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# Welcome to Connect Ministry

**Goal:** Understand the Mission, Vision, Strategy and Structure of Connect Ministry.

**Guiding Principle:** Connect Leaders are shepherds of the adults at Grace Church. It is important to know why Connect Ministry exists, where we are headed and how it works in the overall life of Grace Church.

## **Mission of Grace:**

To help people find Christ and become his mature followers.

## **Vision of Grace:**

Creating safe communities where imperfect people grow.

## **Model of Grace:**

Worship, Connect, Serve, Reach

## **Strategy of Grace: (Simple Church)**

1. Weekend Services (Worship and Serve)
2. Connect Group Ministry (Connect and Reach)

1 Peter 5:2-4 Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

## **Mission of Connect Groups:**

Easy to join; Fun to Participate in; Safe to Grow

## **Vision of Connect Groups:**

Creating safe communities where imperfect people grow.

## **Strategy of Connect Groups:**

Assimilation: To move people from the weekend church service into small group communities in order to know others on a more personal level and be known.

Growth: Groups develop a deeper maturity in Christ through learning and applying God's word in a safe environment to share, ask questions and process.

Leadership and Apprenticeship: Groups provide opportunity for each individual to identify and use their spiritual gifts. Members of the group can help lead the group in different roles (ie. prayer coordinator, food coordinator, child care coordinator, etc.) or be apprenticed by you during the semester to learn how to lead their own Connect Group in future semesters.

Reach: Groups provide an opportunity to invite people who may not be comfortable attending church to your group to experience what church community is like. Groups also provide opportunities to go as a group to help serve at Project Reach at risk families.

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## Overview of Connect Groups:

### 100% Participation

- We believe everyone benefits in being part of a smaller community where they are able to use their gifts, apply truth and where real needs are being met.

### Group Size = 8-15 people per group

- This size typically allows for a safe environment where everyone is able to share thoughts, ask questions, and ask for prayer. There is greater accountability for attendance and follow up with this size group.
- What if groups grow beyond this size?
  - Larger groups can divide into smaller groups for discussion. Talk to your team leader to strategize a plan to control the content but foster connection.
- When should you break up a group?
  - When you grow beyond your meeting space.
  - When you want to create other options for that demographic in order to reach more people.
- What if your group is too small?
  - Keep inviting people to join. There is nothing more important to grow a group than personal invitations. Talk to your team leader to strategize how to add more people to your group.

### Semester system

- Groups meet 3 semesters a year for 12 weeks each semester with about a six week break in between. This provides:
  - Not a life sentence
  - Easy entry point for new comers to Grace Church
  - Opportunity to re-evaluate

**Fall:** Oct - Dec

**Spring:** Feb - April

**Summer:** June - August

### Reach

- Each semester your group is asked to serve together in an outreach. You can participate in our church Reach programs through Project Reach. Email [reach@gracesd.com](mailto:reach@gracesd.com) for how to make this happen.

### Social Event

- Groups are encouraged to use one of their meetings for a social gathering.

### Link Events

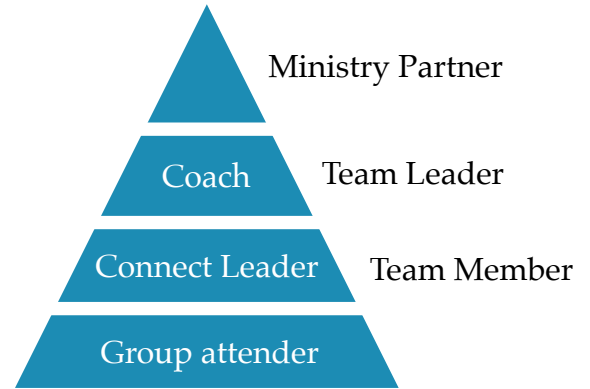
- Between semesters Link Events are organized for weekend attenders to attend an event put on by the church that has a low commitment. Some examples are the Men's Advance, Women's events, etc. The goal of Link Events is to get attenders into Connect Groups the following semester. Connect Leaders should attend these events to meet new people and encourage them to join a group.
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## Connect Group Leadership Structure and Networks:

### Connect Group Leadership Structure

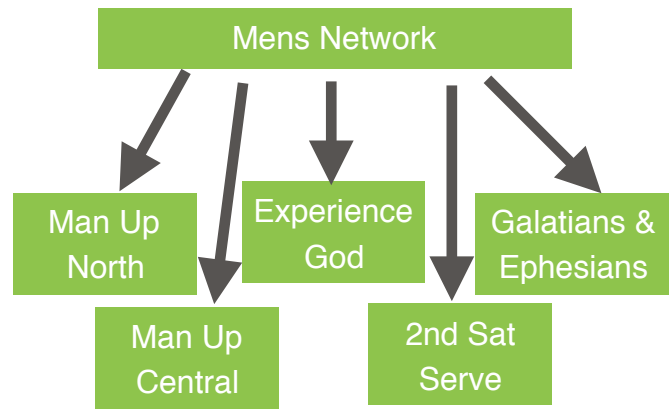
The structure of Connect Groups consists of a Ministry Partner overseeing the whole ministry, team leaders who coach connect group leaders and connect group leaders who shepherd group attenders.



### A Network of Connect Groups

A network is a group of similar connect groups. Current Networks: Recovery, Equip, Families, Mens, Womens, Moms, Everyone, Activities, Outreach, Young Professionals.

Here is an example of the Men's Network:



### What a Connect Group team member does:

Form: Plan what kind of group to lead? Apply to be a leader and FORM your group.

Fill: Promote groups during promotion month.

Facilitate: Communicate with group, plan & lead group meetings throughout the semester.

### What a Connect Group team leader does:

Care and coach Connect Group leaders.

Pray for their team members in your network.

Connect on the phone at least once a month to check in.

Attend each group at least once in the semester to coach them in their facilitation.

Be a resources and point of contact for you the Connect Leader.

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