility between with regards to shepherding members 1:1.

- **Conflict Resolution:** Should conflict arise within the group the people involved in the conflict are to follow the standards for resolution set forth by Jesus in Matthew 18:15-17. If the problem is not resolved, the order in which support is brought into the situation is as follows:
 - Leader Mentor (although leaders may choose to reach out to their mentor earlier in the process for additional guidance, prayer, and discernment)
 - Discipleship Pastor
 - Lead Pastor
 - Board of Administration (This is rare, but there is always a potential. In these very rare cases when the pastors have exacerbated all their resources to resolve interpersonal issues, that issue will be handed over to the board for resolution. Not every board member will be part of these processes but often a subgroup will be assigned).

Grow Group Leadership Expectations

Each person in Grow Group Leadership¹ must:

1. Be a growing follower of Jesus who understands and believes in the mission and theology of Wallenpaupack Church and the Free Methodist Church-USA.
2. Be a regularly attending guest² in good standing at Wallenpaupack Church.
 - a. Attend Sunday worship faithfully. Minimum of 3 services/month.
 - b. Give financially to the work of Wallenpaupack Church (as long as their spouse, if applicable, is also in support of giving).
3. Allow room for the Holy Spirit to adjust plans within group time. Sometimes the “detour” or “distraction” is a divine opportunity and should be followed with discernment.
4. Engage in personal prayer time throughout the week, if not daily. This is imperative and cannot be overstated enough!
5. Set an example of servant leadership in your own group, bearing in mind that future groups should grow from yours and those leaders need strong examples to draw from.
6. Be intentional about identifying or helping to identify the spiritual gifts of each member when unknown, and then delegate tasks to support the life of the group in alignment with the gifts present. This includes, but is not limited to, partnering with the Holy Spirit to raise up future leaders.

¹ The exception is the Leader-in-Training who may still be working toward incorporating these aspects into their lives. Leaders should encourage their leaders in training where possible to these ends and help guide them to where they ought to be by the time they lead independently.

² While regular attendance is a minimum requirement, Grow Group Leadership are strongly encouraged to pursue Partnership if they haven't already.

7. Attend training sessions and keep current with the leadership development resources shared throughout the semester by Wallenpaupack Church.
8. Commitment to respond to group communications outside of regular meeting time (Call, text, email), although group leadership is encouraged to set boundaries as to when they will and will not respond.
9. Commitment to reach out 1:1 at least every two weeks, outside of meeting time, to each member of the group. Leaders are strongly encouraged to spend time, in person 1:1, with each member during each semester (this time can be shared with hosts, if willing, and should include the leader in training for learning purposes).
10. Seek permission from the Discipleship Pastor for any materials, lessons, methodologies, etc. desired to be used beyond what is already available within the chosen study's provided materials (with the exception of Scripture itself).
11. Learn how to use and use the Groups functionality within Church Center/Planning Center to coordinate group logistics, attendance, meeting schedules.
12. Follow the Building Usage Guidelines if the group gathers on church property at any time.
13. Review Grow Group Guidelines with group and ensure the guidance is honored by the group.
14. Honor deadlines set regarding new group registration logistics, feedback surveys, and the like when shared by Wallenpaupack Church. If the deadline cannot be met for some reason, reach out to the person who shared the information initially ahead of time.
15. Finally, extend grace more often than not. No one is perfect, and all the leaders at church all want the same thing: to point people back to Jesus. Sometimes this means giving the benefit of the doubt, extending forgiveness, or practicing patience. We are all sinners in need of grace, sometimes even the best of intentions lead to mistakes made, and we are all servants seeking to advance His Kingdom first.

Leadership will know they are on the right track if they³:

1. Are seeing fruit from abiding in Christ (internally with the manifestation of fruits of the spirit and fruits of their labor manifesting within the group).
2. Are able to hear from and adapt to the Holy Spirit.
3. Maintain a balance of inward, upward, and outward activities within their groups.
4. Can speak the truth in love.
5. Regularly monitor and reflect how their time as leader is going (journaling immediately after each session is a best practice to try to adopt).

³ This is meant to be a tool for self-assessment. Mentors and/or the Discipleship Pastor will also look at the same indicators for supportive and accountability purposes.

6. Know where to direct members to with their questions if they cannot answer themselves.
7. Consistently keep apprised of communications from Wallenpaupack Church so they are aware of opportunities and updates as available (and members are well aware of these as well). Be the source of church updates for your group!
8. Check Wallenpaupack Church's leadership development site on a regular basis.
9. Can disclose to their mentor or Discipleship Pastor if they are starting to feel burned out or overwhelmed. We want to support you in that space. Leaders shouldn't shoulder it alone! We also want to ensure the group remains well supported throughout the struggle.
10. Are building relationships with the people in their group or the leaders assigned to them. They know what's on their hearts, where they are in their walk with God, etc.
11. (Group members and leaders) feel well supported, empowered, and unjudged by their leaders and mentors, respectively.
12. (Group members and leaders) are respected by their leaders and mentors, respectively.
13. (Group members and leaders) are transparent with their leaders and mentors, respectively. This indicates a level of trust and openness that can be healthy if received without judgement.