



A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO UNDERSTANDING MISSIONAL COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

[#2 IN THE MC HANDOUT SERIES]

This Guide will help you discern your interest and calling in becoming a Missional Community leader. It includes:

- A. Overview: process, roles
 - B. Qualifications and clarifications for leadership
 - C. Common Questions
 - D. The circles and size of a Missional Community.
 - E. Clarifying the difference between a MC Leader and a committed participant.
 - F. Commitments
 - G. Discernment + Coaching Worksheet
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A.OVERVIEW: REASON, ROLES, RHYTHMS

1. How does one become a MC leader and start a MC?

Exploration > Identification > Affirmation.

- **Exploration:** A potential MC leader explores their passion, calling, and fit for a new or existing MC. This occurs with coaching and support and a MC leader will then make a formal commitment.
- **Identification:** A MC team of committed leaders identify their reason, roles, and rhythm. A MC is emerging.
- **Affirmation:** A public commission of a MC occurs and others are invited to prayerfully discern if they are a fit to join.

Further comments:

- A MC Leader is a CityLights Partner and typically starts as a part of Missional Community that multiplies.
- MC leaders make commitments, receive coaching, and are affirmed by the Overseers of CityLights
- The start-up process for a MC depends on the stage of development: pre-emerging, emerging, or established. There are guides and coaching to help you start.
- A Missional Community develops as a **reason**, **roles**, and **rhythms** are identified.

2. Every MC has a **reason** for existing: a sent focus.

Typically christians join community groups or bible studies because of a focus on growing knowledge (bible or thematic study) or growing community (care, affinity). A Missional Community, true to its name, has a mission, a sent focus which is the reason the community comes together.

A sent focus could be the people of a local school, a certain subculture (mountain bikers and their families, newcomers to Canada), or an area of justice (refugees, a local prison, or troubled teens). A sent focus gives reason for the rhythms of the MC and for people to join. It's people focused (not picking up garbage), it's tangible and measurable (not "loving families in our city as that is vague), and it's invitational (you can bring invite others to join and develop real community).

3. A MC starts with specific leadership roles

Three primary roles are helpful to start-up and these are most likely leadership roles:

1. **Missional Catalyst:** a natural desire to reach out and has a vision for multiplying disciples and owning the mission of Jesus within a specific context. **This role is best for people with evangelism or apostolic gifting.**
2. **Shepherd and Discipleship group Catalyst.** Find at least one person who is attune to the emotional and spiritual needs of the community. This person is a catalyst for identifying who needs specific gospel shepherding and who could be in a Discipleship group. **This role is best for people with a shepherding gift.**
3. **Logistics Catalyst:** this person helps make a schedule for food and clean-up, sends out calendar updates, and ensures attendance is done. **This role is best for people with an administrative, leadership, or helper gift.**

Additional roles that could develop as the community grows are below. These are not all leadership roles as it can be healthy for various participants to have roles:

4. **Training Facilitator:** this person facilitates discussion around the gospel and helps work through any material that is beneficial for the community. **This role is best for people with a teaching or leadership gift.**
5. **Host:** someone who consistently hosts. This involves preparing the space and drinks. They could also be aware of people's birthdays and special occasions. **This role is best for people with a hospitality gift** and doesn't necessarily need to always be the person who actually opens their home.
6. **Food Coordinator:** as a MC develops or starts to host more, the food portion can be separated from the logistics coordinator's role to become its own role.
7. **Children's Coordinator:** if there are a number of kids then having someone develop a schedule where people hangout with the kids becomes important.
8. **Prayer Coordinator:** initiate reminders of praying for one another and sharing prayer requests. They may also help discerning needs and direction. **This role is best for people with a faith, intercession, or prophetic gifting.**

4. Rhythms of a Missional Community

Rhythms reflect our reason, our mission. Rhythms also grow and build relationship. Any healthy team, community, or family has rhythms. Each MC is unique based on their sent focus and, like any missionary team, must design rhythms that reflect who they are lovingly serving. Weekly are likely at least weekly.



Our logo reflects three dimensions of loving relationship: **Up - In - Out**. **Up**: we are Jesus-centered and love God. **In**: we are family and love each other. **Out**: we are sent servants who love the world.

A MC has Up-In-Out rhythms. *Up* - may be going to Celebration Gatherings together and receiving communion together. *In* - likely includes a MC family meal. And also discipleship groups. *Out* - could include monthly serving with a community program or justice initiative, seasonal invitational potluck feasts, hosting Alpha, and going for prayer walks.

