



LEADER

PLAYBOOK

What it takes to WIN as a
Leader at River Valley Church

Letter from the Connections Team

Thank you so much for taking the time to review this Leader Playbook. Over the next several pages, you will better understand why and how we do leadership at River Valley Church.

It all begins with our church's mission statement, which is ***to lead people into an authentic, life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ.***

Becoming a leader is one of the best and most practical ways of participating in this mission!

Moreover, with our church's vision to continue to plant life-giving churches all across the world, the Lifegroups and Lifeteams you lead will help more people find authentic connections, grow spiritually, and develop as world-changing leaders.

Over the next several pages, this packet will present the vision, the purpose, and some of the basic details necessary for leadership at River Valley Church. Typically, it should take about 15-20 minutes to review.

As River Valley Church continues to grow, it is important that more and more people take on the responsibility and privilege of leadership. So, again, thank you for taking the time to learn more about leading at River Valley.

The Connections Team
leadership@rivervalley.org

Part 1

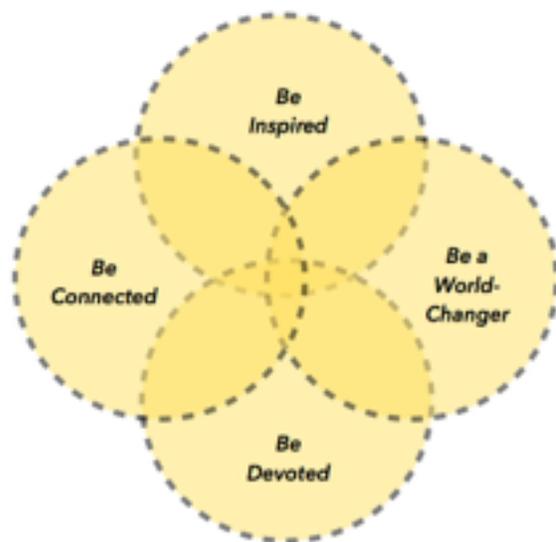
The Big Picture

OUR MISSION AND STRATEGY //

We are blessed to have a visionary leader who desires **to lead people into an authentic, life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ**, which is the mission of River Valley Church.

Our Strategy //

The diagram to the right is a simple representation of our strategy for how we believe God has called us to fulfill that mission.



We believe that an authentic, life-changing follower of Jesus Christ should:

- **Be Inspired:** Prioritizing the importance of being in church regularly and attending a few critical events. The weekend services and events inspire, motivate, and encourage involvement in other parts of our strategy.
- **Be Connected:** Life is designed to be done in healthy relationships. We like to say, "Life is better connected." By being connected in a Lifegroup and/or Lifeteam, you serve your church, build healthy relationships, grow in your relationship with Jesus, receive care in life's difficult moments, and learn how to disciple others.
- **Be a World Changer:** When we serve someone else, we change the world. You can serve your community through Local Service Projects and you can serve the world through Global Project.
- **Be Devoted:** Devotion to Jesus Christ through personal disciplines of Bible reading and praying. (SOAP is a very simple, yet powerful Bible engagement method that we highly recommend. More information is available on the church website and mydailysoap.org)

WHY WE VALUE CONNECTIONS //

We believe life is better connected because:

1. We were designed to do life together. We were not designed to be alone.
Genesis 2:18 - The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone..." (NIV)
2. Groups and teams were the model Jesus Christ used to build His Church.
Matthew 10:1-4 - Jesus called his twelve disciples to him... (NIV)
3. Connection is the primary model of caring for one another at River Valley Church.
John 13:34, 2 Corinthians 13:11, John 13:1-20, Galatians 6:2

Our **vision** is to create and multiply environments that foster life-change, service, and transformation. These environments are better known as Lifegroups and Lifeteams.

These environments not only provide genuine biblical community, but they also give individuals the opportunity to exercise their God-given potential as servants, leaders, and multipliers.

WHY WE VALUE LEADERSHIP //

The Bible gives clear instruction that each of us has a responsibility to equip, teach, and disciple others in community. The following verses are foundational to that call, and they inform our entire approach to leadership development at River Valley.

