

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Everything you need to know to
serve kids and students in our
ministry

2018 - 2019

Hopekids | Middle School | High School

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Welcome!

Are you ready to be a real-life small group leader (SGL)? We can't wait! Before you start, make sure you read through this volunteer handbook. It'll have everything you need to know as you join our ministry, and it's a great place to reference if you forget something! You'll want to keep this handy to write in throughout the year, too!

Here are a few things you should know up front:

THE WIN

As a small group leader, we need you to invest in the lives of a few to encourage authentic faith. You win when kids have meaningful interactions—both inside and outside of small group—that deepen their faith in Jesus and influence their relationships with others.

QUALIFICATIONS

To be a small group leader, you don't have to be a Bible scholar, pass a theological aptitude test or display a particular set of special spiritual gifts. You don't even need to be that cool! Here's all you need to do:

- Love God.
- Care about kids.
- Be committed to consistently investing in and caring for your few over a period of time.
- Complete and pass a background check.

JOB DESCRIPTION

What exactly is a small group leader? A friend? A parent? A coach? A teacher? Here's our definition: anyone who chooses to invest in the lives of a few, to encourage authentic faith.

Every SGL should do five things:

- Be Present
- Create a Safe Place
- Partner with Parents
- Make it Personal
- Move Them Out

You can read more about these principles in the next couple of pages!

Staff: Who should I contact?

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Guidelines for Outstanding Hospitality

Arrive on time and attend the Hospitality Team **huddle** 25 minutes prior to the hour for prayer and any additional information to be shared. (hospitality team members only)

Wear **your name tag** at all times. Part of creating a comfortable environment is being easily recognizable to our guests.

Welcome every guest you pass and who approaches the hospitality area/kiosk and assist them as needed.

Maintain positive **body language** (smile, make eye contact, and stand with good posture).

Ensure the **cleanliness** and **presentation** of the hospitality area and hallways.

Stay in your assigned area until the hour begins. Our team can't be successful without every member!

Refrain from **eating, drinking, or using your phone** while serving.

If you will **miss** your opportunity to serve, please **inform your team leader**.

Any questions you are uncertain of how to answer can be directed to the **Youth Ministry Desk**, located in the back hall.



EXPECTATIONS

- Serve weekly or bi-weekly as agreed with co-leader, if applicable
- Show up on time.
- Come prepared with the question(s) and materials you need for group.
- Connect with your coach monthly, and meet with them every six months.
- Attend the appropriate training events and meetings whenever possible.
- Write birthday postcards for your group (provided)

Allergy Alert!

Due to the wide variety of allergies and their severity in our ministry, please refrain from bringing any food to your small group/large group sessions.

What's Leading Small?

We have a challenge—a BIG challenge. We want to help kids and teenagers develop an authentic faith—faith that stays with them when life gets hard, when they have more questions than answers and when they graduate and move on to whatever is next in their life. We want them to have a faith that lasts.

We believe that the only way to cultivate authentic faith is through leading small.

That's why what you do every week matters! When you lead small, you realize that what you do for a few will always have more potential than what you do for many.

When you lead small, you simply make a choice to invest strategically in the lives of a few over time so you can help them build an authentic faith.

Here are a few important graphics you may be curious about:



- a circle represents a group of students or kids. Not just any group, YOUR group.



- a large orange dot represents YOU. The SGL. Don't you look good?



- a small dot represents one individual in your group. Someone you are leading.



- a home represents . . . well, a student's home. What else would it be?

There are 5 parts of the small group leader job description that we'll go over in the following pages:

BE PRESENT
CREATE A SAFE PLACE
PARTNER WITH PARENTS
MAKE IT PERSONAL
MOVE THEM OUT

be present.

CONNECT THEIR FAITH TO A COMMUNITY

God created us for community. Jesus illustrated community. The Church practiced community. That's why you showed up—to connect the faith of your few to a community.

When you choose to be present, that means you. . .

1. Show up predictably.

For most of you, that means weekly. You cannot lead a small group without trust. You cannot build a community without trust. And the first step to gaining the trust of your few is making sure they know you will show up—predictably.

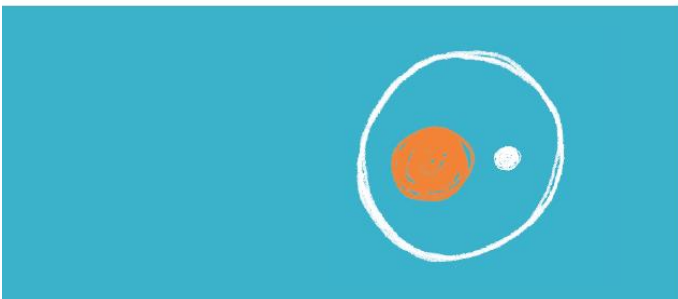
2. Show up mentally.

