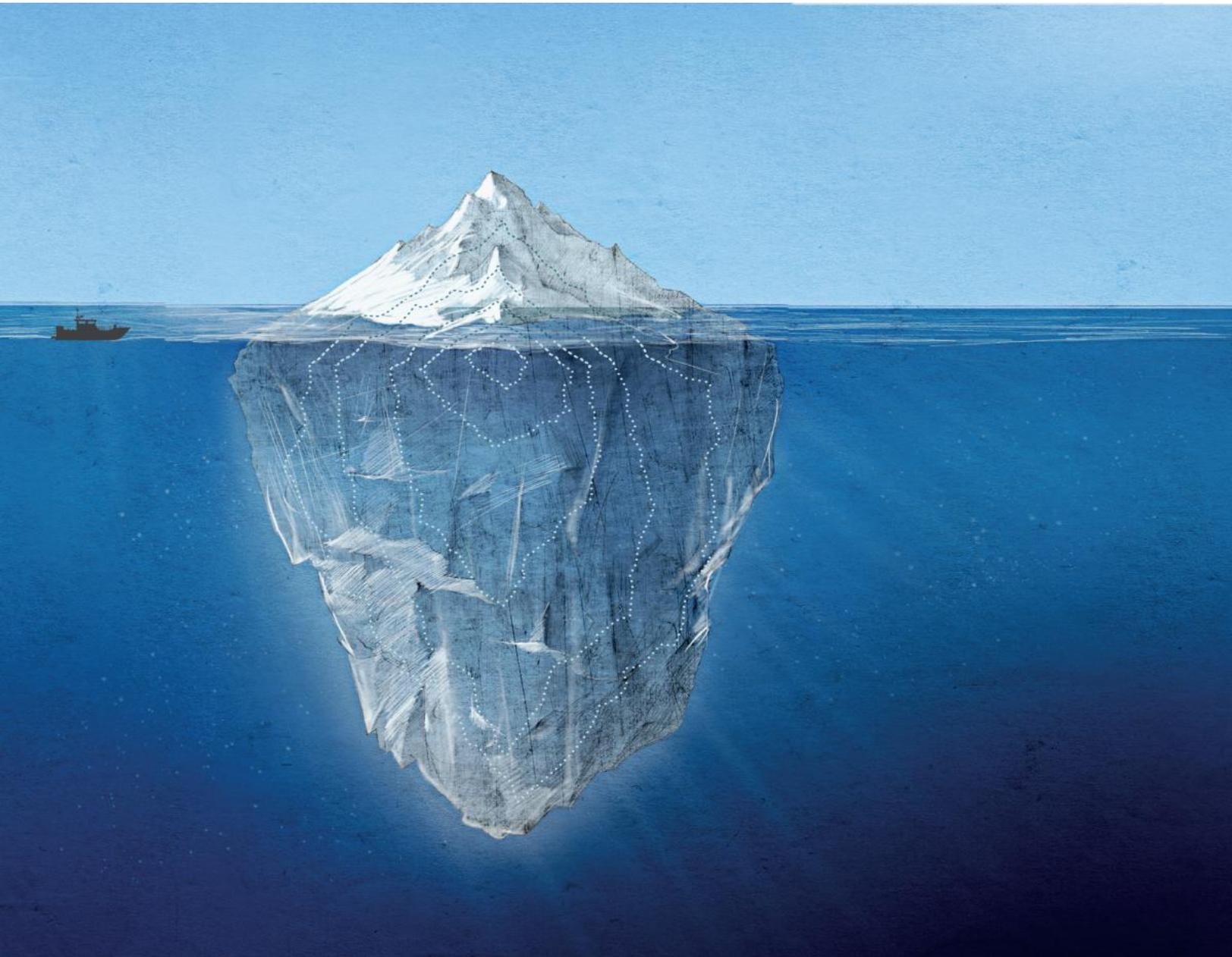


home group leader handbook

...the intentional process of becoming more like Jesus.



BEAVERCREEK
CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Home Group Leaders Handbook

...the intentional process of becoming more like Jesus.

This Handbook is for those who find themselves leading Home Groups and Tribes of all shapes and sizes.

As a leader, you've answered the call to take initiative for the benefit of others. Namely, you're dedicating your life not only to following Jesus, but to cultivating a community that calls others to learn to follow Jesus, too.

