



# Connection Group

Leadership  
Manual





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# Why do we do Connection Groups?

We believe that personal transformation occurs in the context of relationships. Connection Groups have one purpose: To bring people together. God created us to live in community with others, and only when that happens can we experience the life God created for us.

Meaningful relationships can be hard to find; Connection groups exist so that the relationships that generate changes in your life are relevant and accessible to you.

9 It is better to be two than one, because both can help each other. Mind to achieve success. 10 If one falls, the other can hold his hand and help him; But he who falls and is alone, he is in trouble. 11 Likewise, if two people lie down together, they can provide warmth to each other; But how does one just keep warm? 12 Someone who is alone can be attacked and defeated, but if there are two, They stand back-to-back and win; even better if there are three, because a triple cord is not easily cut.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

## Connection Group Model

At Ascend Church we believe that the church must grow and become bigger and smaller at the same time. We get bigger reach as many people as possible with the living message of Jesus. We meet in Connection Groups to build community and care for people.

Ascend Church is not a church with connection groups,  
it's a church of connection groups

We base the model of our Connection Groups on the church described in the Bible, in the book of Acts. In Acts we can read how small group meetings held in homes helped create the foundation for exponential growth in the first church in Jerusalem.



42 Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.

Acts 5:42

### Connection Groups provide people with:

#### 1. A place to Connect with others.

22 When I am with those who are weak, I share their weakness, for I want to bring the weak to Christ. Yes, I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some.

1 Corinthians 9:22

We have not been made to live alone. God has created us to belong to a community, and Connection Groups provide a place for you to connect with others, share your life with them, and grow together in faith.

#### 2. A place to Care for one another.

16 We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters.

1 John 3:16

When we do life together, our problems become smaller as we see how, through others, God supports and encourages us. Connection Groups are a place where we not only know your name but also care about you and what you're going through, walking with you in your spiritual growth.

#### 3. A place to Grow alongside others.

As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.

Proverbs 27:17

We believe that each person was created with great God-given potential to make a difference in the world. Ascend Church is a place where you can grow with others to become more like Jesus and develop the potential that God has placed within you.



# What is a Connection Group like?

## Your life is your Group

At Ascend Church, we want people to gather based on the things they enjoy and that are important to them. Essentially, the things you're already doing in your life can be your Connection Group. Sports groups, lunch groups, mom groups, student groups, dance groups, painting groups, Bible study groups, creative arts groups - our groups are as diverse as we are. Every group falls within one of the following segments:

- >Kids
- >Men
- >Marriages and Family
- >Ascend Youth
- >Women
- >Young Adults

## Things you should know about Connection Groups:

1. We have three seasons a year. Life flows in seasons, and we want to make it very easy for you to be in the right Connection Group in each of them. Thinking about this is that we have new groups that start and end three times a year. We call this cycle "seasons".

BEGINNING OF THE YEAR

SPRING

END OF THE YEAR

Connection Groups meet weekly during each season

The Groups meet in a variety of places, such as homes, parks, restaurants, cafes, and even office rooms.

New Connection Groups start each season, making it easy to create community and enjoy different types of groups each year.



## 2. Our groups are of Interest, Personal Growth and Love of my City.

Our Connection Groups are as varied as ourselves, you can find groups of activities of interest, groups with content for personal growth, groups to deliver social help to the people who need it most.

## 3. Everyone can join a Connection Group.

Our desire is for every person at Ascend Church to be connected in a real and genuine way to a community through Connection Groups. With so many group options to choose from, we believe there is a group that is a great fit for you. You can search for groups by topic, location, day and time online in the menu, connection groups at [www.ascendchurchnw.com](http://www.ascendchurchnw.com)

Note: If you wish you can fill out the online form!

## 4. Anyone can be a Connection Group leader.

We believe that leading a group is easy because we all have something to offer others. It may be about something you are passionate about, an experience you have had that can help others, or an area of your life in which you want to grow; Leading a group is a great way to bring people together into a real, genuine community.

Everyone can be a leader, but as an example to others the requirements are:

1. Be a member of Ascend Church
2. Be baptized
3. Complete Full Life
4. Pass the Connection Group Leadership course.
5. Give your Tithes and Offerings
6. Good testimony in the Church.