Check your phone at the door—unless of course you are using it for our app! When you show up mentally, you commit to engaging your few in meaningful discussions and to listening—really listening—to what your students have to say. This means knowing the content ahead of time and being mentally prepared to shed some light and scriptural insight into their world. They are worth an hour of your attention.

3. Show up randomly.

Never underestimate the power of showing up randomly. This may look like a phone call, a birthday card, a ball game, or a text message. These small connections may seem insignificant, but when you choose to be present in an unexpected way, outside of your weekly group time, you reinforce your students' connection to the community you are creating.

The best way to be present is to lead small.



JOURNAL

SHOW UP PREDICTABLY

Record something specific about each one of your few, and make a note about his or her latest accomplishment:

p.s. don't forget to add these notes to your Lead Small App, too!

SHOW UP MENTALLY

Start a practice of writing down prayer requests. This will help you continue to pray throughout the week and also give you a way to follow up on specific prayer requests.

SHOW UP RANDOMLY

Consider sending a note with a picture of something fun that happened in your circle (on your phone or through the mail.)

create a safe place.

CLARIFY THEIR FAITH AS THEY GROW

There's inevitable tension when a group of different people with different personalities and backgrounds come together in one place. But what if tension is actually the platform that gives you an opportunity to demonstrate that this is a safe place? The safer your environment is, the more honestly your few will clarify their faith in the context of your circle.

When you choose to create a safe place, that means you. . .

1. Lead the group.

Lead your group to value acceptance. Lead your group to value confidentiality. Lead your group to value honesty. When you do, your few will feel safe to be themselves, share doubts, ask questions and admit their struggles and clarify their faith in an authentic way.

2. Respect the process.

Authentic faith is a continual process. It's not static. It is the molding, crafting, shaping and changing of faith through time, life experience and reflection. And the process isn't the same for everyone. Each individual is different, so celebrate their steps. Refuse to get impatient with the process. And let God do what only God can do.

3. Guard the heart.

Faith is personal. We often process the most difficult times in our lives through the filter of faith which is why, as an SGL, you should expect some pretty tough and even shocking things to be revealed during small group time. Your job is to know when to respect confidentiality and when you need outside help.

The best way to create a safe place is to lead small.



JOURNAL

LEAD THE GROUP

Write down specific ways you can make your few feel accepted every week in your circle:

RESPECT THE PROCESS

When one of your few asks a question, your reaction may be as important as any answer you give. Write down three guidelines to help you respond in a way that will allow you to speak truth in love and honor the process.

GUARD THE HEART

Who is your "boss" as an SGL? Find that person, and ask them what your church's rules are for guarding the heart of your few.

When and who to contact for additional assistance:

Boundaries your church has set to protect you and your few:

partner with parents.

NURTURE AN EVERYDAY FAITH

No matter what you think about the parents of your few, two things are true. One, every parent wants to be a better parent. Two, they will always have more influence than you do. So if you want to nurture the kind of faith that lasts, you need to partner with parents.

When you choose to partner with parents, that means you. . .

1. Cue the parent.

When you “cue” the parent, you give them just the right information at just the right time so that they can make a move to do more than they might otherwise do. Cueing the parent is pretty easy. Just let them know who you are, and tell them what you’re talking about.

2. Honor the parent.

Some children struggle with authority. No, scratch that. All children struggle with authority. But remember this—if you’re not on the parent’s side, you’re not on the kid’s side. Model what it means to respect not only your own parents, but theirs’ as well.

3. Reinforce the family.

Although parents potentially have 3,000 hours a year of possible time with their child, it’s not always the same quality as the hours you have with your few. So when you plan your events and small group outings, be strategic. Don’t steal critical family moments. Christmas Eve is probably not a great time for a sleepover.

The best way to partner with parents is to lead small.



JOURNAL

CUE THE PARENT

You already know what you think about parents—the ways you might secretly judge or question their methods. It's best not to write those down. So let's focus on the positives. What are two benefits of partnering with parents?

HONOR THE PARENT

Say something positive and specific about their child to the parent and let them know that you genuinely care. Ask them what they think you should know about their child.

REINFORCE THE FAMILY

Brainstorm some topics that might come up in your circle that would be a good opportunity to cue your few to connect with their parents.

make it personal.

INSPIRE THEIR FAITH WITH YOUR EXAMPLE

The most important person you need to lead is not your few—it's actually you.

When you choose to make it personal, that means you. . .

1. Live in community.

Whether hosted by your church, formed organically or brought together through another local ministry, your own community provides the healthy and necessary outlet for you to process faith in a way you can't with your few.

2. Set priorities.

One of the best things you can do for your few, and for yourself, is to make your priorities clear. They need to see what you value. And when they see the way you prioritize your own relationship with God, it might even inspire your few to think about their own priorities.