This handbook was written to help you lead people, into all Jesus has called us to be. We pray you will find encouragement, clarification, and tools you can immediately implement in your community. Our prayer is that, as you read it, you will consistently put it down and pray; pray for yourself, pray for your community, and listen to God for direction, peace, and clarity.

Before your first training session: Read through the Gospel of Luke chapter by chapter highlighting each activity, moment, or setting in which Jesus made disciples. Note the moments in which He and His disciples are sharing the normal, everyday stuff of life, such as walking, eating, sleeping, and working. Note also how they share community and burdens for one another and the challenges they are facing, such as sick parents, fear, storms, and other stresses. Lastly, note how this discipleship is happening purposefully and on mission. Try to make an exhaustive list of everything that Jesus did to make disciples.

Then ask someone you trust: What would it look like to be a disciple of Jesus and make disciples like Jesus?

The Paradigm

We are on the JOURNEY with You!

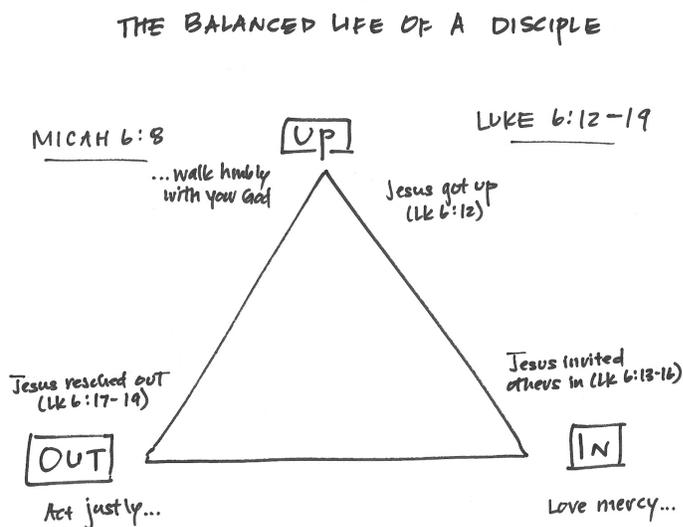
Our Missional Vision

God has given us the vision to become a church centered around *being disciples of Jesus who help others also become disciples of Jesus — what we call disciple(makers).*

Following Christ's example, we intend to engage with people and live life with them, because that's exactly where *discipleship* takes place. Home Groups are the vehicle that we use to do just that. Our hope is that we engage people in their everyday lives and help them be *disciples of Jesus.*

We believe the church is God's people, not a brick-and-mortar building. Our campus is just where we meet corporately, celebrate what God has been doing, encourage each other as a family, pursue discipleship with each other from our children to our most seasoned members.

Living as people **sent** by Jesus into the world is what we call Missional. For us that means God calls us to a specific community or group of people to embody the good news that Jesus is restoring all things. It means we care more about how God transforms people's lives than anything else. Which is why we live as a family of missionary servants where God sends us — what we call a Home Group.



Our strategy for being missional among our friends and neighbors is summed up in three words: UP, IN, and OUT. UP refers to our personal relationship with God, IN refers to our community with other followers of Jesus and OUT refers to our relationships with those who don't follow Jesus...yet. We try to visualize this strategy in a triangle which depicts a balanced life, based on the example of Jesus's time on earth...

This vision makes discipleship the center of everything we do. Being and making disciples becomes central to who we are as a church. Everything we do should be an attempt to be disciples of Jesus and help others be disciples. So we have to ask ourselves then “what is a disciple?”

What is a Disciple?

If we want to lead and make disciples, we have to understand what a disciple is.

A disciple is someone who is intentionally becoming more like Jesus.

Discipleship then is not a program of the church but the **mission** of the church.

Discipleship is the intentional process of becoming more like Jesus—not just in a Bible study, at a church building, or within spiritual disciplines, but in our day to day lives.

Making disciples is leading people to submit all of life increasingly to the lordship and empowering presence of Jesus Christ. As a leader, your role is to cultivate an environment where discipleship happens.

