

The Role of Growth Group Leaders

1 Overview

Growth Groups are a core part of St James' and St Luke's. Growth Group Leaders therefore play an important part in the life of the church. Their role is aligned with the vision of the church. Namely:

- To encourage the group as individuals and together to 'Love the Lord their God with all their hearts, minds, souls and strength. And to love their neighbours as themselves' (Mark 12:28-31)
- To do this by encouraging the growth of the group Upwards (in loving God), Inwards (in loving one another and the whole church) and Outwards (in loving our community – and beyond).

2 Accountability & Support

Growth Group Leaders are appointed by and accountable to the Vicar.

Typically we would hope that Growth Group Leaders would take on the role for a minimum of 2 years –reviewable annually. However, they are free to step down at any time, and the church is free to move them on from the position at any time.

Growth Group Leaders are expected:

- To be **committed Christians** –willing to love and serve their group and lead by example.
- To be **committed members of St James' & St Luke's** –regularly joining in corporate worship, supporting other church activities and promoting the church's vision and teaching – in word and action.
- To be **enablers not experts**: Ensuring that the functions of a growth group are carried out within the group –but not all by the leader. Leaders do not need to be experts in any given area (Bible, pastoral care, music etc) and in general, the more sharing of responsibilities, the better!

To support their role, the vicar will ensure that:

- Growth Group notes are provided in advance for the regular meetings
- People are actively encouraged to join Growth Groups
- People seeking a group are pointed to suitable groups and new groups are formed as needed.
- Where groups aren't working or individuals aren't happy, to help resolve difficulties and reassign people to different groups.
- Growth Group Leaders are encouraged to find support for themselves in different ways (within the group, from other leaders etc) as well as from the vicar.

3 Responsibilities

The responsibilities of Growth Group Leaders include:

- Ensuring that the functions of a growth group happen (see 'Growth Group Description' document) –but not all by the leader.
- **Pastoral Care Responsibility** for members of the group –ensuring care is done, not necessarily by the leaders themselves.
- Ensuring two-way communication between the group and the church. Includes feeding back relevant thoughts, ideas and feelings to the leadership team and sharing stories of God at work from the group to the wider church
- Nurturing the spiritual health and growth of the group – when gathered and in their daily lives
- Establishing effective means of communication between the group – and encouraging people to regularly share prayer requests, encouragements etc
- Ensuring confidentiality within the group, where appropriate
- Ensuring a safe environment for everyone –including children and vulnerable adults
- Attending Growth Group Leaders meetings (approx 3-4 per year)
- Using the church Growth Group Notes for regular meetings
- Identifying members' gifts and encouraging their use within the group and in the wider church
- Encouraging involvement in the activities of the wider church
- To raise up new leaders, such that Growth Group Leaders can potentially take on a new group after about 4 years.

Toby May

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