

LEADER TRAINING

GROUP LEADERS



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GROUP LEADER REQUIREMENTS

We define a Group as an intentional gathering of **three or more**, including a Grace leader, who **connect regularly** for the purpose of mutual interest, encouragement and spiritual growth in Christ.

► TO START A GROUP YOU NEED TO . . .

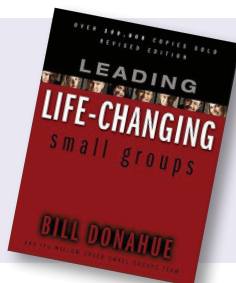
- ▶ Be saved.
- ▶ Be a member.
- ▶ Complete Leader Orientation.
- ▶ Complete Leader Training — This is what you're doing right now.
- ▶ Submit a completed Leader Application at your one-on-one interview.

► TO CONTINUE AS A GROUP LEADER YOU NEED TO . . .

- ▶ Attend at least three meetings (2 Huddles & 1 State of Grace) per year. They are held just prior to the start of a new trimester.
- ▶ Communicate regularly with your division leader.
- ▶ Attend the Communications Skills Class sometime within the first six months of leading a group. This class is offered 3 times per year and will help you in your skills as a facilitator. The sooner the better!!
- ▶ Use only Grace approved resources (purchase materials at Grace Bookstore when possible through Joan at joanc@gracestl.org).

SUGGESTED BOOK

Leading Life-Changing Small Groups is highly recommended. You can purchase one today for \$10 or in the Grace Bookstore for \$15.



COMMUNICATION WITH LEADERS

In addition to occasional snail mail, we communicate regularly with leaders via the following:

MAIL SLOTS — There are several leader mail slots near the Ushers' station (alphabetically grouped A-F, G-L, etc.). Please check and pick up your mail when you come to church. There are additional slots where you can pick up forms, newsletters, etc. Jenny Barber also has a mail slot, which you can use to forward information to us.

E-MAIL — We use email regularly to communicate with Leaders. If you have an email address or if it changes, please forward your email address to emilym@gracestl.org as soon as possible, so we can keep our files up to date and communicate with you regularly.

PLEASE STAY INFORMED — CHECK YOUR MAIL SLOT & EMAIL REGULARLY.

PUBLICITY AT GRACE

CONNECTING BOOKLET — To have your group listed in the Connecting at Grace Booklet and your room reserved each term, you must register your group/class through our online software. About one month before a new printing of the Connecting at Grace Booklet, you will receive an email reminding you to update your study and any other information that may need updating.

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS — Contact Emily Mills at ext 2264. Due to space limitations, only special events are listed in the weekly bulletin. Periodically, as space allows, the Communications Department will highlight a group. You can always ask, just no guarantee there will be space for it.

CG SCREEN ANNOUNCEMENTS — Contact Emily Mills at x2264.

CONNECTION EXPO — There are periodic Expo's where you can have a table and represent your group. Be sure to take advantage when it is offered.

COMMUNITY GROUP TABLE — One month out of the year, your division will be assigned to man the Community Group table in the Auditorium foyer. Your DL will inform you of the month to serve. We ask you to serve before and after one service during that month.

GRACE MANAGEMENT ON MINISTRY PLATFORM — Group leaders will first need to establish an account on MINISTRY PLATFORM. (If they are already giving online, their login credentials will be the same.) Follow this link to get started:

<https://my.gracestl.org>

1. Click the MY GRACE! button.
2. Click Create Account (See Attachment)

The Portal will give PUBLIC and PRIVATE options. Group management will be available in the PRIVATE field under MY GROUPS.

An authenticated user of MP will be able to view the Groups they are a part of so long as said user is a current participant of a current group which is set to be available online. If your group does not show up under your MY GROUPS, we will need to verify that all three conditions have been met.

All Participants in the group will be able to view the group description, meeting time, and primary contact information. The Primary Contact is generally the same person as the Leader, but this is a decision made by your ministry leader. Participants can also view the group roster, calendar, and the basic contact information of other members. It is possible for individuals to have contact information unlisted. Finally, each Participant is able to RSVP for group-specific events.

Primary Contacts and Group Participants who are designated Leaders have further access:

- Leaders can add, edit, and remove participants from any selected group they lead. This is accomplished by selecting the **View All Members** button toward the bottom of the screen of the selected group.
 - ▷ The **Add Group Member** option is listed at the top of the page followed by the Group roster. Once you enter the contact information, click the Search button which will determine whether the individual is already in our system. Make the selection from the choices presented. You will need to select a Group Role for the individual. Please select **Participant** for your new member.
 - ▷ If a person does not show up after an attempt to add them to the group has been made, it is because they are not a contact in our data base. You will need to get contact information for this individual and pass this along to your ministry leader/admin/pastor for data entry.

