

# St Columba's Leaders Guide

August 2025

## What is a Leader?

There are different categories of leaders in a church, but in short, a leader is a follower of Jesus, striving to mature in faith, hope, and love by using their spiritual gifts to help others do the same. A leader is someone who helps people move from where they are to where God wants them to be.

## Who Should a Leader Be?

1. A person who knows the grace they've received
2. A person who communes with Christ daily through prayer and Scripture
3. A person focused on serving more than being served
4. A member who is giving, attending, and supporting the work of Jesus' church at St Columba's.
5. A person seeking to grow theologically and pastorally through reading, training, etc.

## Who is Included?

This guide applies to:

- Elders
- Deacons
- Women's pastoral team members
- City Group leaders
- Church staff and Campus Outreach staff
- Those the elders identify as people to be disciplined toward leadership

## Our Mission as Leaders

Helping others grow in love for God, love for the church, and love for Edinburgh.

## What Does a Leader Do?

Of course, that depends on whether they're an officer or serve in another role underneath the leadership of the elders. But in general, all leaders are called to:

1. Be a part of the rhythms of church life (Worship, City Group, Midweek, etc.)
2. Regularly invite the unchurched both into church and into their lives.
3. Welcome and assimilate: look for new faces and help move people from stranger to family.
4. Support and sometimes lead a ministry in the church: serving teams, City Groups, youth, Grace Groups, etc.
5. Care for people in their geography with phone calls, visits, coffees, meals, Sunday lunches, meeting needs.
6. Seek two types of relationships: 1) discipleship and prayer with a friend; 2) discipling/supporting someone else in prayer, Bible reading, personal life, etc.
7. Look to fix problems and promote peace as far as they are able.

# A Guide to Seeking out New People

1. Look for new faces and get to know them.
2. Invite them to take a Next Step:
  - Invite them to a meal or coffee.
  - Introduce them to a staff member.
  - Give them a vision and values card and point them to the 'new here' link: [stcsfc.org/new](https://stcsfc.org/new)
  - Tell them about our ministry rhythms.
  - If they are a Christian: invite them into a city group **by first** filling out the 'new here' form and to join a serving team: [stcsfc.org/serve](https://stcsfc.org/serve) (some restrictions apply).
  - If they are not a Christian or you are unsure: consider meeting with them to talk about their story and the faith; point them to a ministry staff member; invite them to Midweek prayer or another public ministry; invite them to our upcoming Questioning Christianity small group (details TBD).

## City Group Leadership

See City Group Leadership Guide here and below: [stcsfc.org/cg-leader-guide-2025](https://stcsfc.org/cg-leader-guide-2025)

## Pastoral Areas: for Elders, Deacons, WPT

- Work with the staff to keep these lists up to date in ChurchSuite so you always know who is in your area.
- Divide the people among leaders in your area and catch up with everyone every 60 days. Phone calls work well for this, though meals are even better. In the largest pastoral area, this should amount to just a call or two per week per person.
- What to say? The easiest approach is: "I'm one of the elders (etc.) in this area and I wanted to know how you're doing at St Columba's and how I could pray for you." They will indicate whether they want more contact or need to address an issue by how they respond. Often, people will open up and seek help for hurts they may be experiencing
- Never hesitate to bring a pastoral concern up. Elders, Ministers, etc. can't address what they don't know about.

## Resources to Use as a Leader:

1. Our Ministries Map: work in progress...
2. Needs ministry:
  - If you encounter a need, try and address it within your city group, pastoral area, or amongst friends.
  - If you can't or need more help reach out to a minister, Neil Macrae or Georgie Armstrong so the needs team can figure out how to assist.
3. The Church Calendar: [stcsfc.org/calendar](https://stcsfc.org/calendar)

4. ChurchSuite Directory, Groups, Rotas, etc: [stcsfc.org/churchsuite](https://stcsfc.org/churchsuite)
5. Install the App on your phone from your AppStore or [stcsfc.org/churchsuite-apps](https://stcsfc.org/churchsuite-apps)

## A Pathway for Thinking About People:

Every person we encounter fits into one of these categories and we are trying to move people from unbelieving “gatherer” all the way to mature leader in the church as far as the Holy Spirit allows:

1. (unchurched) Gatherer →
2. (believing) Worshipper →
3. (growing) Disciple →
4. (committed) Member →
5. Servant Leader

## Staff Roles (to know who to go to):

### Full-time:

**Cory:** Preaching, vision, discipling, chairing elders/deacons, admin, denom work, misc., etc.

**Mairi:** Operations and admin, building and communication, anything and everything! etc.

### Part-Time

**David Court:** Visitation, pastoral care, preaching, worship leading, Leith pastoral area, etc.

**Chris Lamont (MiT):** Pastoring University students and young workers, Gilmerton Pastoral Area

**Jemimah Allen (Apprentice):** Youth, University women, women’s ministry, hospitality, catering

**Kelly Shuttlesworth:** Children’s ministry, rotas.

## New Things to Look for Soon(ish):

1. A printed welcome guide for new people
2. A printed members guide for those seeking membership with a membership class.
3. A small group for the unchurched or yet to believe (potentially titled Questioning Christianity)
4. A new website (soonish).

# City Group Leadership Guide - August 2025

## Why City Group?

Christians are called to gather on Sundays and live in community throughout the week. City Groups create space for that community.

## What is a City Group?

City Groups are intentional communities of followers of Jesus who attend St Columba's, live in the same part of the city, and gather to build relationships and grow as disciples.

**When:** 1st and 3rd weeks monthly, September to June, typically Wednesday nights.

**Leaders:** Elders, deacons, women's pastoral team members, and emerging leaders selected by pastoral teams or ministers.

## General Notes for Leaders

1. **The 3 rules of healthy City Groups:** People, people, people (build relationships).
2. **Create a community, not a program.** Coming to City Group should feel like spending time with friends, old and new.
3. **Have a leaders meeting.** It doesn't need to be before the first City Group. Get together, discuss your people list, and make a simple plan to contact and care for them.
4. **Sort out hosting and leading across the semester.** Ideally, host homes should be closer to the center of your geography, but this isn't always possible.
5. **Use WhatsApp to communicate beyond basic City Group information.** Share prayer points, send encouragement, invite people to events, etc.
6. **Ideal size caps at about 15 adults (on the active list).** Ask: Do we need to split this group to encourage better attendance? Do we need 2 City Groups in our geography? If yes, talk to ministry staff to make it happen.
7. **Where do I get the leader's guide for this semester?** Here:

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/course/what-is-the-gospel/>

## Tips for Great City Group Meetings

1. **Have a meal if possible, but don't stress about it.** If you can't manage it, no worries. Consider rotating who makes or brings a meal.

2. **Follow the new City Group guide (separate document) for smooth flow.**
3. **Finish on time (8:30-8:45pm).** People have work tomorrow!
4. **Rotate facilitators.** Let emerging leaders try.
5. **Encourage people to come prepared!** It makes all the difference if people have read the passage already. If everyone prepares, the conversation will be rich.
6. **Create an informal, relaxed space** where people feel like family in their own home rather than guests under a host
7. **Be flexible.** Allow great conversation to continue even if that means starting late or cutting something from the study. The goal is Christian friendships
8. **Be proactive** in curating community. Avoid the perfunctory.

## How New People Join

Generally, City Group is for Christians. If someone comes to church exploring Christianity, we have other options: one-on-one with ministry staff or leaders and a new small group (starting late semester) for those yet to believe. But this isn't the law of the Medes and Persians.

### If you meet someone new or not in a city group:

1. Get to know them.
2. If they are a believer and church attender, tell them about City Groups.
3. Ask them to put their details in 'New Here' and introduce them to a staff member ([stcsfc.org/new](https://stcsfc.org/new)). Let the staff sort out the admin while you pursue them relationally.
4. **Look for an email.** When you get an email about someone being added to your City Group, contact them quickly. Send a brief welcome message. Add them to WhatsApp. It's great if they get multiple messages from multiple leaders. Hold their hand into their first meeting. Shepherd them toward knowing people.

## How City Groups Help

In church ministry literature, it's common for authors to say that three of the most important factors for new people joining and sticking around a local church are (1) making a friend quickly; (2) being invited to join a group; (3) seeing a programme for intentional discipleship. **City Groups can help with all three.**