# Connection Group Structure

No matter what topic of interest brings your groups together; Every time you meet in a Connection Group, the meeting must have these 4 components:

## 1. Casual friendship

A relaxed time for group members, during which they can talk and get to know each other.

## 2. Activity or discussion

This will change depending on the type of group you are leading. It could be an activity like Frisbee, or discussing a book, or going to feed homeless people.

## 3. Prayer

This is what sets your Connection Group apart from the social club you might find in your neighborhood. Whether through activities or discussion, always find a way to include God's Word. This can be as simple as sharing with the group something that God is teaching you or asking for any prayer requests that group members may have, and praying at the beginning or end of the meeting.

A Connection Group is not a place to:

- Do business
- Receive offerings
- Share material or invite speakers without prior approval
- Talk about controversial topics



# Your role as a Connection Group leader

God has a role for all of us within the church, and Connection Group leaders are there, along with pastors and the Team, to help care for people.

11 Now Christ gave the following gifts to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. 12 They have the responsibility of preparing God's people to carry out God's work and build the church, that is, the body of Christ. 13 That process will continue until we all reach such unity in our faith and knowledge of the Son of God that we are mature in the Lord, that is, until we reach the full and complete measure of Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-13

Your primary goal as a Connection Group leader is to help group members take their next step of faith in their walk with God.

23 Keep track of the state of your flocks and give yourself fully to the care of your livestock,  
Proverbs 27:23

The people in your group will be at different places in their spiritual life, and each person will have different next steps to take. Below is a guide to some of the Next Steps you can help them take.

- >Start attending weekend meetings.
- >Start reading the Bible regularly.
- >Start praying regularly
- >Be baptized in water.
- >Complete Full Life.
- >Join Team Ascend Church  
(Dream Team) Start tithing.

- >Attend Conferences & Seminars
- > Invite a friend neighbor to church  
or a Connection Group
- >Attend Training for Connection Group  
leaders
- >Sign up to a Group for the  
Community



# How to be a successful Connection Group leader?

1. Pray daily for the members of your group.
2. Consider finding someone to help you share the responsibility of caring for and leading your group.
3. Connect with people in the group during the week, by phone, email, text, social media or face to face. Encourage members to connect with each other throughout the week as well.
4. Have fun through laughter and creating a pleasant atmosphere.
5. Respect people's time by starting and ending your group on time.
6. Invite group members to attend church meetings and events with you.
7. Encourage the group to be close to people in the group who are going through a crisis.

Be wise and sensitive.

## The importance of Prayer

Prayer is the foundation of our church, and it is important for your Connection Group.

14 But if my people, who bear my name, humble themselves and pray, Seek my face and turn from your wicked ways, I will hear from heaven, forgive your sins and restore your land.

2 Chronicles 7:14

## How to Pray for Your Connection Group

- Pray for any requests that group members share.
- Ask for the presence of the Holy Spirit in your group.
- Pray for God to open people's hearts, to hear the truth from him.
- Pray for authentic community to develop.
- Pray for wisdom and strength to lead your group well.



# Confidence as a leader of Connection Groups

If you only do what makes you feel comfortable, you don't need God.  
The best of God is often found outside your comfort zone.

When you serve God and people by leading a Connection Group, He will equip you and give you the strength and wisdom to lead well.

13 For I can do all things through Christ, who gives me strength.  
Philippians 4:13

7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity but of power, love and self-discipline.  
2 Timothy 1:7

When you feel insecure about leading a Connection Group, use the Scriptures to overcome the lies of the enemy.

1. When you feel like you don't have the time, remember that God created you to this and his timing are perfect.

The farmer who waits for perfect weather never sows; If he contemplates every cloud, he never reaps.  
Ecclesiastes 11:4

2. When you feel disqualified, remember that God is the one who has equipped you.

5 It's not that we think we are capable of doing anything on our own. Our aptitude comes from God. 6 He enabled us to be ministers of his new covenant. This is not a covenant of written laws, but of the Spirit. The old written covenant ends in death; but, according to the new covenant, the Spirit gives life.  
2 Corinthians 3:5-6



3 When you feel that your past disqualifies you, remember that God uses imperfect people.

3 All praise be to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. 4 He comforts us in all our difficulties so that we can comfort others. When others are going through difficulties, we can offer them the same comfort that God has given us.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

When you feel like you don't know how to help someone in your Connection Group, remember to help accordingly:

1. Share the Word of God
2. Encourage
3. Next Step
4. Pray

### Help in leadership

As a Connection Group leader, you are never alone in creating a community. We have pastors, family care groups, and the Connection Groups team who are working alongside you to invest in and build the best Ascend Church Connection Groups.