- ▷ To remove a group member or to change contact information, click on the specific member with whom you are dealing. This opens that record. There is an **Edit** button located at the bottom of the page allows for the removal of a member from the group.
- Leaders can also manage **Pending Group Inquiries**. These originate when a person comes to the Portal on the GraceStl.org website, searches for a Group, and selects a specific Group of interest. In this case, the Group leader will also receive an email about the inquiry. Once the communication loop is complete, a person can easily be added as a participant to the group.
- Leaders can EDIT GROUP INFO by clicking on that button and making changes. **This is currently disabled as we work through coding issues**. Similarly, creation of new groups is not enabled as we work through coding control issues.
- Leaders can CREATE NEW MEETING by clicking that button and making changes.
- Leaders can SEND GROUP EMAIL by clicking that button and creating the message.
- Leaders can email participants (each person receives his own email).
- Leaders can manage the group calendar.
- Leaders can send invitation emails.
- Leaders can remove a group event.
- Leaders may post attendance.

POSTING ATTENDANCE from the Portal is a critical role of the leader. Once you have logged on to the Portal, gone to MY GROUPS and selected your group to open, click on the desired EVENT from the GROUP CALENDAR. This takes you to a screen where you can select an ACTION. There are several choices because the PORTAL manages all events for the church, and these selections cover a variety of needs. <https://www.thinkministry.com/kb/portal/secure-pages/my-groups/attendance/>

SEND INVITE/MESSAGE is a button that shows up toward the top of the screen you opened to post attendance. If you have created a new meeting or plan a party and want to let the group know, click on this button. It won't seem to do anything. Scroll to the bottom of the page. Select who you want to receive the invitation to the event and enter a message, if you prefer.

PUBLICITY IN THE COMMUNITY

NOT GETTING ENOUGH PUBLICITY? — People can't come if they don't know about it? And how will they know unless someone tells them? RIGHT? Right! Grace's bulletins and booklet can only reach within the walls of Grace, but you don't have to settle for that! There are multiple advertising venues just waiting to serve you and many are FREE. Some options include:

- JOY FM 99.1 Radio Station allows free posting of events on their website. Go to: www.joyfmonline.org then scroll down and click on "Submit your event."
- AmericanTowns.com has a press release distribution tool that makes it a snap to build buzz for your events and activities on-line. Anyone in your group can add, manage and update the information you have posted directly to their Maryland Heights site. You can: (1) quickly distribute news releases to local media outlets for additional exposure and (2) easily attach photos and files for each release you send.
- The Localite newspaper reaches Bridgeton and Maryland Heights and is free to church groups. Items are due around the first of each month. Send them to: The Bridgeton–Maryland Heights Localite Shopper, 2516 Woodson Rd, St. Louis, MO 63114. There may be a small paper just like this in your own neighborhood. Check and see!
- Grocery, specialty stores, community centers and other public places often allow groups to post flyers on their bulletin boards. Check out places near where your group meets and hang up those flyers left over from the Connection Expo!

ROOM RESERVATIONS & SET-UP (ON-CAMPUS)

To reserve a room for your group, you just request it when you fill out the online registration form. Your assigned division leader will walk you through setting up your group.

WEDNESDAY FYI — Wednesday groups should not meet during the communion service which is held on the first Wednesday of the month. We expect all leaders to make attending this service a priority. Some groups meet before or after the communion service. Most groups that meet during services are scheduled for 90-minute time slots. On Sunday mornings, rooms are reserved either from 9–10:30am or from 10:45am–12:15 pm. This allows for better use of our building during peak hours.

ROOM SET-UP — Each room has a standard set-up. You should include your set-up needs when you complete the online form. The admins will attempt to reserve a room in your preferred set-up. However, this is often not possible, in which case it is your group's responsibility to arrange the room the way you want it so you should plan to arrive early to do so. It is

also your responsibility to return the room to its standard set-up. A chart of this arrangement should be posted near the door of the room. If it is not posted, return the room to the set-up found upon your arrival. If you find your room messy or not set up properly, please advise Emily x2264 or Barb x2112 immediately. This will enable us to find out who is responsible and discuss it with them. **REMINDER:** You must be prompt on leaving your room as scheduled, especially during weekend or midweek services when another group may be assigned to that room immediately following yours.

ROOM CANCELLATIONS — If for any reason your regularly scheduled meeting is cancelled, you must notify Emily Mills (ext 2264) or Barb Emert (ext 2112) so they can cancel the room reservation. You should do this every time a meeting is cancelled. It is very expensive to heat, cool and provide electricity for such a large campus. The thermostats are raised and lowered depending on anticipated room use. Also be considerate; there are many groups needing rooms. If yours becomes available, others could be using it.

SECURITY ISSUES / KEYS — The Security Department will unlock your room, as well as the building you need access to, for the time slotted on your reservation. If the rooms are not open, call Security at 314-580-8001. Please enter this phone number into your cell phone contacts. Call security any time your room is not unlocked, you feel uncomfortable or threatened by someone on campus or if someone needs medical attention during one of your meetings or during regular service times.

GROUPS OR CLASS EXPENSES GUIDELINES

Groups and classes often have expenses. For example, you might want to have an event, need additional equipment, have completion awards, create a scholarship fund or want to help a financially struggling group member, etc. Some groups decide to take up collections for various expenses. If you do that, please follow these guidelines:

TAX CREDIT — Because donations to groups are not deductible, let group members know in advance that they cannot deduct it on their taxes and won't see it on their Grace tithe statement.

