

*“And David shepherded them  
with integrity of heart;  
with skillful hands he led them.”  
- Psalm 78:72*

*“I have a special concern  
for you church leaders.  
I know what it’s like to be a leader,  
in on Christ’s sufferings  
as well as the coming glory.  
Here’s my concern:  
that you care for God’s flock  
with all the diligence of a shepherd.  
Not because you have to,  
but because you want to please God.  
Not calculating what you can get  
out of it, but acting spontaneously.  
Not bossily telling others what to do,  
but tenderly showing them the way.”  
- 1 Peter 5:1-3,  
The Message*

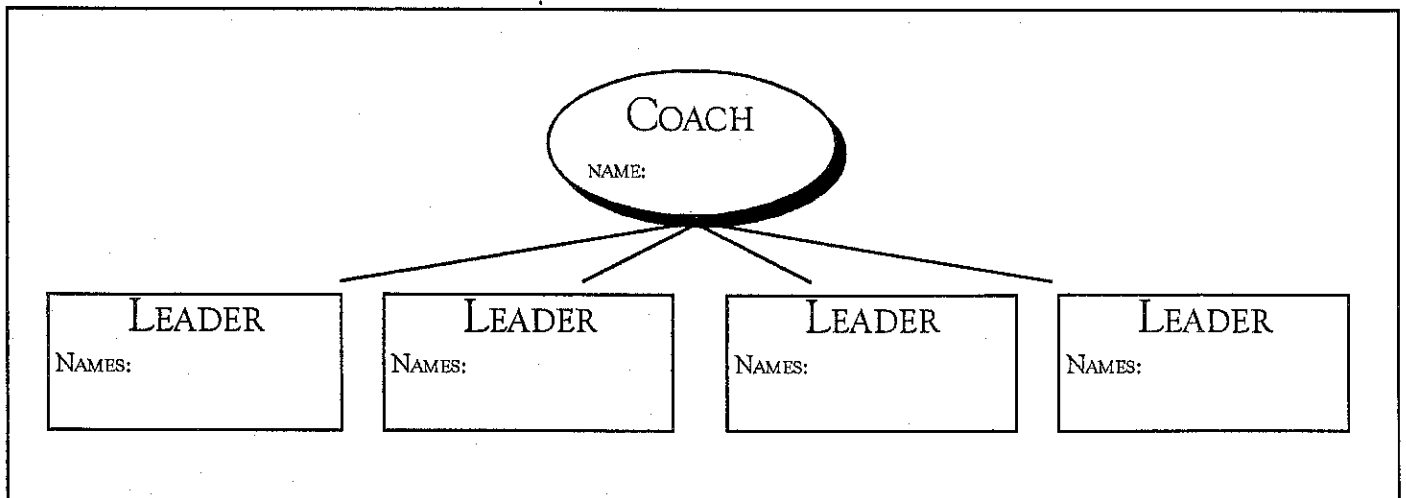
## CALLED TO COACH

The role of a “coach” is not a promotion from being a shepherding group leader. Rather, it is another place of service. A coach is a shepherd to shepherding group leaders. As a coach, you play a vital role in assuring that our group leaders get the care, encouragement, support and equipping they need in order to fulfill their ministry. Although Mid-County is without elders at the moment, our desire is that elders will eventually fill this strategic coaching role and shepherd the entire church through this structure.

Your goal as a coach is the spiritual success of your shepherding group leaders. You should be willing to do whatever it takes to develop your leaders and their small groups. Knowledge and skills combined with the example of your personal life has a powerful, transforming effect. What you do and how you live your life is your real ministry to your leaders. Teach them from your life.

You are a shepherd of leaders. As your leaders serve Christ, they will need your help. So study them, know them, love them and seek to release them into fulfilling ministry. Your ministry of leadership development is vital to this church—and it is your calling from God and privilege to fulfill this ministry. And as you go about your work of ministry, keep in mind that Jesus, the Great Shepherd, has promised to provide you with every good thing you need to accomplish His will (Hebrews 13:20-21)!