3. Be real.

Find ways to relate to your few without compromising who you really are. It's more important for them to see a real person that is still growing, learning and trying to live out authentic faith than it is for them to have another friend.

The best way to make it personal is to lead small.



JOURNAL

LIVE IN COMMUNITY

Use this space to make a list of a few people who are or could be your community. Are they in a similar stage of life? Are they a little further down the road? Would they understand your struggles? Do you feel comfortable sharing with them? Would you respect their input?

SET PRIORITIES

What are you currently doing to invest in your own spiritual growth?

BE REAL

How do you decide if a personal story will be beneficial for your few?

move them out.

ENGAGE THEIR FAITH IN A BIGGER STORY

When you focus on the bigger story of their lives, you understand that what happens inside your circle is measured by what happens outside your circle.

When you choose to move them out, that means you. . .

1. Move them to someone else.

The truth is, as we speak, while you are still their SGL, your few need other positive adult influences in their lives. Your few are going to connect with other leaders who will teach them something about God and help them discover something about life. They will experience significant things together. And that's a good thing. So do your part to encourage other adult influences in their lives.

2. Move them to be the Church.

The Church is more than just a building or a location. The Church is a growing, changing, moving, living being that your few get to be a part of.

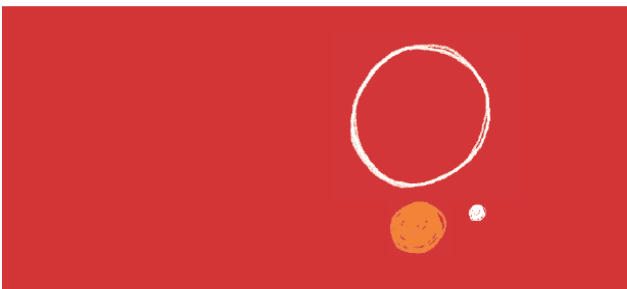
Never underestimate the importance of allowing them to participate in telling the Bible story or letting them help lead worship for younger kids.

The options are endless.

3. Move them to what's next.

No matter what is next in their lives, it is your responsibility to do everything you can to set them up for that transition and to make sure it goes as smoothly as possible.

The best way to move them out is to lead small.



JOURNAL

MOVE THEM TO SOMEONE ELSE

Think about your few. Make a list of the people you know who are a positive influence in their lives. Make an effort to speak positively about these individuals and encourage these relationships.

MOVE THEM TO BE THE CHURCH

Write down a few ways you can help your few serve—within your circle or outside of your church.

MOVE THEM TO WHAT'S NEXT?

What stage of life are your few in? Use this space to list a few big milestones coming up for them.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CHECK-IN & DISMISSAL

Make sure each child in your group has gone through the official check-in process before sitting down in group. Also, be sure each child is dismissed according to the official dismissal process.

- Hopekids: Check-in at a kiosk and receive two labels
 - One name badge to be worn by the child
 - One name badge to be kept by parent and turned in at pick-up time
 - Volunteers will also check-in to receive their name tag (one label will print)
- Confirmation: Leaders check-in students on mobile device
 - Students will check-in themselves when attending worship services using a kiosk (no label will print)
- HSM: Students check-in on kiosks as they enter (no label will print)

RESTROOMS

Never go into the bathroom alone with a child. If they need help, bring another adult with you. If they are old enough to go by themselves, wait outside for them.

ALLERGIES

Be aware of the allergies of your few—especially peanut allergies. During group times when you are giving out food, double check with each student to make sure they aren't allergic to anything you're giving. Due to the magnitude of different allergies, Hopekids policy requests no food to be served.

DISCIPLINE

If you have a student who is not following the guidelines that have been put in place, try redirecting the child's behavior. If that doesn't work, have a plan in place to contact the coordinator or director so that they can handle the situation apart from small group. Follow up with your coach to brainstorm other ways to help a student succeed in your group.

SICKNESS POLICY

If a child has had a fever within the last 24 hours, they should not be allowed in the environments.

CHILD ABUSE POLICY

Each state has its own child abuse mandated reporting policies. Be sure you are familiar with those policies. You can contact your state Department of Child and Family Services for specific guidelines. Please bring any concerns to the attention of the director.

FIRE EVACUATION PLAN

Be aware of the fire evacuation map at the door of each classroom. Make a quick exit to the nearest safe exit with your group. Take attendance of the group when you approach a safe distance away. Notify church staff, if any students are missing from your group.

LOST CHILD PROCEDURE

Should a child get lost after they have been checked-in with your small group, be sure to notify church staff immediately. They will direct the next action steps.

FAQs

What if I need a sub?

If you know in advance, plan with asking parents of your few to sub or your co-leader. If your absence is last-minute, please notify your coordinator/assistant director.

