

## Sermon Based Small Group 1<sup>st</sup> Session

Each person shares their name, who makes up their family unit, how they came to Good Shepherd and what they hope to get out of being a part of this small group.

### (READ)

The mission of Good Shepherd is to “Make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” The Discipleship path at Good Shepherd is Worship, Serve, Belong. Small Groups are a way to belong while growing in your faith.

### Belong (Coordinator Read Aloud)

The purpose of a small group is to actively pursue Christ through relationships, as the small groups worship, serve, and belong together.

### Why Small Groups?

We will begin by providing a Biblical foundation on which SBSG groups have been designed. Let's begin by reading Acts 2:37-47. What do you see the early church doing together?

Acts 2:42 (NRSV): They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

**Worship God:** Acts 2:42 – Apostles' teaching in small groups. Through your prayers (both in and out of church), presence in worship, being generous and giving back to God through the ministry of the church as he has blessed us (tithe... 10% of income).

**Serve:** Acts 2:45 – Serve those in the small group, in the local church and in the community (ATP...once a semester).

**Belong Together:** Acts 2:42 – Fellowship and breaking of bread in small groups.

**Prayer:** Acts 2:42 - Lifted each other up in prayer through personal prayer request.

**What will a sermon based small group do?** The purpose of our small group is to actively pursue Christ through relationships, as we worship, serve, and belong together. (This group is not about being best friends with everyone in the group; it's about spiritual growth.)

### 1. Small groups will build Christ-centered relationships within the Church by:

- a. Reading Scripture
- b. Fellowship
- c. Service
- d. Prayer

### 2. Small Groups will be a safe place to learn about Christ.

- a. Approximately an hour should be devoted to reading through the scripture, sermon synopsis, discipleship point and working through each question.
- b. Discussion facilitation will ideally rotate between members of the group. These individuals will be responsible for coming prepared to facilitate the discussion. Ideally all small group participants have listened to the sermon to be discussed. No one will be lecturing on a topic; these discussions will be stronger, and the group will gel more quickly if as many people as who feel comfortable join in on the discussions. Responses to questions need to be personal (this is a safe place) and related to how the sermon will be lived out in their life.
- c. No one will ever be called on to pray or talk.
- d. All are welcome at this group. This may mean that we have a new person joining the group at some point. They are to be welcomed as one of our own.

### 3. **Small Groups will provide a place where members can practice living for Christ.**

- a. The beauty of learning about Christ is so we can live for Christ. This means this small group will be about how the sermon will be lived out in our lives by sharing about our lives with each other (good/bad/growing). Participants will also encourage each other to use their God-given gifts and talents in the church and in the community as the Holy Spirit leads each individual.
- b. Even as individuals seek the Spirit's direction on their lives, Small Groups are encouraged to seek the Spirit's direction on their group as a whole. Some Small Groups will connect and remain a group, others may decide to multiply (16 is max), and still others may need to take a break at some point.

### 4. **Small Groups will serve together.**

- a. To be their most effective, participants will serve their group by fulfilling several roles. These will include hosts to provide space and snacks, facilitators to guide the discussion, and a coordinator to communicate.
- b. One of the most important ways that you can help your Small Group is to communicate effectively. This means responding to your group communication quickly, letting your group know when and why you will have to miss is one of the most helpful things a member can do.
- c. Small Group members are encouraged to serve somewhere in the church. It is the desire of Good Shepherd that you will serve in the area where you are most passionate and gifted (i.e. gsKids, gsYouth, building and grounds, band, vocals, sound, slides, live stream, coffee, connection desk, usher)
- d. As a Small Group we will serve at A Turning Point together at least 1x per semester we are together.

### **Framework for Sermon Based Small Group:**

## **Roles within the Small Group:**

**Coordinator:** This is the person that takes responsibility for the group. Here is a list of what a coordinator would take responsibility for.

- Several days before each weekly small group session sends a form of communication (whatever the group decides is the best way to communicate) to everyone. This communication is to remind the small group of location (it may change, it may not), who the facilitator is for that week, food plans, and what will be discussed (content comes from the sermon / gs app).
- Records prayer requests in a group journal (one to two sentences prayer request). Prayer requests are to be personal.
- Record group attendance and email/communicate with either Bryan or Carolyn.
- This person will stay in weekly contact with either Bryan or Carolyn.
- Organizes the group and sets schedules for facilitators and hosts.
- Talks through small group covenant and gathers signatures.

**Facilitator:** The word teacher or leader does not create the atmosphere we're looking for. Unlike a teacher or leader, a facilitator is not expected to have all the answers or to have the final say on any issues. A facilitator will guide the conversations and welcome other people to participate in the discussion. Also, the role of facilitator is passed around, so people can take turns.

**Host:** Provides snacks, space, set-up of room. 12-14 people

## **Discuss and sign-up for either Facilitator or Host**

**Frequency and Times of Small Group:** Sermon based small groups meet weekly for one hour and fifteen minutes. There needs to be a very clear beginning and end time to the group. Typical Small Groups will begin meeting after Labor Day (week of September 9) and will end the week of May 5). Small Groups will break during the holidays, June, July, and August. (Small Groups will be encouraged to get together for fellowship 2x while on summer break).

**Covenant Form (pass out, discuss and sign form) – turn into Small Group Coordinator**



## **SBSG – Sermon Series – Fail: Jeremiah's Story**

### **The Purpose of a Sermon Based Small Group (to be read at the beginning of each gathering)**

The purpose of our small group is to actively pursue Christ through relationships, as we worship, serve, and belong together.

### **READ ALOUD BY ALL (allow this prayer to shape your time together)**

**Dear God, help me in this dialogue to be humble & suspend judgment. I recognize that we are all created in your image. Give me courage to stay curious about each other by asking questions. Thank you, God, for this opportunity to meet together and in so doing grow closer to you. AMEN**

**Sermon Series:** Fail

**Opening question:** Have you ever failed at something? If so, what was it?

**Sermon Synopsis:** Ever felt like there was too much in life that seemed outside your control? Or that the deck was stacked against you, and caused you to fail? Welcome to the club! Jeremiah was a prophet in the Old Testament who encountered circumstances none of us would choose. Yet, his story reminds us that we can control our response.

### **Bible Reading**

Reading the Bible is about reading for practice and spiritual formation – spiritual formation, in which the reader seeks to be formed by the Spirit of God.

**Passage(s) from the sermon:** Jeremiah 1:1-10

What questions do you have about the passages/sermon?

What do you feel God is saying to you through this passage?

**Discipleship Point:** we can't control our circumstances, but we can control our response

How can our response to our circumstances be honoring to God?

### **Personal Prayer Request**

Share a one or two sentence prayer request with the Small Group for this next week.

Remember these prayer requests are about your life not someone else's.

### **(Sample Prayer)**

God, we thank you for your presence with us. We lift up these requests to you knowing that you care deeply about us...we pray for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and (fill in prayer requests) ... God we know that you have heard our request and we release all outcomes to you and your glory. It's in your Son's name Jesus that we pray...**AMEN.**