### Your Mentor (Connection Group Director)

As a Connection Group leader, you have an associated mentor to help and support you throughout the season. Your Mentor's number one priority is to pray for you daily. Please contact your Mentor if you have any needs, prayer requests or concerns.



# How to create good dynamics in a Connection Group?

- Set expectations.

A key to helping people feel comfortable in your group is to let them know what to expect. Take time to share how the group will flow week to week. This can include things like explaining the time the group will start and end; how group discussions or activities will occur, and how group members can best share prayer requests or participate in the group.

- Follow the 70-30 rule.

Give members of your group a chance to talk, rather than doing all the talking yourself. About 70% of the conversation should come from the people in the group and 30% from the leader.

- Maintain a positive discussion.

If the conversation takes a negative turn, guide him back to a healthy place. If someone needs to talk about a sensitive topic or complex problem, you can follow up with them after the group or call your mentor to help you respond well.

A Connection Group is not a place to talk about personal problems out of respect for other guests, new people, and visitors.

- Keep the conversation relevant to everyone.

Remember that the people in your group will be in different places and contexts within their spiritual walk. Be thoughtful when discussing spiritual concepts or church terms that may be unfamiliar to new Christians or attendees.

- Respect limits.

Men are to minister to men and women are to minister to women. A couple can minister to only one person. We want to maintain integrity and purity in our Connection Groups. These boundaries will help protect leaders and group members from falling into an uncomfortable or inappropriate situation.



- Stay connected

Throughout the season, respond to your mentor and the Connection Groups team about group attendance, identifying potential new leaders, and how members are moving forward with their next steps.

## Prepare to be a leader of a Connection Group

Every small group leader must complete the following steps:

1. Become a member of Ascend Church
2. Complete the Full Life process at Ascend Church
3. Attend a Connection Groups leadership training
4. Fill out the Connection Groups leadership application
5. Have a one-on-one Connection Groups leadership interview
6. Sign the Connection Group Code of Honor, Leadership Commitment, and Confidentiality.
7. Tithe and offering
8. Good testimony
9. Be baptized.

## How to start your Connection Group?

1. Ask God for direction on which group to lead and who to invite.
2. Once you decide on a topic or activity for your group, choose a meeting place and time.
3. Register your group with the secretary so that people can find it and get in touch to attend.
4. Invite people you know to visit your group.
5. Pray for God to do great things through your Connection Group

### Prepare for Connection Group meetings

- Send a message to group members, reminding them about the first meeting.
- Arrive early to create a welcoming atmosphere.

All messages will be received through our 'Church Center' app. Remember that at Ascend Church we do not send personal messages, and all communications will be made through the church application.



## Conversation with new people

Here are a couple of conversation starters to help get new people talking in your group and get to know them:

- How did you find out about Connection Group?
- What are your hobbies?
- What are you looking forward to this year?
- What brought you here?
- What do you hope to get out of this Connection Group?

Thank you for being an important part of Ascend Church Connection Groups!



## Frequent questions

How can I recruit people to come to my Connection Group?

- Start with people who are already in your sphere of influence (coworkers, friends and neighbors).
- Find people around you who are new to the church, who are new believers, or who have shown interest in getting involved.
- Look for people you think you can help reach their potential.
- Ask God to send the right people to your Connection Group.

Where can I meet my Connection Group?

We encourage Connection Groups to meet outside the church building, in places where you like to spend your time. Some of the most common gathering places are homes, restaurants, parks, cafes, and offices.

Where can I find content for Connection Groups?

We have a variety of curriculum suggestions available for you in the Rightnow Media App.

Does my group have to meet weekly?

We recommend that groups meet weekly each season to build genuine relationships.

How do I gauge if group members are ready to take a next step?

Ask them! Make it part of the activity, whether in a group or individually.

Here are some good questions to guide your conversation:

- How did you connect with this Connection Group?
- What do you most expect from the group?
- Do you attend Ascend Church?
- What brought you to Ascend Church?
- Have you ever been part of a Connection Group?
- What do you feel God has been doing in your life lately?