Reason > Roles > Rhythms

B. QUALIFICATIONS FOR MC LEADERSHIP

1. Five Points on Qualification

1. The Six “C’s” of leadership:

- **CHARACTER**: this is about a genuine love for Jesus and for people. We are serious about Jesus-centered character first (ie. we are looking for teachable humility).
- **CHEMISTRY**: this is about alignment with our core theology, philosophical approach, culture, and values. Therefore, a leader must be a CityLights Partner.
- **CALLING**: is someone feeling called/led/drawn to make disciples with us? Is there a desire?
- **CAPACITY**: is there capacity to serve and lead in this way at this time? To disciple others?
- **COMMITMENT**: is there a willingness to commit? Passion is like the foam on top of the river while commitment is the current at the bottom – passion looks neat, but commitment creates the movement.
- **CARE**: am I willing and able to not just manage a program or plan but care and disciple a person?

2. A MC leader can say “follow my lifestyle and you will get closer to Jesus because I am getting closer to Jesus.”

- In terms of being a reproducing disciple, they can evaluate their character, lifestyle, and habits and recognize the imperfections and growth areas but there aren’t red flags that would hinder them from humbly, in grace, saying “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1). They aren’t hiding issues of sin, issues in their marriage, finances, sexual purity, etc. It’s not about perfection but direction and a leader can say their direction is growing in Jesus.

3. A MC leader says “yes” to loving Up-In-Out

- “Yes” to loving “Up” meaning they say yes to personal prayer rhythms and yes to corporate prayer. When there are times to pray, worship, and seek God – they say “yes.”
- “Yes” to loving “in” meaning they will, from love, inconvenience themselves to build up the church family. This means they will care for those in the MC as if they are family and it means they will participate in discipling future leaders and new Christians. When someone is hurting, in need, or wants to be discipled – they say “yes.”

- “Yes” to loving “out” to the world meaning they will have a BLESS-5 they pray for, will seek to start discovery groups, will actively participate in loving the people the MC is focused on serving. When there is an opportunity to love the city, seek out people of peace, or participate in a MC initiative – they say “yes.”

4. **A MC leader is teachable and desiring coaching.**

5. **A MC leader is intentionally discipling others, looking to utilize the vehicle of a d-group** (discovery or discipleship) or is ready, willing, and able to start doing so.

2. If we boil it down, who is a Missional Community leader?

One who is becoming a reproducing disciple (aka a spiritual parent).

There is obviously more to say but spiritual leadership is about discipleship, discipleship is relational, and relationships are about love. Our logo is a visual reminder of how we love in three relational directions: Up-In-Out. A MC leader genuinely leads in those directions and is growing in loving God, loving the church family, and loving the world. Loving in leadership is not abstract or theoretical but works out in lovingly discipling a few specific people towards maturity. A parent has kids.

“I am writing this not to shame you but to warn you as my dear children. Even if you had ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. Therefore I urge you to imitate me.” 1 Corinthians 4:14–16 (NIV)

The goal of a Missional Community leader is to, in the context of community on mission, multiply reproducing disciples in order to join Jesus in saturating our region.

GOSPEL LIGHTS, EVERYWHERE.

Discipleship is an

INVOLVES INVITATION AND CHALLENGE

intentional relational

INFORMATION  IMITATION 

journey of learning

CAN START PRE- OR POST- FAITH 

to put Jesus in the

center of all of life.

C. COMMON QUESTIONS

Q >> What does coaching and development look like?

> It's about direction not perfection and we are here to help you continue to join Jesus. We want to help you have healthy rhythms of prayer, rest, and fruitfulness and equip you in strengthening habits such as B.L.E.S.S and seeking out people of peace.

Q >> Are spouses always on the leadership team together?

> No. Not necessarily. Because of capacity or competency, one spouse may be on the Leadership team and the other may simply be a committed participant who is involved but not with the leadership team.

Q >> Do MC leaders need to be CityLights Partners?

> Yes.

Q >> Does someone need to finish Step 1 and Step 2 Cohort before joining a MC?

> If they are a Christian transferring to CityLights then ideally yes. That will help them grasp our heart, display their desire to humbly grow and learn. It will provide a foundation for a MC to build on together so there can be increased clarity and unity. If someone becomes a Christian through the MC then it will likely be a different journey.

Q >> Does a MC leader need to have a formal role in the MC?

> If they don't then it would be odd as they are helping lead.

Q >> What if someone isn't in a d-group or isn't leading one?

> Good question and should lead to a discipleship conversation. The short answer is that a leader is a disciple-maker and therefore would likely want to be a part of a d-group and seek to start their own as soon as possible. If they don't have this desire or it's not coming to life then it's a good opportunity to discuss our heart and what we are wanting.