Ephesians 4:11-12 (NLT)

11 Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. 12 Their **responsibility is to equip** God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.

2 Timothy 2:2 (NLT)

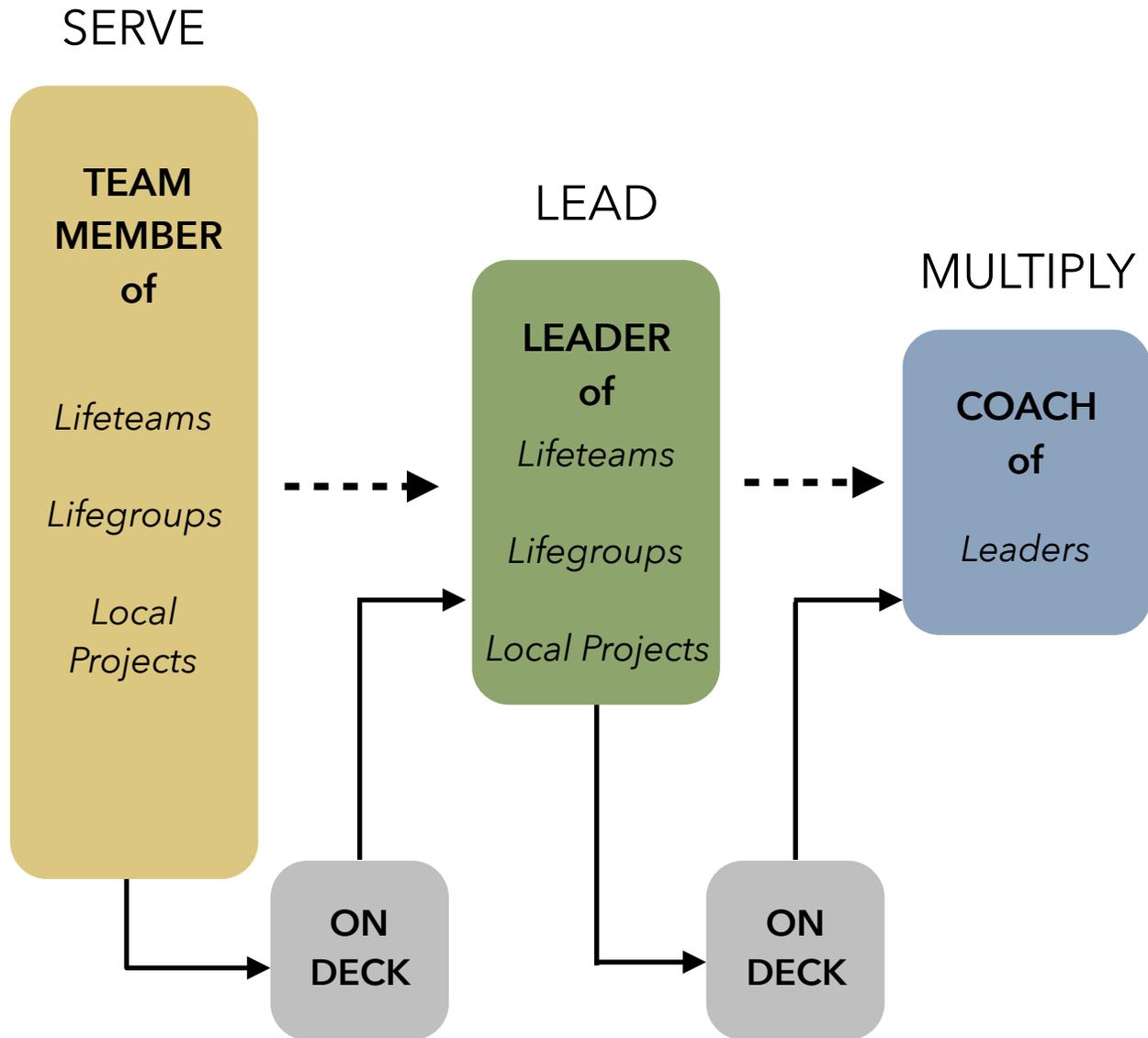
2 You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now **teach these truths** to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.