- Have you ever attended an Ascend Church or Limitless Conference?
- Are you familiar with the Full Life process?
- Do you remember which one is your personality type or what are your spiritual gifts?
- In what areas of your faith do you hope to grow in the coming months?
- What are you focused on in your life right now?
- Have you ever served on the Ascend Church Volunteer Team -Dream team?
- How can I pray for you?

Everyone in your group will be at different places in their spiritual walk. The vision of helping them move forward into their “Next Step” is not for them to do everything at once, it is to help identify where they are spiritually right now and offer a practical Next Step to help them grow.

Here are some examples of next steps you can share, depending on where your group members are spiritually:

- Invite them to attend a weekend gathering with you.
- Share your personal story and what God has been teaching you.
- Invite them to Conferences, seminars and Limitless Conference
- Share how the Full Life Classes can help them discover their purpose? and invite them to attend Vida Plena.
- Invite them to consider being baptized in water.
- Invite your Connection Group to be present to celebrate anyone who is baptized.
- Share how you regularly find time to pray, worship and read God's Word, and encourage them to make their own plan to get through time with God.
- Tell them about the website for all Ascend information church
- If they are ready to receive Christ, offer to pray with them.
- Encourage them to learn more about areas such as tithing, the Holy Spirit prayer, and looking at past messages at [www.ascendchurchnw.com](http://www.ascendchurchnw.com), Youtube or Facebook at Ascend Church.



What should I do if someone asks a question I can't answer?

It's okay to not have all the answers. Fortunately, we can find guidance through prayer, the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit.

Encourage them to spend time reading the Bible and praying. Also, let them know that you will do your best to obtain information and discuss it with them at your next Connection Group meeting. Do some personal research and call your mentor for advice.

What should I do if someone in my group shares something with me (or the group) that requires attention beyond what I (or we) can provide?

If you encounter a difficult situation within your small group, it is important to know that you are not alone. If a member is going through a crisis, you can rally the group around them to offer prayer, encouragement, and support. Apply wisdom and be sensitive to the situation. If you're not sure what to do, don't hesitate to ask your mentor.

How can I share stories of transformed lives from the small group season?

We love hearing about lives being transformed through Connection Groups. You can share the stories with your mentor or send them to [info@ascendchurch.com](mailto:info@ascendchurch.com)

You can also share your own personal stories through social networks.





Important Documents

# Paperwork



# Leadership Code of Honor

As part of the leadership of Ascend Church, you have the responsibility to develop and enact mature Christian behavior. This should be your main wish when joining and being part of the Ascend Church team.

By serving the Body of Christ as part of the Ascend church team, you accept and declare to present a spirit of faith and good behavior in an organic and natural way, which is exhibited from your way of dressing to your way of treating others. You must seek to demonstrate biblical standards and lifestyle at all times.

As Christians, the way we present ourselves to others is vitally important; In this way others perceive Christ in us. Our conduct must always be of glory to Christ and must exemplify the best qualities of a team member.

Be an example of morality. The team and leadership of Ascend church seek to maintain a living and constant relationship with God through Bible reading and prayer. They must also refrain from:

- To curse
- Abuse tobacco consumption
- Gambling and betting
- Abuse the consumption of alcoholic beverages
- Dishonest gains or illicit businesses
- Drugs
- Pornography
- Sexual immorality (sexual activity outside of marriage)
- All conduct that may cause others to stumble

When we set an example with our language and actions, we encourage others to serve and follow Jesus. Ascend Church does not impose behavior, but rather expects a result from the heart and commitment of each person who is part of the church family. We must see this as an essential part of our development, not as an imposition or restriction.

Having read The Code of Honor, I confirm my desire to part of the Ascend Church team and commit to living up to the standards expected of an Ascend Church leader.

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Signature

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Date



# Declaration of Leader

As God has called me to serve my generation, I will value worship over wealth, "we" over "I," character over comfort, service over status. , and the purpose of God above possessions, positions, popularity and pleasure.

