



Developing a Leadership Community

A Local Church Resource for Students & Partner Churches

Step #1: Completing a Leaders & Groups Inventory

Every church, large or small, is comprised formally and informally, of a collection of groups. Churches have been organized in both large group and small group gatherings for the last 2000 years. Paul used this strategy with the Ephesian church and explained, “I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you **publicly** and from **house to house**” (Acts 20:20). Paul taught in both large public gatherings as well as small groups in homes. The early Jerusalem church also used this strategy (Acts 2:46, 5:42) of church organization.

Completing a leaders and groups inventory is a first step a revitalizing pastor and church board can take in organizing the church for effective leader development. The simple act of uniting the church into groups by identifying who is leading and serving in what groups can be wonderfully motivating. There are always more people leading and more ministry roles filled than we first think. Doing a leaders and groups inventory is not a complicated task. It is also a first step we take when we want to **simplify church development**.

Healthy, multiplying churches are very simple churches, usually made up of **two kinds of groups – serve groups and grow groups**. Let’s define each of them. The purpose of a **serve group** is primarily to do ministry, both inside and outside the church. While serve groups practice important leader development, they are not organized to technically be “disciple-making” groups that study together.

Serve groups are designed to minister and serve. A study of the local government section of the Nazarene Manual reveals there are **31** different serve groups referenced that a local church may choose to use. Different churches may call their serve groups by different names. Examples are the evangelism/outreach team, church board, SDMI leadership team, NYI (youth) council, NMI (missions) council, trustees team, stewards team, finance team, money counters team, worship planning team, ushers/greeters team, facilities team, communion team – the list can go on and on.

Every group of people who gather to minister within the church or to the community in some way is a **serve group**.

Not every serve group meets every week. When you are completing a leaders and groups inventory, make sure you do not overlook the informal serve groups that may meet only a few times a year. These serve groups are also important in church development planning. Groups like the Christmas or Easter outreach teams, nominating committee, community outreach groups, the VBS team and the annual team that comes together to lead an event your local church does every year. Keep asking questions to discover every group and every ministry activity in your church. The first collection of groups a church develops are **serve groups**.

The second collection of groups every church develops are disciple-making groups; many churches simply call these **grow groups**. Grow groups are “involved in the study of the Bible and its application of biblical principles for Christlikeness.”ⁱ The vision and purpose of **grow groups** must be constantly renewed so they maintain their effectiveness for outreach and stay aligned with the Great Commission. These are church groups that support people along the journey of grace. They help people take disciple-making next steps. They help people continue learning and growing in their journey to become a Christ-like disciple-maker. These groups can gather anywhere; they do not have to meet inside a church building.

Some groups meet when the church gathers for worship such as age-related Sunday school groups and children’s church groups. There are baptism classes, membership classes and prayer groups. Other examples are men’s and women’s groups, weekly small groups, accountability groups, neighborhood outreach groups, celebrate recovery groups – this list can go on and on as well. A study of the local government section of the Nazarene Manual reveals there are **26** different disciple-making, **grow groups** referenced. A listing of these groups, along with their Manual reference, can be found at the end of this resource.

Healthy, multiplying churches have learned how to keep the operation of their church simple. They are simple churches that have learned to organize the church into groups. They see their “ministries” as a collection of groups that must be organized for development through micro multiplication. People can participate in more than one group. Groups can be flexible, fitting people’s schedule and needs. Every group has a leader and should have a “Timothy” or apprentice leader. Churches that are healthy plan and organize to never stop multiplying new leaders and new groups (Mark 4:20).

Many pastors and church leaders need training as they develop greater skill in church organization. They need help understanding how to apply Nazarene Manual principles and keep the organization of the church simple, healthy and multiplying. The Nazarene Manual is “the official statement of the faith and practice of the church.”ⁱⁱ It explains our church polity and form of government. It is our legal church bylaws, and it has been created over the last 112+ years to serve a global church operating in 160+ countries.