Matthew 28:19-20 (NLT)

19 Therefore, go and **make disciples** of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. 20 Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Our leadership development culture is simply an invitation to join what God is doing at River Valley. The diagram to follow will give you a simple picture of our leadership development process, which includes team members, leaders, and coaches, who are all contributing to our mission and vision as a church by serving, leading, and multiplying.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CULTURE //



THE ROSTER //

- A **Team Member** is someone who CONNECTS to biblical community through growth in a Lifegroup or service in a Lifeteam.
- Being **On Deck** is someone who SERVES a group, team, leader, or coach to prepare for his or her next level of leadership.
- A **Leader** is someone who LEADS a group or team so that as many people as possible are connected, growing in their faith, and serving.
- A **Coach** is someone who MULTIPLIES his or her leadership. They have experience as a Leader and have a passion to support, care for, and influence current and future leaders.

Part 2

What to Expect

OVERVIEW //

A River Valley leader's main responsibility is to **champion community**. Leaders foster an encouraging, loving, and supportive environment, while spurring others toward continued growth and service. A leader is someone who models godly character, prays daily, welcomes newcomers, and cares for others.

PLAYER QUALIFICATIONS //



The following tables are given to help you understand the expectations of Leaders and Coaches at River Valley Church. For more detailed descriptions of these qualifications, please reference the Glossary in the Appendix.

LEADERSHIP QUALIFICATION TABLES //

SPIRITUAL MATURITY	<i>On Deck</i>	<i>Leader</i>	<i>Coach</i>
<i>Developing Godly Character</i>	X	X	X
<i>Fosters Church Unity</i>	X	X	X
<i>Embodies Christian Values</i>	X	X	X
<i>Has Made Salvation Decision</i>	X	X	X
<i>Models Godly Character</i>		X	X
<i>Establishing Generosity</i>		X	X
<i>Heart for the House</i>		X	X
<i>Meaningful Devotional Life</i>		X	X
<i>Embedded in Biblical Community</i>		X	X
<i>Exudes Generosity</i>			X
<i>Inspires Godly Character</i>			X
<i>Has Healthy Accountability</i>			X
<i>Spirit-Led Leader</i>			X

LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY	<i>On Deck</i>	<i>Leader</i>	<i>Coach</i>
<i>Self-Manager</i>	X	X	X
<i>Demonstrates Optimism</i>	X	X	X
<i>Builds Interpersonal Skills</i>	X	X	X
<i>Resilient and Adaptable</i>		X	X
<i>Demonstrates Team-Building Skills</i>		X	X
<i>Engages Newcomers</i>		X	X
<i>Provides Valuable Perspective</i>		X	X
<i>Effective Communicator/Collaborator</i>			X
<i>Practices Courageous Leadership</i>			X
<i>Manages Conflict Well</i>			X
<i>Keen Sense of Self</i>			X

MINISTRY EXPERIENCE	<i>On Deck</i>	<i>Leader</i>	<i>Coach</i>
<i>Regular Service Attendance</i>	X	X	X
<i>Consistent Participant in Lifegroup/ Lifeteam</i>	X	X	X
<i>Agrees with Church's Beliefs and Practices</i>		X	X
<i>Completed NEXT</i>		X	X
<i>Engages in Building Community</i>		X	X
<i>Demonstrates Care for Others</i>		X	X
<i>Member at River Valley Church</i>			X
<i>Involved in Leadership for 6 Months in Lifegroup/Lifeteam</i>			X
<i>Track Record of Multiplication</i>			X
<i>Completed "Multiply" Lifegroup</i>			X

TIME COMMITMENT //

On average, your time commitment will be approximately **5-10 hours a month** spent CHAMPIONING community:

- Actively leading your Lifegroup or Lifeteam, focusing on identifying and developing On Deck leaders, championing community, and caring for members.
- Identifying and developing an On Deck leader every six months.
- Faithfully attending River Valley Leadership Nights.
- Establishing a track record of multiplication in your group or team.
- Connecting with your coach once every six months.