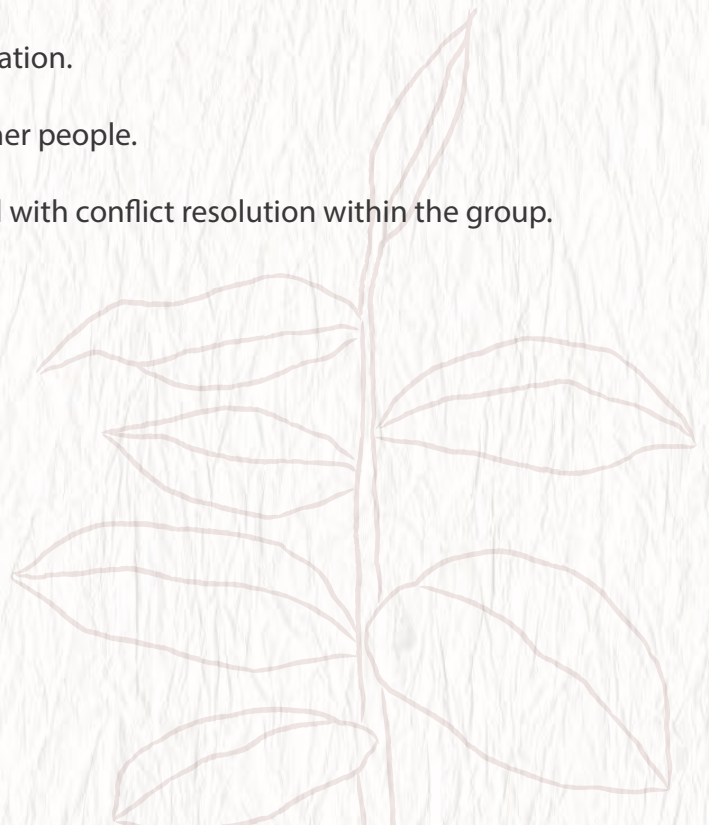
To my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ I say: Whenever, wherever and whatever you ask me to do, my answer from today is yes! Wherever you take me and whatever the cost, I am ready at all times and in all places. I want to be used by you in such a way that, on that final day, I will hear you say, "Well done, my good and faithful servant. "He enters with me to the eternal party."

8 Likewise, deacons must be worthy of much respect and have integrity. They should not get drunk or be dishonest with money. 9 They must be committed to the mystery of faith that has now been revealed and live with a clear conscience. 10 Let them be carefully evaluated before being appointed as deacons. If they pass the exam, then let them serve as deacons.

1 Timothy 3:8-10

## Qualities

- Sincerity, being worthy of respect and good reputation.
- Regularly tithe Ascend Church
- Have a genuine desire to serve and minister to other people.
- Ability to lead, motivate and teach other people.
- Ability to create positive group dynamics and deal with conflict resolution within the group.



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Signature

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Date



# CONFIDENTIALITY SHEET

## CONFIDENTIAL NOTICE FOR ASCEND CHURCH CONNECTION GROUPS

At Ascend Church we value each person and their right to personal privacy. Out of love for our brothers and the church, we promise not to disclose information and to protect the privacy of our members. Any testimony or talk or gossip that someone shares in the group will be treated as confidential. We will inform the family care supervisor and pastor only if necessary.

### Purpose of the Notice:

This notice seeks to guarantee a safe and confidential space for all members of our Connection Groups, promoting an environment of mutual support, respect and trust. Any information shared within these groups is expected to be handled with the utmost discretion and sensitivity.

### Confidentiality Commitments:

**Respect for Privacy:** Every member agrees to keep personal information, testimonies and any other data shared within the group confidential.

**Use of Information:** Information shared in groups should not be used outside of them, except with explicit consent of the individual who shared said information.

### Failure to comply:

Failure to comply with this confidentiality notice may result in corrective action, including but not limited to exclusion from the group or church, depending on the severity of the case.