You might want to use the diagram below to identify the names of the Shepherding Group Leaders in your huddle. You can also use this to pray for those whom you serve.



*"I am the good shepherd.  
The good shepherd lays down  
his life for the sheep."  
- John 10:11*

***A LIFE  
INVESTED IN  
THE MINISTRY  
OF OTHERS IS  
NEVER WASTED.***

## THE ROLE OF THE COACH

Your role is much like that of a shepherding group leader, but now you are primarily focused on leaders instead of group members. Your responsibilities involve providing care and coaching for a specific number of shepherding group leaders. Your ministry takes place as you meet with your leaders either through a huddle, a visit, or one-on-one.

- **HUDDLES**  
a meeting with all of your leaders
- **VISITS**  
a visit to one of the shepherding groups of your leaders
- **ONE-ON-ONES**  
a meeting with one of your leaders (or one couple)

The way in which you meet with your leaders is entirely at your discretion. But each of these three settings provides its own unique opportunities for your ministry as a coach.

Your role in each of these meetings will be explained in greater detail later in this section of the notebook. But regardless of the setting, your role remains the same: to help leaders accomplish effective ministry and become more like Jesus. During these meetings, you will provide...

- ✓ **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**
- ✓ **PASTORAL CARE**
- ✓ **MINISTRY SUPPORT AND EXPANSION**

The chart on the following page adds some specifics to each of these three areas of responsibility. Refer to this chart as often as needed to get a snapshot of your role as a coach.

## THE ROLE OF THE COACH, CONTINUED...

	CATEGORIES	HUDDLES	VISITS	ONE-ON-ONES
DEVELOPING	<b>LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision Casting</li> <li>• Skills</li> <li>• Apprentices</li> </ul> <p>Focus is on <b>Person</b> (Mentoring)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remind leaders of the mission of small groups.</li> <li>• Use each other's successes and struggles to show how God raises up and develops leaders.</li> <li>• Teach leadership skills. <i>Leading Life-Changing Small Groups</i> is a good resource.</li> <li>• Have your apprentice coach lead parts of the Huddle.</li> <li>• Challenge leaders to develop their apprentices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build character and relational skills.</li> <li>• Identify areas to be developed.</li> <li>• Help them solve problems.</li> <li>• Encourage development of the apprentice leader in the group setting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm the leader's vision for ministry.</li> <li>• Discuss character and skills that need attention and devise a plan to develop them.</li> <li>• Help the leader identify and train an apprentice.</li> </ul>
NURTURING	<b>PASTORAL CARE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spiritual</li> <li>• Relational</li> <li>• Personal</li> </ul> <p>Focus is on <b>Need</b> (Helping)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model caregiving.</li> <li>• Encourage leaders to care for each other.</li> <li>• Challenge leaders to grow spiritually.</li> <li>• Help leaders and apprentices to build healthy relationships.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affirm leaders.</li> <li>• Observe the leader's relationships within the group.</li> <li>• Determine if leaders share ministry with members and apprentices.</li> <li>• Assist in conflict resolution and encourage the group to work through the stages of group life.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get to know leaders personally. Concentrate on real needs.</li> <li>• Be open and transparent with your life. Build an authentic relationship with each other.</li> <li>• In specific ways, encourage a deep relationship with Christ.</li> <li>• Involve them in membership orientation for a potential new member.</li> </ul>
EQUIPPING	<b>MINISTRY SUPPORT &amp; EXPANSION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prayer</li> <li>• Affirmation</li> <li>• Resources</li> </ul> <p>Focus is on <b>Task</b> (Teaching)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate what God is doing in groups and personal lives.</li> <li>• Pray for each other as a team.</li> <li>• Problem-solve together.</li> <li>• Exchange ideas and provide information.</li> <li>• Have fun and be creative with your huddle.</li> <li>• Help them identify potential leaders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine how you can pray for this group, its leader and apprentice.</li> <li>• Talk about the strengths of the leader and apprentice.</li> <li>• Identify helpful resources for study and for ministry.</li> <li>• Let them know you are available.</li> <li>• Discuss expanding the ministry with the "Open Chair" and birthing and the value of apprentices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pray specifically for the "Open Chair."</li> <li>• Problem-solve.</li> <li>• Celebrate all that God has done in their groups.</li> <li>• Challenge them to use the equipping process as a vehicle for discipling group members and recasting a vision for their group.</li> </ul>