BEING A TEAM PLAYER //

- Pray daily and serve your coaches, pastors, and group/team members.
- Work toward healthy community and accountability in your life and leadership.
- Actively pursue, resource, and empower other On Deck leaders.

THE WINS //

The short-term win of LEADERSHIP is to create an environment that fosters community, transformation, and service. The long-term win is to multiply that environment.

When starting a Lifegroup or Lifeteam you can view them:

1. As a **CIRCLE** - Exclusive, closed loop - no openings (basically a huddle). Provides great community and growth for a season, but doesn't develop beyond its borders or create opportunity for future multiplication. [Roles: Leader & Followers]



Instead, we need to view our teams and groups:

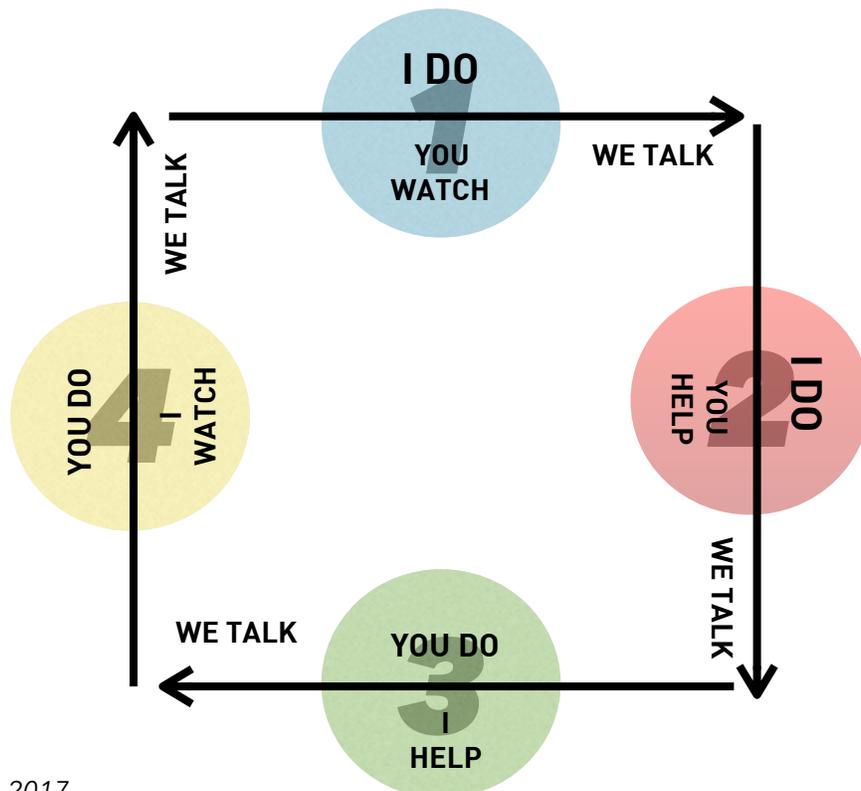
2. As a **SERIES of CIRCLES** (forming a circle) - Inclusive, gaps, openings. Provides great community and growth for a season, and opens opportunity for the group to multiply, expand, and reform for continued growth. [Roles: Leaders & On Deck Leaders (Potential Leaders)]



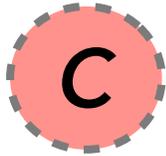
KEYS TO WINNING //

We believe ongoing development of leaders best happens in the context of on-the-job training. This is why we encourage leaders to identify On Deck leaders and invite them to learn from you while participating in small and significant leadership assignments.

The diagram below offers a simple process in providing On Deck Training for potential leaders in both Lifegroups and Lifeteams. Use this as often as you can.

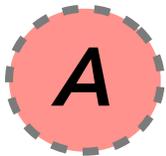


Care is also a vital to the leadership role at River Valley Church. As a leader, we empower and equip you to provide spiritual care and leadership resources to others at our church. When you approach connections and conversations with your team or group members, use the following CARE model to shape and structure your time.



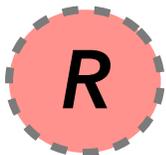
Connect - Open with a time of connection and relationship-building. Remember, your influence and voice with another individual is a product of your relationship with him or her.