ACCOUNTABILITY — To protect everyone's integrity from being questioned, there should always be at least two unrelated people responsible for any money collected.

USE OF COLLECTED FUNDS — Funds can be used for any of the previous expenses, but funds should NEVER be used to pay for the leader or group member's services.



BOOKS/STUDIES — When your group/class is doing a book study, individuals should purchase the book. If you advise the Bookstore in advance, they will often have the book/workbook on hand. Proceeds from Grace Bookstore go to missions so it's always a good idea to encourage your group to purchase there. Setting up a scholarship fund to provide a book for an individual who can't afford a book is permissible.

CHILDCARE GUIDELINES

WHY WE EXIST — Limited childcare exists to support classes and community groups which meet at Grace Church during off-service times.

WHEN WE EXIST — Community group and class childcare is available only by reservation. It is open on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday evenings, 6:30 pm–9 pm. Daytime hours vary according to availability of workers. Childcare will not be open for use — even during the aforementioned times and days — unless the need is sufficient to warrant its use.

HOW MUCH IT COSTS — The cost for childcare is \$6 for the first child in a family and \$2 for each additional child. Ministries or community groups will be billed \$6 per child for no shows.

PROTOCOL FOR UTILIZING CHILDCARE

The online form includes a place regarding childcare, but this is simply for advertising purposes. You will still need to do the following to arrange childcare on campus.

30-DAY INITIAL NOTICE REQUIRED — Once a group or class determines that childcare would benefit their efforts, the leader should call 292-8300 x2164 to secure childcare. You will need to:

- Provide the name and phone number or email address for the contact person.
- Indicate the dates and times for the group or class.

Give an estimate of how many children will need care. This number is important because it helps assure adequate staffing. Classes and groups will receive verification by phone or email that space is available to take the indicated number of children.

ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE OF THE FIRST MEETING — Each group or class is further required to give specific details about the numbers and ages of the children coming for childcare. The group/class is entirely responsible for gathering and reporting this information. This report may be phoned in (314-292-8300 x2164) or emailed to gracekids@gracestl.org. We recommend that a childcare point person within the group/class take on this responsibility. **REMINDER:** Ministries or community groups will be billed \$6/child for no shows. In the event of on-going no shows, childcare may be discontinued.

ON-GOING REPORTING — Once a class/group is underway, the point person is required to report any changes (additions or deletions to the roster of children) or a meeting cancellation. Parents in classes/groups meeting on Monday or Tuesday nights should notify the point person no later than 3 pm on the Friday before the class so childcare givers can receive the information by 5 pm on that day. Parents in classes/groups that meet on Friday nights should notify the point person by 3 pm on the Wednesday before the meeting so childcare givers can receive the information by 5 pm on that day. If class and community group childcare is not contacted, it is assumed that the level of care required is unchanged from earlier meetings.

PAY RESPONSIBILITY — Childcare for the initial meeting of a class can sometimes be difficult to anticipate. Special advance arrangements can be made to staff for larger groups. However, children whose names are actually on the list will be given preference in the event that the maximum capacity for childcare is reached. Potential class participants need to be aware that space is limited. This grace period will be extended for two weeks at the written request of the sponsoring ministry, but said ministry will be responsible for absorbing the cost of the additional staffing should their presence prove unnecessary.

CHILDCARE (WORKER:CHILD) RATIO

There will always be at least two childcare workers on duty, but as the number of children increases, additional workers will also be serving.

- ▶ Birth to 18 months = 1:3
- ▶ 2- and 3-year-olds = 1:5
- ▶ 4-year-olds and up = 1:8

Contact GraceKids Children's Ministry: 314-292-8300 x2164

GRACE CHURCH GROUP LEADER COMMITMENT STATEMENT

When you complete your one-on-one interview, you will be asked to sign a commitment like this. This copy is for your reference only.

- Will you regularly attend Grace's weekend & monthly Communion services? Yes No
- Will you support Grace Church with your tithes and offerings? Yes No
- If you haven't already, will you complete the Grace Base Classes and become a member? Yes No
- Will you support Grace's mission, statements of faith and values in your words & actions? Yes No
- Will you commit to teach and share the theological beliefs as taught in Orientation? Yes No
- Will you stay in contact with your division leader and return their calls? Yes No
- Will you attend the three Leader meetings (2 Huddles/ 1 State of Grace) each year? Yes No
- If Support Recovery Division, will you attend the 2 Continuing Ed. meetings each year? Yes No
- Will you commit to using only pre-approved materials in your group? Yes No
- Will you strive to have daily devotions in the bible and prayer? Yes No

By signing below, I affirm that the information on this form is true and accurate. I affirm that I have answered the above commitment statement prayerfully and with every intent, to do all that is specified. I agree to talk with my leadership if any of these commitments become too difficult.

Leader Signature _____

Leader Printed Name _____

Interviewer Signature as Witness _____

Date _____

GRACE  CHURCH

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