*"Plans fail for lack of counsel,  
but with many advisers  
they succeed."  
- Proverbs 15:22*

***THE BIRTHING  
OF NEW GROUPS  
IS NOT BASED  
ON GROUP  
MULTIPLICATION  
SO MUCH AS  
LEADERSHIP  
CULTIVATION.***

## CONDUCTING HUDDLES

The huddle provides an opportunity for you to gather your leaders together, assess their needs and lead them toward accomplishing the vision of ministry through our Shepherding Groups. As you prayerfully consider the needs of your leaders, consider some of the following key components of an effective huddle.

- **VISION—**  
Keep the vision of "becoming like Christ" and "multiplying your ministry" as clear goals.
- **PRAYER—**  
Pray for each other and the ministry of this church. Listen to God. Be thankful. Express praise and worship.
- **RELATIONSHIPS—**  
Facilitate authentic relationships where they can discuss ministry issues as well as personal needs.
- **PROBLEM-SOLVE—**  
Discuss group issues and listen to the various perspectives each leader expresses.
- **CELEBRATE—**  
Celebrate what is happening in group life and personal life.
- **TEACHING—**  
Communicate information that helps them lead or inspires them in ministry.
- **SKILLS—**  
Provide leaders with new ideas on relationship building, asking creative questions, listening tips, different ways to pray as a group, etc.

## CONDUCTING HUDDLES, CONTINUED...

You can use the same key areas listed previously as a way of discerning areas where you need to lead and provide additional training:

- **VISION—**  
Can my leaders impart the vision for the Shepherding Groups to their group members? How do they explain it?
- **PRAYER—**  
What is prayer time like in their groups? Do they need some fresh ideas? How can they encourage their groups in the area of prayer?
- **RELATIONSHIPS—**  
Are the relationships in their groups growing? How can they encourage group members to be more open?
- **PROBLEM-SOLVE—**  
What problems are my leaders encountering and how can we work together in this huddle to explore solutions?
- **CELEBRATE—**  
How often and what do they celebrate in their groups?
- **TEACHING —**  
Are teaching/discussion skills strong? Is a discussion being led, allowing for all members to participate? Is application being stressed?
- **SKILLS—**  
Do my leaders need help in areas such as listening, conflict management, apprentice development, etc.?
- **INFORMATION UPDATE—**  
How do my leaders handle the exchange of information in their group? Is an appropriate amount of time (or too much time) being spent on this?

## CONDUCTING HUDDLES, CONTINUED...

### PLANNING AND EVALUATING YOUR HUDDLE

Jesus sent 70 people into various towns to talk about the kingdom of God, he sent them out with clear instructions and objectives (Luke 10:1-16). They returned for another “meeting” in which they reported all that God had done through them (Luke 10:17-23).

As you plan your huddle, you may want to follow the example of Jesus and include a “sending out” (anticipating ministry) and a “coming back” (reviewing ministry) aspect for your meeting.

After your huddle, take a few minutes and evaluate your time together. If you have an apprentice coach, evaluate your huddle together.

- ✓ Was the huddle worth the leaders’ time and effort?
- ✓ Did the leaders feel encouraged?
- ✓ Did the huddle meet the leaders’ needs?
- ✓ Did it have “take-home” value?
- ✓ Did each leader have an opportunity to participate?

