

## Maintaining a Healthy MC

### Keep A Close Watch

Good leaders are good self leaders. This does not mean that they are sufficient on their own. It means that they will keep themselves accountable to foster growth in their lives. As Paul reminds Timothy, “Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.”

How is your prayer life, time in God’s word, your marriage, your parenting? We are not perfect, but we are called to a higher standard.

To help, it is the Lead Pastor’s commitment to continually build into you. This takes place during meetings about MCs, Sundays Gatherings, MC Leaders Trainings, and informal get togethers.

Lastly, always be growing in the gospel. Know it more and more. Apply it to more areas in your life. Practice preaching it to yourself, your group and your neighbours. Come to know how it is the power of God for salvation for all who believe.

### Communicate, Communicate, Communicate,

Good leaders communicate well. It is our greatest weapon as a team. Be quick to communicate with the Lead Pastor. Communicate often with other MC Leaders. If you are struggling or doing well, communicating too much is always better than not communicating enough.

Communicate with your MC. People forget and vision leaks. Speak often about the vision and direction of MCs. They will primarily hear through you.

Most importantly, be in constant communication with God. He is the one

### Life Cycles of MCs

Our hope is that MCs multiply so that more people can be reached and saved by the gospel. However, there are also times when it may be necessary to shut down an MC. Do not be discouraged by this. MCs are vehicles, but what matters most is the health of those inside the vehicle.

## An Introduction to this Guide

At The Meadows, Missional Communities is the structural framework of our church. They are the way in which we disciple one another and live out the mission of God. Through them, we love God, love each other and love our neighbours.

### A Simple Structure that is Highly Relational

We deeply value relationships. God is all about changing lives and He uses His Spirit through His people to create that change. Missional Communities provide a simple structure that allows everyone to keep our focus on connecting with one another and reaching out to our neighbours.

### Send Us Out

Missional Communities are the sending out of our people to live on mission throughout the remainder of the week. We start the week off worshipping God together at our Sunday Reunions, then are sent out to live for Christ by the power of the Spirit together.



## Our Greatest Need

For Missional Communities to thrive, our greatest need are leaders who will follow Christ on His mission and call others to join them. This is why this guide exists. It will provide the vision of Missional Communities and detail how appointed church members can lead an MC well.

## The Gospel Foundation

All that we do must be based on the Gospel, for it alone “is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (Rom 1:16). Therefore, we need to always make sure that our message and our methods are shaped by it. Missional Communities are no exception.

The Gospel reveals to us who God is by telling us what He has done for us. In turn, this changes our identity and gives us a new purpose for life.

## The Gospel Defines Our Identity

WHO IS GOD?	WHAT HAS HE DONE?	WHO ARE WE?	WHAT DO WE DO?
Father	Substituted His Son for Us	Loved Child in the <b>Family</b> of God	Love One Another
Son	Saved Us into His Likeness	<b>Disciples</b> remade in His image	Grow One Another
Holy Spirit	Sent the Son and Us	<b>Missionaries</b> sent by the Spirit	Proclaim Jesus to Others

Missional Communities must maintain a balance by living out all three identities. Regularly ask, how are we doing as a family? As disciples? As missionaries? Some seasons may call for leaning into one more than the other two, however, we fail to follow Christ if any are neglected.

### MCs are NOT Bible Studies...

Because the Bible is to be lived out and shared with our neighbours

### MCs are NOT Social Clubs...

Because everyone needs Jesus, not just relationships

### MCs are NOT Support Groups...

Because growth leads to giving and growth comes from the Gospel

MCs go as a **family** of **disciples** on **mission**

## Leadership Modes

**Gardner, Not God** - Your goal is to create a health environment for people to grow. You cannot force growth, but you can cultivate it.

**Catalyst, Not CEO** - Call people to God’s plan by casting vision and asking good questions.

**Example, Not Perfect** - You are inviting people to watch your life and follow you as you follow Jesus on mission.

**Missional, Not Protective** - They are a champion for the mission by reminding the group about the it and the why.

**Shepherding, Not Militant** - They focus on the internal care of the group. They are thinking through their spiritual formation and wellbeing.

## Leader’s Discernment Questions

Leaders must always be reflecting on where God is leading their MC.

- What do we need to be praying for?
- Which Scriptures should we be reflecting on?
- Who is it that we are reaching?
- What are our MC’s greatest strengths at the moment?
- Where does our MC need to grow?
- Who can I build into to become a leader?

## Leader’s Discipleship Questions

Most of discipleship happens in informal settings: conversations over meals, at the park, and in the regular flow of life. As a leader, how can you pursue others and have intentional conversations that produce fruit? Here is a list of go-to questions to ask in the formal and informal moments of missional community life.

- What was something great that happened in your week?
- Where did you see Jesus in your life this week?
- What do you believe God is teaching you of late?
- What has made you feel worried or frustrated this week?
- In what areas do you think God wants you to grow in?
- What have you been praying for lately?
- What does that reveal about your desires and priorities?

## Leaders Ministry Description

MC Leaders fulfill a vital role in the life of The Meadows Church. They are appointed under-shepherds over a group of members within our church.

### Who is Qualified?

An MC leader must meet the character qualifications of a deacon found in 1 Timothy 3. They must be members of The Meadows Church. They should be able to articulate the vision of what a Missional Community is about. They must have a heart for reaching the lost and shepherding God's people. Should have a vibrant prayer life and be a diligent student of God's Word.