That said, it's helpful to remember - the point isn't d-groups. The point is joining Jesus and seeing Jesus made known to everyone, everywhere. Gospel Lights, Everywhere. That's God's plan. We participate by being reproducing disciples. Missional Communities are merely communities where discipleship can occur. D-groups are specifically focusing on multiplying reproducing disciples. It's an environment or vehicle for discipleship. The point isn't the program. The point is God's purpose.

Remember, a spiritual leader is one who is **becoming a reproducing disciple (aka a spiritual parent who matures and multiplies).**

D. THE CIRCLES AND SIZE OF A MC.

How is a MC different from a small group? One key distinction is that a Missional Community has a reason to exist beyond building community. A MC has a mission, a sent focus. Additionally, a Missional Community is not an event you go to or a program you attend but a community you are *a part of*. It's relational not just programmatic. More could be said but two key aspects to understand are concentric and the size of the MC.

1. The Concentric Circles of a Missional Community



Spheres of Relationships

City.

Community (relational network)

Committed participants

Core Leadership Team

Let's note the concentric circle starting with the outside:

- **City:** the people around us. Jesus has a regional and global vision and made time for the multitudes.

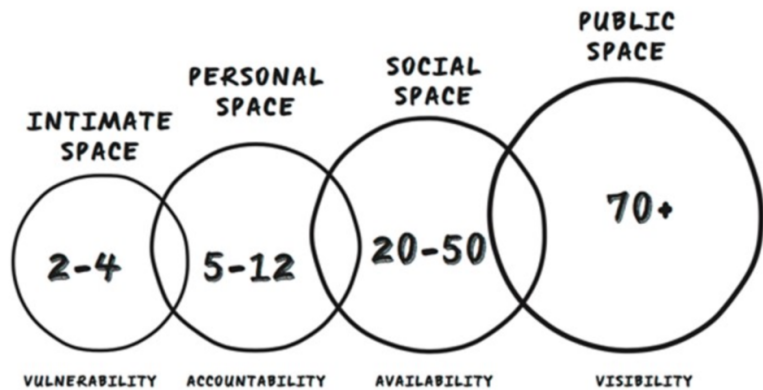
A Missional Community involves:

- **Community:** Those who are connected to the people of the MC and in the MC's relational orbit. This includes those who attend church gatherings, neighbours, friends, (Jesus-followers and others). They are invited to connect but may not do so (consistently).
- **Committed participants:** Those who are committed and are "a part of a Missional Community." Most of the time they will be Jesus-followers but there are times when someone may be committed to the community but not yet committed to Jesus. They are committed and quite consistent and understand that a MC has a sent focus. These would be the ones typically invited into discipleship groups. Think of Jesus' 12 plus the ladies. This is the family who goes deep and wide together.
- **Core Leadership Team:** Those who facilitate the MC and provide discipleship and leadership. Think of Jesus' 3.

Look at Jesus. *Jesus went deep in order to go wide and he went wider in order to go deeper.* He didn't lead everyone the same and didn't have the same expectations. He had a large community connected to him as he went wide. But he also had a clear family of partners, the 12 disciples with whom he went deep. He loved everyone but his attention towards people and his expectations of them wasn't the same. He invited them into deeper relationship and he challenged them to greater service. More invitation and more challenge.

2. The Size of a MC: How many people are in your Missional Community?

How many people? *It depends how you count but typically 12+ people engaging consistently is a helpful picture to have. It's mid-sized community. Think of an extended family vs a nuclear one - it's social space.*



One wants to consider how many people from the community engage w/ your MC rhythms? You don't want to have so many Christians committed participants that you lack space to include the broader community at invitational meals. You also don't want to be regularly in the personal space where it's just seven of you sitting in a circle. As one pastor said, you want to be "small enough to care and big enough to dare."¹

Small groups vs. Missional Communities.

- Small groups are typically in or out. There is one circle and you are in it or you aren't. MC's have concentric circles.
- Small groups are - small. Personal space 6-10 people. MC's are mid-sized 12-30 people (depending how you count, how many kids, and the size of your spaces).
- Small groups are often programmatic. They happen for 90 minutes. MC's are relational, there are rhythms and programmes elements but there may be people who orbit around the MC and are in some way quite connected to the MC but they may not even be a Christian or claim to be a part of it - but they are relationally connected and get invited to certain happenings.