Ask questions like: What's a story that sums up your past week? Are there any new things happening in your life since we last met? How is your family doing?



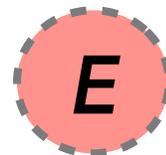
Accountability - Be intentional about asking how your leader is doing in their faith, family, personal life, and discipleship at River Valley.

Ask questions like: How would someone else describe your faith? Where are you winning in your leadership? Where are you losing? Who is on deck for you?



Resource - Think of ways you can resource your members to grow spiritually and in their leadership. You can only resource others as much as you are resourcing yourself, so look for opportunities to read and listen to other leadership voices.

Ask questions like: May I direct you to a resource on this topic? Have you thought about how this passage of Scripture might have application for you?



Encourage - This is a crucial piece to leadership. Make a diligent and heartfelt effort to leave your members inspired and energized to continue pursuing an authentic and life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ.

Ask questions like: How can I be praying for you? What can I do to continually support you in your life?

Part 3

The Plays



LIFETEAMS DEFINED //

Lifeteam ~n. - a group of people who have been empowered to use their gifts and abilities to create the life-giving atmosphere of River Valley Church through faithful service and leadership.

Many teams are necessary to create the life giving atmosphere of River Valley Church. Some options include:

- GoKids (Elementary & Early Childhood)
- River Valley Youth
- First Impressions (greeters, ushers, café, welcome center, and parking lot)
- Security
- Prayer Team
- Weekend Worship and Production Teams

LIFETEAM LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES //

1. **INVITE** people to join your Lifeteam.
2. **MANAGE, RESPOND, & COMMUNICATE** with members through the Lifeteam Toolbox
3. **ASSIST** with finding substitutes
4. **SERVE** with your team and **FILL** out attendance reports through the Toolbox
5. Identify **ON DECK** leaders
6. Look for opportunities to **CARE** for others
7. **DEVELOP** yourself and other team members by identifying next steps

QUESTIONS/CONCERNS //

Please know that we are always available to help out in any way possible.

For general Lifeteam questions: serve@rivervalley.org

For specific Lifeteam questions regarding pastoral concerns or other issues, please email jayne.poli@rivervalley.org



LIFEGROUPS DEFINED //

Lifegroup: ~n. a community pursuing an authentic and life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ. At River Valley Church, we have two primary Lifegroup environments:

- **Core Groups**- A group that meets up to 11 weeks around a specific, predetermined topic. This group is focused on building a core value in your life. (Alpha, Freedom, Financial Peace, God I Never Knew)
- **Community Groups**- 6 to 15 adults around the same stage of life who meet regularly during a given Lifegroups season to connect relationally, grow spiritually, and serve locally.

Most groups have a primary “target” but many have blurred lines and are open to more than one target group. For administrative purposes, however, it is most helpful to primarily focus on one of the following target age group or life-stage.

- GO Kids - (these happen on the weekends)
- River Valley Youth - (these happen at during YTH services)
- Young Adults (20+)
- Family
- Men
- Women (including Sisterhood)
- Adult

LIFEGROUP LOGISTICS //

Lifegroups meet at locations within the community that are purpose-appropriate and create a comfortable, casual environment. (Examples: homes, coffee shops, parks, community centers, gyms, restaurants, break rooms, meeting rooms, etc.) We want people to experience and connect with Christ in the community.

We like our Lifegroups to meet at regular and at memorable times (i.e. second and fourth Tuesday of each month). Here are the basic guidelines we ask all our leaders to follow:

- Community Groups- meet weekly during a given season
- Core Groups- typically meet weekly for 8-11 weeks
- Any day of the week
- Any time of the day
- Not during your campus weekend service
- Not during Leadership Night events

What about Childcare?

For childcare (if applicable), there is no single solution for childcare needs. Each individual leader decides how they want to handle their group's childcare. Listed below are some options:

- None provided - each individual/couple make their own arrangements.
- Rotate responsibility - each individual/couple takes a week to provide childcare or involves older, responsible kids to watch the younger ones.
- Group/Leader responsibility - the leader or someone in the groups gets the necessary childcare and the group collectively pays for the childcare.