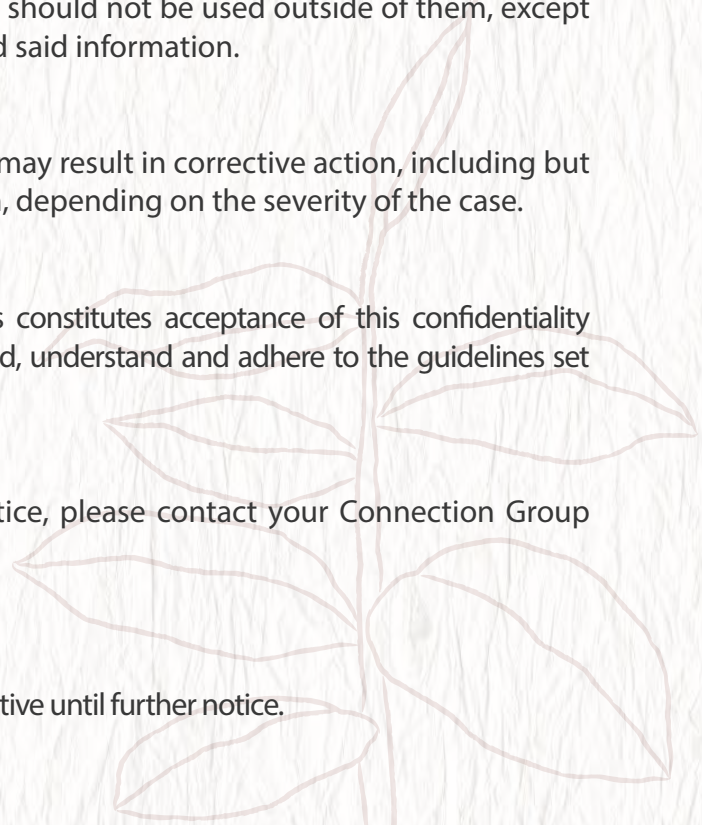
### Acceptance:

Participation in Ascend Church Connection Groups constitutes acceptance of this confidentiality notice. It is the responsibility of each member to read, understand and adhere to the guidelines set forth herein.

For questions or clarifications regarding this notice, please contact your Connection Group leader or Ascend Church administration.

### Effective date:

This notice is effective immediately and will remain active until further notice.



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Date

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Connection Group Director

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Executive Director



APPLICATION SHEET TO BE A CONNECTION GROUP  
LEADER AT ASCEND CHURCH

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Connection Group Idea: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Day of connection group: \_\_\_\_\_

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation:

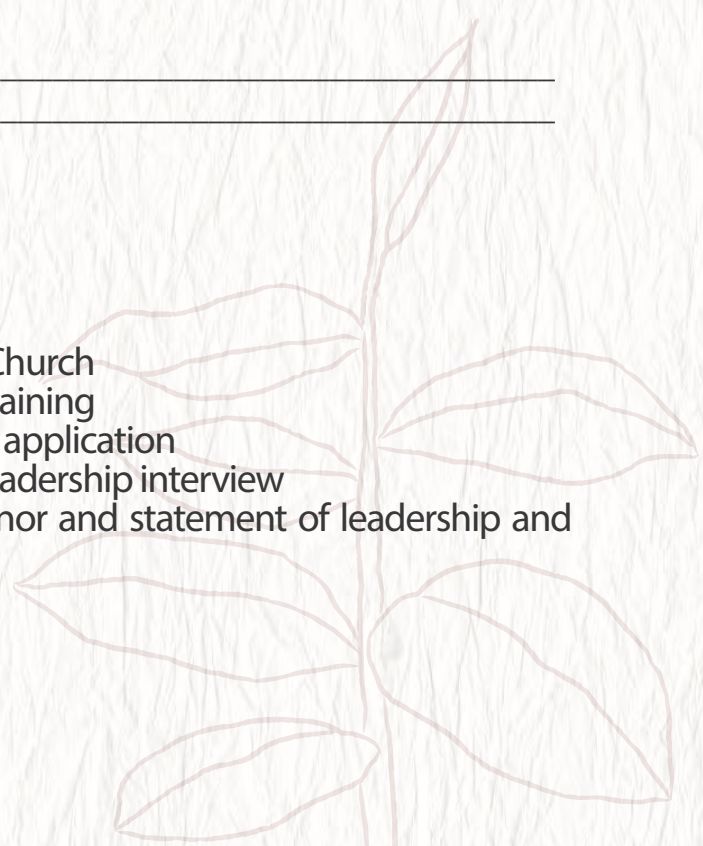
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**REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Become a member of Ascend Church
2. Complete the Full Life process at Ascend Church
3. Attend a Connection Groups leadership training
4. Fill out the Connection Groups leadership application
5. Have a one-on-one Connection Groups leadership interview
6. Sign the Connection Groups code of honor and statement of leadership and confidentiality sheet.
7. Tithe and offering
8. Good testimony
9. Be baptized.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Connection Group Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Director





[www.ascendchurchnw.com](http://www.ascendchurchnw.com)