E. CLARIFYING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A MC LEADER AND A COMMITTED PARTICIPANT

1. Changing our Perspective: Team vs singular leader

Typically our perspective and experience relates to small groups where we have one leader and others who help. A missional community is too dynamic and diverse for singular leadership. We need diverse gifts and many hands. It's team leadership.

2. Point leader and MC (Leadership) Team.

¹ This was said by Mike Green or a 3DM staff.

There is a point leader, maybe the person who initiated or had the call from the Lord, or maybe the person designated because of their gifting to synergize the team. The point leader liaisons with the general church leadership. The point leader is at all the MC Equipping Summits and typically receives monthly coaching. They DO NOT make all the decisions in isolation, handle PCO, do 2-3 roles etc :-). They participate with the team.

3. What is the difference between someone who helps and is committed and a MC “Leader” on the MC Leadership Team?

It isn't about being a type A personality. A leader is a reproducing disciple and they come in diverse forms. *It is helpful to have a sense of clarity* because a MC may develop to have 6, or 9, or 15 committed people helping, even owning certain roles but there can't legitimately be that many leaders trying to make decisions together.

There is a difference between the MC (Leader) Team and Committed Participants. It's healthy to have a qualified, affirmed, committed, united team. This could start with 3 people and could grow to 5-6 (but not more). See the table below to help clarify:

	MC Team “Leader”	MC Committed Participant
Prepared and seeking to intentionally disciple others (i.e d-group)	Yes	maybe
Carries personal ownership and a sense of “call” to the team and mission (it isn't merely a program or event or something they “help” with. They carry ownership for the community and the mission.	Yes	maybe
Is a CL Partner and is united in spirit. Holds the values and guards unity.	Yes	maybe
Has a clear, consistent role of responsibility in the MC.	Yes	maybe
Committed to development rhythms: MC leader retreat + coaching	Yes	no.
Is an affirmed leader by CityLights leadership	Yes	no
Participates in MC Team planning and prayer sessions to guide the MC (is active behind the scenes as a MC leader).	Yes	no.
Is consistent with MC Rhythms	Yes	maybe
Is prepared and willing to lead a person not just an event/program (i.e lead them to Jesus, have a courageous conversation, guide them to truth, gently call out sin, protect unity).	Yes	maybe
Praying and serving towards disciple multiplication	Yes	maybe

F. MISSIONAL COMMUNITY LEADER COMMITMENTS

If you were to become a MC leader then you would make the following commitment:

- I will continue to love Jesus, the church, and the world, taking steps of faith as I grow in seeking first his kingdom. This is reflected in personal rhythms of prayer, giving, and serving.
- I will guard the unity of the faith and will seek out conversations putting “relationship first” over fear, convenience, or shame. This means I won’t let offense, hurt, or bitterness fester – even if it’s small.
- I will be coached and prioritize the equipping summits so I can continue to grow alongside others. This means I will engage in the MC leaders retreat. *We want to support and equip you!*
- I will participate in a d-group leading one or preparing to lead one as I want to intentionally disciple others towards maturity and multiplication.
- I will have a consistent role within the Missional Community to meet needs, use my gifts, and build up others.
- I resonate with our vision and values and intend to increasingly live them out.
- I am committed for the school year.



Gospel Lights, Everywhere

G. DISCERNMENT AND COACHING WORKSHEET

If discerning MC leadership, please answer the following questions and send in your coach or the designated Overseer.

1. Can I say “yes” to the points in the MC Leader vs. Participant Table above? (See D. 3)
2. Looking at the MC Commitments, would you be able to commit? Which one causes the most hesitation? Why?
3. Looking at the 6 C’s of leadership above, which two “C’s” would be the areas of growth or concern for you? Why?
4. Looking at the leadership roles, what role would you have in the MC?
5. Who are you currently discipling? What does that involve?
6. Have you invited anyone into a discovery group recently? Please expand.
7. Who are your BLESS5?
8. Please briefly explain current examples of the BLESS rhythms.
9. Which value of CityLights do you foresee being most challenging for you to live out with your MC? Why?
10. How is the Gospel currently meeting you in your need? (How is the gospel being good news to you?)
11. Why are you excited about MC leadership?
12. What support and coaching do you need?

OUR VALUES ARE HOW WE LIVE THE MISSION TOGETHER

We put Relationship First: Forged by relationship.

We are Sent to the One: Relentlessly pursuing the lost.

We are Intentionally Intentional: We do things on purpose.

We are Multiplying Disciples in Communities on Mission: Growing together in Jesus and going together for Jesus.

We are Becoming a Gospel-Fluent People: Sharing, showing, and being shaped by the gospel in everyday life.

We are Seekers of God: Passionately desiring the presence and power of God