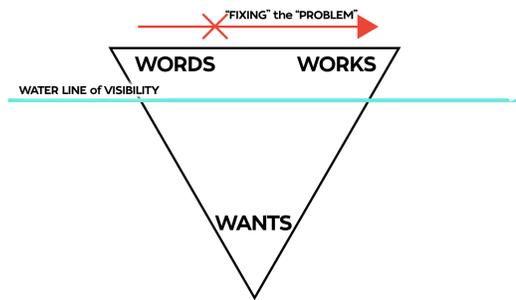
Life on Life — UP: Making disciples means we share life with people so we know their stories, know their struggles, and can see each other walk in faith and learn how to submit our lives to God. They also get to know us! To be a disciple means we submit to God.

Life in Community — IN: Making disciples requires the input, encouragement, gifting, and example of a whole group of people. It can't only be one-on-one. We need the body. We need community to know how to follow Jesus. To be a disciple means we share our lives with others.

Life on Mission — OUT: Making disciples draws us into the mission of sharing the good news with friends, neighbors, and families. Our communities live outwardly, seeking to make the good news clear through our words and actions to others. To be a disciple means we embody the good news of Jesus in the world, through word and deed.

Unfortunately discipleship has been broken down into doing Bible study and making sure we behave morally. That's what Dallas Willard called, “The Gospel of Sin Management,” and it does nothing significant to transform us, or make us more like Jesus. We know what Jesus taught and how he acted but we aren't really imitating him.

Think & Behave, Words & Works, is what we have been focused on in Christianity through the 20th century. We spend our time talking about beliefs and behaviors, just trying to fix the problem. But when we orient ourselves around the balance of UP | IN | OUT and start to imitate Jesus we notice that something is missing. We realize Jesus wanted to get below the surface, beyond just words and works. It is why the greatest commandment was to love God with all your soul, mind and strength. Jesus is saying, “Love must permeate your desires (wants), your thoughts (words) and your actions (works). That means we have to be aware of our desires. We have to know what we want, and we have to know if what we want lines up with what Jesus wants, **remember being a disciple is learning to live like Jesus.**



So discipleship has to address our attachment to our desires. Unless we get our wants on the table in discipleship, we will never be able to integrate the different aspects of our spirituality so that we look and live like Jesus.

As a church we have discerned our wants, which reveals our motivations behind our pursuit of becoming disciples of Jesus, and which we hope will become the motivations for the development of our Home Groups, the place where we begin to make disciples.

Our Wants (Value):

We want...

We want to be a *FAMILY*, loving each other with grace and truth.

We want to *EMPOWER* people to live out their calling, sent by God's Spirit into their world to restore all things to God through Jesus.

We want to be *WORSHIPERS*, loving God with all of our heart, soul, mind, & strength.

We want to be *NEIGHBORS*, living intentionally & honorably with those around us.

We want to be *LEARNERS*, learning God's word & doing what it says.

We want to be *DISCIPLE(MAKERS)*, mentoring the next person to live like Jesus.

We want to be a *SAFE PLACE*, where people find healing for their brokenness.

We want to be known to value *PEOPLE* before institutions, always seeking ways to love above all things

EXERCISE: Look up John 13:21-38

Here are two disciples and their desires on display: Judas and Peter. Jesus takes the same posture toward BOTH. He helps them name/own what is in their hearts even when what is there is not godly.

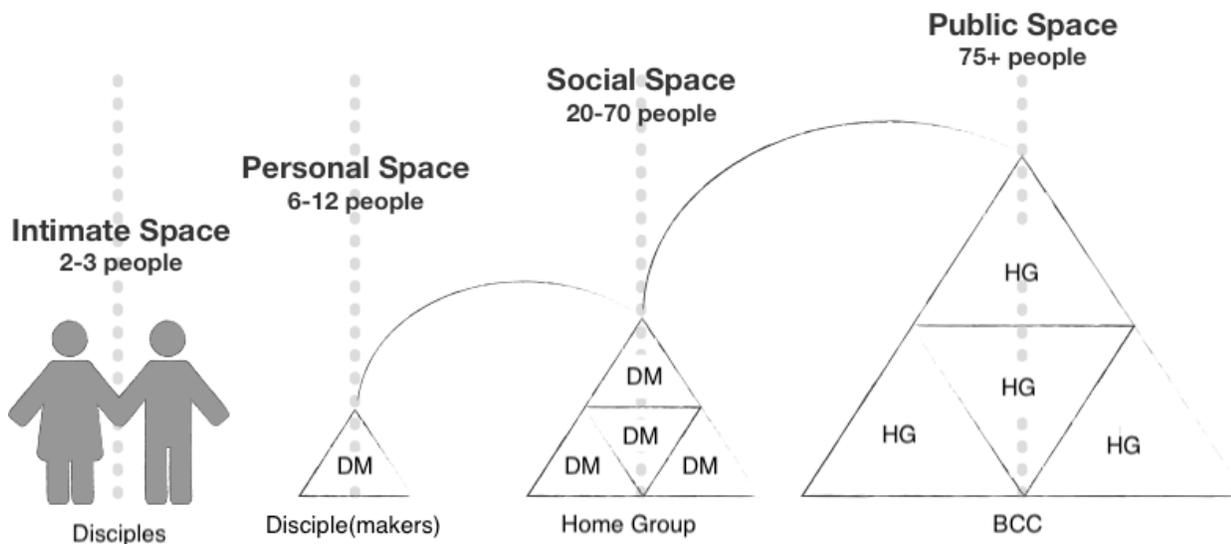
What do you notice about how Jesus relates to Judas' desire here? Does he ignore it? Try to influence it? How would you describe his posture toward it?