*“Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, ‘Let us go back and visit the brothers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing.’”*

*- Acts 15:36*

*“For I long to visit you so that I can impart to you the faith that will help your church grow strong in the Lord.*

*Then, too, I need your help, for I want not only to share my faith with you but to be encouraged by yours: Each of us will be a blessing to the other.”*

*- Romans 1:11, Good News*

***GIVE THEM A CHALLENGE.***

***GIVE THEM CONTROL.***

***GIVE THEM CREDIT.***

## VISITING GROUPS

One of the most effective ways you can coach your Shepherding Group leaders is to “make the rounds,” visiting each group, paying attention to the general well-being of the leader and members. Visits, if done correctly, will leave a group feeling affirmed and encouraged about themselves.

Since leaders may have some anxiety about your visit, be certain they understand that you are there to support and encourage them, to be a resource, and to discern anything that would prove helpful to the health of the group. Look for an opportunity toward the end of the meeting to tell the group whatever words of encouragement that you feel comfortable expressing—particularly of the group leaders themselves.

Having a clear sense of purpose prior to your visit will clarify your role during the visit and make it much more effective. Ask yourself these questions regarding your group visit:

- ✓ WHY AM I VISITING THIS GROUP?
- ✓ WHAT DO I HOPE TO ACHIEVE?

Here are some possible answers to those questions:

### For Myself:

- I hope to get to know the leader and group members better.
- I hope to gain an understanding of how the leader relates to the group.
- I want to see how the leader is developing the apprentice.
- I wish to understand the nature of the relationships in the group.
- I will evaluate the commitment level of the group members to this group.

### For The Leader:

- I want to provide support and encouragement to this leader.
- The leader needs help in assessing a particular situation.
- There is some problem-solving that the leader needs help with.
- I want to support this leader with some new ideas and methods.
- I will acknowledge this leader's positive qualities to group members.



## VISITING GROUPS, CONTINUED...

### For The Group Members:

- I will encourage them in their commitment to participating in a Shepherding Group and growing in their relationship with Christ.
- I would like to clarify the vision for our Shepherding Groups (or keep the "mission" in front of them).

Pray about how God can use you in the life of this group and leader. The following are some questions that may help you in making some observations about the group during your visit:

- Was the setting conducive to a good meeting?
- Did the leader facilitate good discussion, listening to the responses of each member?
- How well did the group members relate to each other, exercising one-another ministry?
- Was prayer and/or praise meaningful in the group?
- How was God at work in this meeting? Did any life change take place?
- Is the "Open Chair" being used? Is birthing a part of the group's strategy?



*“As iron sharpens iron,  
so one man sharpens another.”  
- Proverbs 27:17*

## **HOW TO BRING OUT THE BEST IN PEOPLE:**

**B ELIEVE IN THEM.**

**E NCOURAGE THEM.**

**S HARE WITH THEM.**

**T RUST THEM.**

You will find some excellent teaching about the entire coaching process in John Maxwell's book, *Developing the Leaders Around You*.

## ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS

The purpose of one-on-one meetings is to establish a personal relationship with each leader. You cannot mentor your leaders from a distance. Your “personal touch” will assure your leaders that they are valued, affirmed and empowered. Be sensitive to the need of each leader, whether it be a need for direction, coaching or support. Spend a significant amount of your time in prayer—even if your meeting is taking place over the phone! Pray for them and their family specifically, their group and any special needs that are mentioned.

Draw from some of the following questions as a way of helping leaders evaluate their ministry as well as set direction for their groups. [Shepherding Group leaders have these same questions available to them on page 2-7, “Weekly Processing Questions for Group Leaders.”]

- Regarding your weekly time together: How did it go? Did caring occur? Did people have significant conversations? Was truth communicated?
- Did you do something that was particularly effective and might be useful to pass along to other group leaders?
- How many people on your group list were you in touch with between group meetings?
- What are some good things that have happened to the people in your care?
- What are some of the challenges faced by those within your care?
- What are your concerns about your ability to minister to them? Do you have any special needs requiring help from your coach or the church staff?
- Do you have an apprentice leader at the moment? What progress are you noticing in them? What are you doing to encourage and equip them?
- Into what serving or outreach opportunities are you encouraging or leading your group?
- What areas of your own leadership do you desire to develop?