LIFEGROUP LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES //

1. **DETERMINE** your Lifegroup content (SOAP Discussion, Sermon Discussion, online content available on Right Now Media, etc.)
2. **CREATE** your Lifegroup profile online through the Lifegroup Leader Toolbox
3. **INVITE, RESPOND, & COMMUNICATE** with group members weekly
4. Schedule opportunities to **SERVE** your community
5. Identify **ON DECK** leaders
6. Look for opportunities to **CARE** for group members and **PRAY** for them daily
7. **DEVELOP** yourself and other group members by identifying next steps

QUESTIONS/CONCERNS //

There are countless questions or concerns that arise as you lead. Please know that we are always available to help out in any way possible.

For general Lifegroup questions: [***lifegroups@rivervalley.org***](mailto:lifegroups@rivervalley.org)

For specific Lifegroup questions regarding pastoral concerns or theological issues, please email [***clynt.reddy@rivervalley.org***](mailto:clynt.reddy@rivervalley.org)

Appendix

GLOSSARY //

When you spend any amount of time at River Valley Church, you'll hear some terms and language that may seem unfamiliar to you at first. There is always a lot going on in various different ministries, so knowing what is what is a great way to get plugged in.

Leadership Roles:

On Deck - a developing leader; someone who serves a group, team, leader, or a coach to prepare for their next level of leadership.

Leader - a champion for community; someone who leads a group or team so that as many people as possible are connected and growing in their faith. Leaders also provide support, encouragement, and accountability to apprentices in their group or team.

Coach- a catalyst for growth; someone who multiplies his or her leadership. They have experience as a Lifegroup or Lifeteam Leader and have a passion to support, care for and influence other leaders.

Leadership Qualifications:

Spiritual maturity- the intentional process of becoming more like Jesus.

Godly character- seeking God daily and asking Him to reveal areas of weakness & blind spots in your life. Seeking accountability from friends to help develop God's character and create healthy, sustainable habits. Willing to receive feedback & input regarding areas for personal growth.

Church unity- Upholding and advocating the mission, vision, values, leadership, and strategy of a church community.

Christian values- a set of biblical teachings and principles from Jesus and other Church fathers that inform life and practice.

Salvation decision- the willful and premeditated acceptance of Jesus as Lord and Savior in one's life.

Generosity- the heartfelt giving of time, talent, and treasure as God leads in one's life without expecting anything in return.

Heart for the House- a desire to actively and passionately serve the church.

Devotional life- regular time invested in reading the Bible and praying and listening to God with the goal of developing a more authentic relationship with Jesus through the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Biblical community- a close-knit fellowship with others that results in sharing common values, beliefs, and convictions centered on spurring one another in discipleship and outreach.

Healthy accountability- honestly sharing one's life with another with the purpose of receiving encouragement, correction, and prayerful advice.

Spirit-lead leadership- Ability to seek God, hear His voice & act in obedience. Not afraid to step out in faith & act on the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

Leadership competencies- a set of skills, aptitudes, and abilities necessary for effective and enduring leadership

Self-Manager- the ability to take an introspective look and self-identify areas in need of improvement. Able to be places on time, accomplish basic tasks that are assigned & manage up.

Optimism- the ability to see the positive side of things & expect that things will turn out well. Chooses to stay positive even when others are being negative and spreading discouragement. Able to see opportunities where others see problems and can instill in others a sense of hope for the future.

Interpersonal skills- the ability to interact with others. These often include listening and communication skills, used to build rapport, trust, and accountability with team and/or group members and leaders.

Resilient- the ability to spring back after or in the face of difficulty or conflict.

Adaptable- the ability to adjust to new, different, or changing conditions while still staying positive and focused on the goals at hand.

Team building skills- the ability to continually bring a group of people together toward a common goal. Allows tasks and responsibilities to be shared, while also leveraging unique talent for specific projects and outcomes. Builds environment centered on trust, interdependency, and mutual accountability.

Courageous leadership- the ability to lead through any and all circumstances. Willingness to make tough decisions in a timely manner. Champion for unity, hope, and progress even in the face of opposition. Willing to be stretched to his or her limits as God leads and directs.

