

FAQs

1. If I am a Small Group Leader, does that mean I also have to host the Small Group meetings at my house?
 - No, you do not have to host group at your house, but you would need to be the one securing a place to meet.
2. Could our Small Group meet at church?
 - At this time there is no availability to meet at church. Additionally, meeting in locations across the Fox Valley better suits our model of Small Group ministry – it is our belief that meeting in environments outside of the church walls better facilitates relationships because of the warmth of a home is much greater than a meeting room at a church building.
3. What is the minimum length of time I need to commit to leading a group for?
 - We ask you to make a commitment of a minimum of eight sessions.
4. How will I find people to join my group?
 - Personal invite is the best way; however, in addition to the group being listed on the PWC website and app, there will be a variety of opportunities provided to help populate your Small Group.
5. Is it okay to partner with a friend(s) to co-lead a group?
 - Yes!
6. Does the church purchase curriculum for Small Groups?
 - No, because the church subscribes to RightNow Media (RNM) and offers a complimentary RNM account to PWC attenders, we do not purchase curriculum for Small Groups.
7. What is RightNow Media and how do I get access to it?
 - RightNow Media is an online streaming media library for individuals in every age and stage of life – think “Netflix” of Bible studies and more! Request a complimentary account at pathwayschurch.us/rightnowmedia.
8. What is a message based group?
 - A Message Based group takes a deeper dive into the weekend message and typically uses the provided discussion questions called “Beyond the Row.”
9. Where can I find the Beyond the Row discussion questions?
 - They can be found at pathwayschurch.us/messages/, and also under “Media” on the Pathways Church mobile app. Hard copies of the questions are available in the Connect Area.
10. How do I let you know that I am interested in becoming a Small Group Leader?
 - To learn more, or indicate interest for either being an apprentice under a current Small Group Leader, or to directly enter the process to become a Small Group Leader, complete the “Leader Interest” form found on the groups page of pathwayschurch.us or call the church office to request an interest form to be emailed to you.

Small Group Ministry of Pathways Church

Pathways Church exists to lead people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ, and the purpose of Small Groups is to support this mission. Additionally, it is our goal to be a church OF Small Groups and not just a church WITH Small groups.

A Small Group is defined as a group of up to 12 or so people who meet on a regular basis to collectively encourage one another and challenge one another to grow in one's relationship with Jesus Christ.

- We believe group discipleship is beneficial because just as “iron sharpens iron,” when people who are at different points of their spiritual journey gather together in the context of a small group, they are continually encouraging, challenging, and inspiring one another in their walk with Christ.

Group Resources provided by PWC

- Beyond the Row discussion questions for Message Based groups
 - Message Based groups takes a deeper dive into the weekend message
- Complimentary access to RightNow Media
- The Discovery Bible Study.

Group Promotion

- pathwayschurch.us/groups (optional promo video)
- PWC mobile app
- Business cards
- GroupLink events

Men's and Women's Events

Each ministry year, the Small Group Ministry at PWC will hold two events for men, and two events for women.

- The purpose of the events is two-fold:
 - To create a time of connection for those who attend PWC.
 - Ideally, the event will also include a component of Small Group promotion.
 - To create an opportunity for PWC attenders to invite “unchurched/de-churched” people to join them at the events.
- The events are promoted in a variety of ways:
 - Church calendar
 - Video announcements
 - Weekend service bulletin
 - Social Media
 - Email invites to list of past event attenders
 - Through Small Group Leaders and members
 - Print material – postcard type invites

Within Small Groups, “men's” and “women's” ministry should be happening on a continual basis depending on the needs of the Small Group. For example, in a group made up of men and women, the group could structure their meeting time for men and women to periodically meet separately – for social reasons, or to focus on a study that is tailored for a specific sex.

Basic Information

- New Small Groups can be formed any time.
 - Newly formed groups have the option to begin with the eight-week video study "Community: Starting Well in Your Small Group."
 - The purpose of this study is get to know one another over an eight-week period.
- After the initial eight-week study, most of PWC Small Groups are message based* groups; however, that is not a requirement.
 - Instead of being a message based study, a group could be based on a common interest/activity (subject to approval), a RightNow Media study, or another type of Bible study (Such as the Discovery Bible Study).
 - Because the church subscribes to RightNow media and offers it complimentary for individual and group use, we do not purchase curriculum for Small Groups.
- The Small Group Leader has complete flexibility on the when and how often the group would meet.
- It is preferred that invites are not actively extended to people who attend other churches.
 - Each church has a unique God-given mandate on how to lead people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ, and PWC Small Groups are an extension of PWC even if the groups are not message based groups.
 - While our focus is moving people from the "row" to the "circle," we realize that in some cases, people will start in a "circle" before they attend the row.

Process to become a Small Group Leader at Pathways Church

- One can either "apprentice" with a current Small Group Leader or directly enter the Small Group leader process.
 - To learn more, or indicate interest, complete the "Leader Interest" form found on the groups page of pathwayschurch.us or call the church office to request an interest form to be emailed to you.
- Periodically, there will be informational meetings offered for interested parties to learn more about leading/forming a Small Group.

Training provided

- Periodic Small Group Leader trainings will be offered.
 - Generally, second Sunday of each month from 8 – 8:45 AM.
 - All Church "Team Nights."
- Suggested materials on RightNow Media for individual use.
- Training and documentation on how to use the Church Community Builder platform.
- Training on the process of connecting with individuals via pathwayschurch.us/groups.
- Each Small Group Leader will have a "Team Lead" to assist as needed.

*A Message Based group takes a deeper dive into the weekend message and typically uses the provided discussion questions called "Beyond the Row."

SMALL GROUP LEADER ROLE

The primary role of a Small Group Leader at Pathways Church (PWC) is to facilitate a group of up to 12 or so people to collectively encourage one another and challenge one another to grow in one's relationship with Jesus Christ.

This is accomplished by:

1. Meeting regularly
2. Encouraging group participation by creating a safe environment where group members feel comfortable sharing.
3. Leading by example in the areas of encouraging one another, being transparent with one another, offering/receiving accountability, and loving one another.
4. Preparing content, and/or reviewing prepared content prior to meeting.
5. Praying regularly for individuals in the Small Group.
6. Coordinating care for members in a crisis situation (Example: Meals for someone who had surgery.)
7. Establishing group guidelines (sample "GroupLife Agreement" guideline attached)

Secondary responsibilities include:

1. Scheduling meetings
2. Communication – acting as a liaison between church leadership and group members.
3. Utilizing Church Community Builder (CCB) platform to keep Small Group info current (participants and group info/description)
4. Identifying potential Small Group Leaders and investing in his/her development

Characteristics of a Small Group Leader:

1. Honorable
2. Trustworthy
3. Consistent
4. Dependable

Small Group Team Lead

Objective: To come alongside of those who are leading Small Groups at Pathways Church to offer support and assistance as needed.

Goals:

1. Pray daily for your Small Group Leaders.
2. Have personal contact with each leader at least two times per month (i.e. phone, text, email, note, etc.).
3. Be a “life coach”— as needed or requested, provide inspirational leadership, support, and accountability to your Small Group Leaders.
4. Identify and mentor Small Group Leaders to be future coaches.
5. As needed, assist your Small Group Leaders in identifying and mentoring assistant group leaders.
6. As needed, assist your Small Group Leaders with curriculum requests.