What do you notice about Peter's desire here? How is his aspirational desire different than his actual desire?

Notice: in between Jesus empowering Judas and then Peter to name/own their desires, Jesus gives them a new commandment (vss. 34-35). What do you think is the connection between this commandment ("Love as I have loved you") and desire?

Now that we know our motivations for being and making disciples at BCC. We can start to consider how that will be played out in our home groups, and in the church over all.

Mike Breen has said, "If you build the church, you may get a few disciples, if you make disciples you will get the church." Our motivation, is not to build the church but to make disciples. If we do that then the church will be a natural bi-product of making disciples.



It is very easy, in the pace we keep around the Miami Valley, to slip into thinking that church is a building, an event, or a program. As we have seen in the Bible, church is a movement.

The early church didn't build buildings hoping people would come, people were drawn to the gospel at work in them. Instead of saying, "build it and they will come," the early church was saying "if we become it they will come."

Becoming disciples of Jesus is at the core of this movement. It is the core of BCC, and the core of our home groups.

That's why our calling is built around the same core idea: becoming more like Jesus. If we look at our calling through the lens of UP | IN | OUT we can see how imitating Jesus will affect our everyday lives and produce a Home Group and a church that is like Jesus.

Our Calling:

We have been called to be a loving family of Jesus' disciples, empowered to reveal the beauty of the Kingdom of God.

Home groups allow us to live out this calling up close and personal. Home group is where we actually practice our Christianity. In church on a Sunday morning it is really hard to dig deep with people, to share our hurts and celebrate our triumphs. Sunday services isn't conducive for allowing someone to hold you accountable or to ask someone to pray over you because you are struggling with life. Home Groups are where we become a family, learn to meet God in our everyday lives, follow him with our whole hearts, and share that beauty with the rest of the world.

UP: *Celebrate God and His work through Jesus Christ* – In Home Group together we learn to submit to God through Jesus. We pray for each other, seek God's heart on behalf of our friends and rejoice in the work God is doing through us. This beats sinning a few songs and hoping we can capture God's heart.

IN: *We are a family* – We get to invite each other into the center of God's love for us. Family, is not always easy, but we all know we need it. Home Group can be a place where we become a healthy community that will dig into the hard places of life and magnify life's joys.

OUT: *Empowered to reveal the beauty of God's Kingdom* – We haven't been asked to change the world on our own. With our Home Group behind us we can embody the good news to the world. We can inspire each other and support each other to truly make a

difference in someone's life. As we embrace our mission as a Home Group, together we can see people and places transformed with the good news of Jesus.

This means Home Groups are the front lines of BCC. The story of BCC is the story of the Home Group: The place where disciples are made thus place where the church is.

Homework —> Practice UP | IN | OUT: Ask the Holy Spirit to show you one way you can step into this practice throughout the next week as an individual:

Family — Spend time this week learning something new about Jesus and sharing it with people from your community, it might inspire them. OR...

Servants — Seek out one opportunity this week to have a meal with someone in your community. Ask them about how they became a Christian. OR...

Missionaries — Spend relational time with a friend, neighbor, or co-worker who isn't following Jesus, get to know some of their story, and find a way to bless them.