Why do I have to wear my volunteer name tag?

We like all of our background checked, approved volunteers to be clear to parents and attendees. Please wear your name tag every week so that we can easily spot people who should and shouldn't be in our environments.

Can I drive my middle schoolers off-site for small group?

After a parent permission form has been signed, you can take your students to lunch or bowling or whatever you want! Just make sure that your church leader knows and that you've got another adult with you.

Do we have a volunteer website?

We've got you covered! All youth ministries have their own Facebook and Instagram! Additional information can also be found on our website at: fargohope.org/get-involved, but a lot of important information will be coming to you through your Lead Small App!



lead **small.** **app**

An app for our volunteers!

Go to your ministry area webpage to see a quick tutorial!

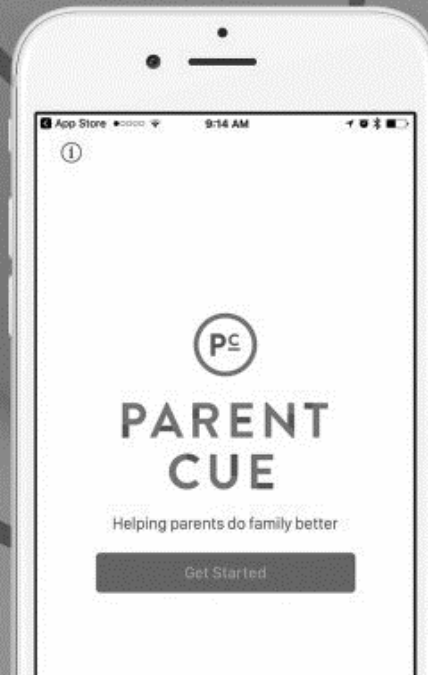
fargohope.org/get-involved

Search for: Hope Lutheran Church to get connected!
*search 58102, if it does not appear



DOWNLOAD THE PARENT CUE APP

The Parent Cue App is designed to help every parent do something each week to help move their child toward a deeper faith and a better future.





Hope Lutheran – Youth Ministry

2018 – 2019 Events Calendar | Hopekids, Confirmation, & HSM

August '18						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

September '18						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

October '18						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

November '18						
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

December '18						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

January '19						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

February '19						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

March '19						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

April '19						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

May '19						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

June '19						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Date	Event
Jul 29-Aug 2	Camp House
Aug 8-12	Summer Castaway
Aug 15	Hopekids "Faith in Motion" Event
Aug 15	Confirmation Orientation 7-8pm
Aug 19	Confirmation Orientation 11am-12pm
Aug 26	All Volunteer Rally 5-7pm
Aug 29	HSM Bonfire
Sept 5 & 9	First day of programming
Sep 16	2 nd grade Bible Event
Oct 5-7	Fall Castaway/Guardrails
Oct 10	HSM Fields of Faith
Oct 31	Trunk or Treat 5-6pm
Nov 11	Chili Feed
Nov 26	Deck the Halls 6-8pm
Dec 5	Hopekids (Wed.) Sing Prek-1 NC/SC
Dec 9	Hopekids (Sun.) Sing Prek-1 SC
Dec 12	Hopekids (Wed) Sing 2 nd -5 th NC/SC
Dec 14	Confirmation Lock-in NC
Dec 16	Hopekids (Sun) Sing 2 nd -5 th SC
Dec 16	Hopekids (Sun) Sing Prek-5 NC
Dec 19	HSM Christmas Party
Jan 2 & 6	Hopekids Celebration
Jan 18-20	Confirmation 9 th grade retreat
Jan 27	Honor the Promise Baptism Event
Feb 2	Confirmation FMSC – Mass Serve
Mar 6	Ash Wednesday – Worship with family
Mar 20	Flower Sales Trip Fundraiser Begins
Mar 29	Confirmation TNT Event
Apr 7	NC 5 th grade: 1 st Communion Instruction 2-5pm
Apr 10	All (Wed) Hopekids Sing
Apr 10	Confirmation/HSM: Passion Story Worship
Apr 14	SC 5 th grade: 1 st Communion Instruction 2-5pm
Apr 14	All (Sun) Hopekids Sing
Apr 14	Confirmation/HSM: Passion Story Worship
Apr 18	1 st Communion 5 th graders/Maundy Thursday
Apr 21	Easter Sunday – Worship with family
Apr 29	Flower Sales Fundraiser Deadline
May 8 & 12	All Grades – End of Year Celebration
May 15	HSM Bonfire
May 18	Affirmation of Baptism/Rehearsal/Pictures
May 19	Affirmation of Baptism
May 22	Baccalaureate
Jun 3-6	VBX North Campus - PM
Jun 10-13	VBX South Campus – AM & PM

On Break
Hopekids Event
Confirmation Event
HSM Event
Multi-Ministry Event