Keen sense of self- the ability to know oneself honestly and thoroughly. This may include knowledge of personality profiles or strengths through different assessments (i.e. Myers-Briggs, StrengthsFinder). Knows strengths and areas of talent as well as weaknesses and areas of improvement.

Ministry experience- tangible and practical time invested in helping others grow, serve, and develop and leaders

Care- providing help, resources, counsel, and prayer to those in need. This may require connecting members to specific care ministries given their specific needs.

Care Ministries:

DivorceCare- a lifegroup based on a biblical approach to divorce, separation as well as remarriage, forgiveness and reconciliation

Marriage mentor-a trained married couple who is assigned to another married couple for the enrichment of one's marriage or to provide support for marriages that may be in a hurting place.

River Valley member- an individual who has committed to actively connect, serve, and give to the ministry and goals of River Valley Church. Members must have a 6 month track record of active participation in a Lifegroup and Lifeteam as well as tithing (giving 10% of one's income to the church). Members must have also completed NEXT and must submit an online application that must be approved.

Multiplication- an increase in the number or amount of something, resulting in more opportunity for discipleship, service, or connection.

River Valley Church Ministries:

NEXT- a class that explains in-depth why River Valley exists, how we started, where we are going, why we function the way we do, why you are an essential part of the success and how you can find your place in the vision of the church.

Lifegroup- a community pursuing an authentic and life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ.

Core Group- a group that meets up to 11 weeks around a specific, predetermined topic.

Freedom- a group focused on helping you become the person you were created to be by finding freedom in Christ.

Financial Peace- life-changing course that teaches you how to make the right decisions with your money. You'll be empowered with the practical skills and confidence needed to achieve your financial goals and experience true financial peace.

Alpha- a 10 week class to learn more about the Christian faith.

God I Never Knew Lifegroups - a Lifegroup experience designed to explore a life lived in relationship with the Holy Spirit.

Community Group - six to fifteen adults in the same stage of life who meet regularly during a Lifegroup season to connect relationally, grow spiritually, and serve locally.

Lifeteam- a group of people who have been empowered to use their gifts and abilities to create the life-giving atmosphere of River Valley Church through faithful service and leadership.

Leadership Night- specially designed to challenge and grow you as an individual, Christ-follower and leader.

GoKids- GoKids is the children's ministry of River Valley Church, from birth through the 5th grade. GoKids meets the same time as weekend services at all campuses as well as midweek.

Youth- Youth entails all the ministry to youth from 6th grade all the way through high school. This includes Wednesday night youth groups at all campuses, Sunday night discipleship at Ignite, special events and conferences throughout the year, and Lifegroups that meet all across the Twin Cities.

Global Project- Global Project is the global and local missions effort at River Valley Church. Global Teams are sent all across the world every few weeks and provide a chance for us to take part in God's work across the world. Local Project seeks to show the love of Jesus through acts of service in the Twin Cities.

Sisterhood Night- Three times a year we meet for a women's only service called Sisterhood Night. On a designated Sunday evening, we bring in internationally recognized speakers, musical guests, and teaching from leaders within River Valley Church. The night begins with a time of worship followed by door prizes, a message, and treats.

Men's Night- A Night for the men of River Valley to come together for community, inspiration and to have a good time.

Twenty Plus (20+)- 20+ is a movement of young adults at River Valley Church, which exists to connect and collaborate with young people seasonally and weekly to impact our church, our community and our globe through serving.

Kingdom Builders- Kingdom Builders is what we call our above and beyond giving, after our tithe to the church. Last year, as a church we gave nearly \$4.5 million to fund missions, church expansion, and other various ministries across the globe.

RVLI (River Valley Leadership Institute)- RVLI is the internship program here at River Valley. Interns serve and learn in a variety of areas and capacities on the weekend and during office hours.

Sisterhood- A Lifegroup community for women at River Valley Church.

Sparkle- Sparkle is our annual Women's Conference at River Valley Church. Each year, thousands of women gather to grow together and to be inspired as a Christ Follower.