With over 30,000 churches globally, operating in thousands of cultures, sub-cultures and contexts, and with dozens of different church models the Holy Spirit is raising up among us, under the leadership of 480+ superintendents, the church wisely allows local church boards to “organize themselves for ministry and missional action using alternative structures.”ⁱⁱⁱ **Healthy, multiplying churches learn to organize the church for growth rather than control.**

A church organizational guideline is that every 75-100 new people who are added to the church, requires a revision of operational thinking. New people can more effectively be added and disciplined when we develop appropriate church structures. New operational structures can easily be adjusted without violating the principles of the Nazarene Manual. Most of our larger churches throughout the world have learned how to do this. In consultation with their superintendents, churches in different countries have learned to adapt their structure to fit their ministry context. To aid local churches, **MULTIPLYNAZ** has created a Leaders and Groups Inventory tool we are making available for use throughout the world.^{iv} To complete your inventory, we suggest you do the following:

- Identify every serve group and grow group in the church
- Identify and list every serve and grow group leader
- Update the contact information for each group leader
- Identify when and where each of these groups meet

This first step of completing a leaders and groups inventory will result in information on all of the leaders and ministries currently operating in your church. This information becomes vital as you build your church development plan. You now have all of the information at your fingertips to organize! Too many churches meet every week without ever taking this important organizational step. Building a plan to multiply new leaders and ministries first requires an accurate list of all current leaders and groups within the church. The **first step** is to complete a leaders and groups inventory.

Manual Listing – Local Church “Grow Groups”

Language Bible classes (100.2)

Adult small groups (145.1)

Youth small groups (145.1)

Children’s small groups (145.1)

Sunday School classes (145.1)

Bible studies (145.1)

VBS groups (145.1, 148)

Caravan groups (145.1, 148)

Singles disciple-making groups (145.1)

Childcare / Schools groups (145.1)

Christian faith groups (145.2)
Equipping / training groups (145.2)

Age group Sunday School/Bible studies/ small groups leaders (145.8)

Continuing Lay Training gathering (145.9)
SDMI Leadership Training (146.3, 147.6)

Monthly Groups Report (147.8)

Quarterly Calendar of Activities (147.9)

Children’s Church (148)
Bible Quizzing group (148)
Cradle Roll (148)

Children’s (NMI) Missions groups (148, 152)
Youth NMI Missions groups (152)
Adult NMI Missions groups (152)

Marriage & Family groups (149)
Senior adult groups (149)
Single adult groups (149)
Women’s ministry groups (149)
Men’s ministry groups (149)

Manual Listing – Local Church “Serve Groups”

Church-Type Mission Group (100.1)
Evangelism and Church Membership Committee (107.1, 110-110.8, 129.24)
Evangelism/Outreach team (145.2)
Nominating Committee (113.10)
Church Board (127-134)
Long-range planning committee (129.29)
Church Board Committees (or teams) (113.12)
Finance Committee (129.7)
Money Counting Committee (129.22)
Auditing Committee (129.23)

Stewards (137-140)

Church Growth Committee (138.1)

Church organization committee (138.4)

Church planting committee (138.1)

Community outreach team (138.4)

Communion team (138.7)

Stewardship Committee (140)

Trustees (141-144)

Facilities team (143.2)

Financial Planning team (143.2)

SDMI Board or Education Committee (113.12, 129.25, 145-146.6)

VBS planning team (145.1)

NYI Youth Council (147) NYI Local ministry plan (150.1, 810.100-810.118)

NMI Missions Council

District Assembly delegates (113.14)

Board of Tellers (124)

Trial Committee (129.26)

Childcare / Schools groups (145.1)

Children's Ministry Council (145.7, 147, 148)

Adult Ministry Council (145.7, 147)

Nazarene Childcare/School Board (151)

ⁱ Nazarene Manual, SDMI Bylaws, Par 812, Article II, Section 1.

ⁱⁱ Manual, Church of the Nazarene, Forward, p 6.

ⁱⁱⁱ Nazarene Manual, par 113.12.

^{iv} This tool can be downloaded from the **MULTIPLYNAZ** resources website.