### A Leader's Commitment

- Preparing and Planning. Spend an hour each week ensuring FDNs, DNAs, missional activity, and all other activities run well.
- Praying and Processing. Spend an hour each week praying for your MC and discerning through God's leading for your people.
- Ensure DNA groups are meeting and are functioning well. This involves ongoing teaching for how to study the Bible properly.
- Oversee the Family Dinner Nights. Leaders are not required to host. However, they need to make sure they are run well and are welcoming.
- Keep the focus of the MC on mission. Help to target a specific group of people with the gospel and keep the MC's attention outward.
- Seek to develop future MC Leaders from within your MC
- Report to Lead Pastor any significant problems with your MC or its members in a timely matter

### A Commitment to Grow Together

- Meet with Lead Pastor biweekly to share challenges and successes of your MC and to hear feedback and direction
- Will attend six MC Leadership training days a year
- Read an appointed book on MCs once a year

## How to Fulfill All Three Identities Together

A Missional Community (MC) is a family of families who have **covenanted together** promising to **care for one another** and fulfill a **common mission**.

### FAMILY

Through Jesus, the Father adopts us into His family. MCs take seriously the idea that we ought to love each other like family. We celebrate together, laugh together, mourn together and set our schedules together.

Therefore, members commit to care for, pray for, serve, and eat with one another on a regular basis.

### DISCIPLE

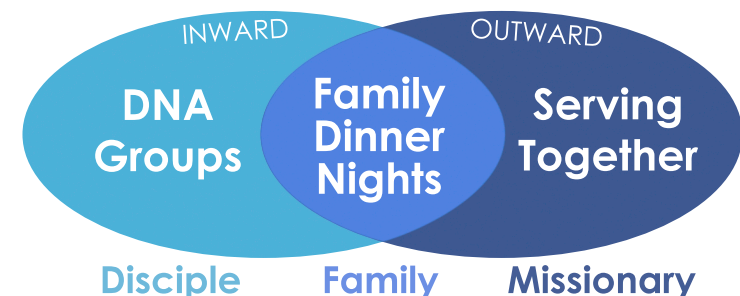
Every follower of Jesus is called to be an imitator of Jesus. This takes God's power and the church's help. MCs provide both formal and informal times to encourage one another with the gospel to walk with Jesus.

Therefore, members commit to study God's Word together in DNA's and use this time to encourage, build up, and correct one another.

### MISSIONARY

Some of Jesus' last words were a commission directing his followers to go out into the world to spread the good news about God's saving grace. Jesus sent them out in communities and with the power of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, members commit to share the Gospel to a focused demographic through word and deed as a team.



## Family Dinner Nights

Families eat together. Jesus prioritized gathering around food as he both built up the church family and reached out to his neighbours. Therefore, it is essential to invest our time to do the same.

### Making a Plan

FDNs need to be planned out. Someone needs to host, enough food must be there, and people should be invited. All of this takes time and planning. However, you should not do this alone. Use your members to work as a team to host the evening. Ask others to contribute food and help with set up and clean up.

### Everyone has a Place at the Table

Just like at Jesus' table, everyone should be welcomed. Think through how all ages and peoples can be included in. This may effect the food you serve, dietary restrictions, seating arrangements, toys and entertainment. Think through how you can expand capacity limits while still making sure everyone has enough space. Be aware of pets, cleanliness, etc and how this all may affect guests.

### Lead the Dialogue

Although the evening is not a structured teaching time, you can still guide the conversations and bring up the Gospel in natural ways. It does not need to be focused, but we can do this as long as we have intentionality. Teach your people how to do this and lead by example. The hosting is important, but so is the dialogue.

### Lead as a Family

Your whole family are hosts so be sure to include in your children. They too are hosts and will make an impact on those who come for dinner. This is also an opportunity to show others how to parent their children in the Lord. Feel free to show examples of discipline.



We grow by **partnering** together with others from our MC to intentionally speak the **gospel** into our lives

A DNA Group ideally consists two or three people—men with men, women with women— from the same Missional Community, who meet together once a week to disciple one another. The goal is to help one another to **DISCOVER** Jesus in the Scriptures, **NURTURE** the truths of the gospel in our hearts, and faithfully **ACT** on what the Spirit calls us to do.

#### Discover *Teach the Head*

Read a passage of the Scriptures as laid out by subheadings in your Bible. Be students of the Word, not experts. Make basic observations as you slowly piece together the main point of the biblical author. Before we apply, we must know why. Be a detective gathering all the evidence before concluding who is the suspect.

**What is the ONE main point the original author is making to the original audience?**

#### Act *Empower the Hands*

Let the passage speak to your everyday life. Everyone share how God wants you to live differently and how the gospel will help you to change. Be clear, be genuine, be specific!

**What is the ONE way I will live differently this week because of God's Word?**

End in prayer to commit these actions to God and ask the Spirit to work in you this week. Come back next week ready to share how God worked in you and carry on with the next passage in the Bible

#### Nurture *Shepherd the Heart*

Take God's Word and compare it to the way we have been living recently. Ask good questions of each other to get at the root of our sin. Behind all of our sin is an unbelief in who God is. Once a struggle or sin is shared, dig deep to understand the belief that motivates that action or behavior.

1. How have I not been living inline with this main point?
2. What does my sin reveal about my beliefs about God?
3. What has Jesus done in his life, death, or resurrection to deal with this sin?

Speak the truth in love as the Spirit leads you, reminding each other of what Christ has done for us. Repent of our unbelief.

**What is the ONE thing I need to repent of and accept Jesus' forgiveness for?**