

Session 3: Leadership Skills

Quick recap

This was the third session in a series called "Equipping the Saints," where Hillary taught about essential leadership skills and group dynamics for small group ministry at St. Columba's church. The session focused on how Jesus equips small groups through the Holy Spirit, biblical foundation, prayer practices, and spiritual gifts. Hillary discussed the role of the Holy Spirit as an advocate who speaks "with and for" the believers, drawing from John 14:26 and Acts 1:8. The teaching covered four key powers of leadership: the Holy Spirit as the primary equipping, personal knowledge and skills including a spiritual gifts inventory, the role and office of leadership with qualities like servant leadership and pastoral care, and the importance of sharing power and having succession planning. Hillary emphasized that true leadership follows Jesus's example of washing feet and serving others, while also maintaining accountability and integrity within the group. The session concluded with discussion about mentorship and teaching, highlighting how mentoring others helps both the mentor and mentee grow in their faith.

Next steps

Hillary

- [Provide extra copies of the Bible study technique and prayer practice tools to attendees who want them.](#)
- [Connect interested attendees with spiritual directors for mentorship.](#)
- [Compile all the class materials and handouts into a handy booklet for easier navigation.](#)

Collaboration

- [Staff: Prepare and deliver a presentation for the next week's session.](#)
- [Small Group Leaders: Take the Spiritual Gifts Inventory individually and consider taking it collectively with their small groups to discern and organize group roles based on spiritual gifts.](#)
- [Small Group Leaders: Use the discernment tree tool provided in the packet to guide decision-making for new or existing ministries.](#)
- [Small Group Leaders: Consider recruiting and training successors for leadership roles to ensure group longevity.](#)
- [Small Group Leaders: Encourage and facilitate mentorship and teaching within their groups, especially for youth and newcomers.](#)
- [Parishioners interested in mentoring youth: Contact Hillary to discuss opportunities for mentoring children or youth, potentially for a 2-year relationship.](#)

Summary

Christian Leadership Skills Training Session

Hillary led the third session in a series called "Equipping the Saints," focusing on essential leadership skills and group dynamics in Christian small groups. She reviewed previous topics including Jesus' concentric circles of ministry, biblical foundation, prayer cycles, and discernment with the Holy Spirit. Hillary mentioned that the session would examine how early Christian groups worked together in the book of Acts and through examples from Paul, while also providing participants with additional Bible study resources and prayer practice tools.

Holy Spirit in Small Groups

Hillary discussed the role of the Holy Spirit as an advocate in small groups, referencing John 14:26 and Acts 1:8 to explain how the Holy Spirit empowers believers when gathered together. She emphasized that the Holy Spirit's presence and guidance are most evident in collective settings rather than individual experiences, and highlighted how the early church organized themselves around communal spiritual gifts and shared resources. The discussion concluded with Hillary inviting participants to reflect on their own experiences at St. Columba's where they felt the communal movement of the Spirit.

Early Christian Small Church Groups

Hillary discussed the effectiveness of small church groups and house churches in early Christianity, noting how these communities functioned with familial roles and shared responsibilities. She highlighted architectural evidence from early communities and emphasized the power of small groups in prayer, worship, and learning together. The discussion appeared to focus on the importance of these intimate gatherings and their role in spiritual development.

Spiritual Leadership Development Meeting

Hillary discussed the biblical model of leadership, identifying the Holy Spirit as the primary source of power for leaders. She introduced a spiritual gifts inventory tool to help individuals and small groups identify and leverage their unique talents and skills. Hillary also emphasized the importance of understanding spiritual leadership qualities rooted in Christ, referencing John 13:12-17 as an example of Christ-like leadership.

Servant Leadership and Spiritual Guidance

Hillary discussed Jesus's example of servant leadership at the Last Supper, emphasizing how true power involves serving others and sharing in the workload. She highlighted Jesus's consistent practice of prayer as essential for spiritual leaders, noting that a leader's personal relationship with Christ is crucial for maintaining focus and helping groups flourish. Hillary also mentioned how the early church shared leadership responsibilities and power by dividing roles to care for widows and orphans.

Early Church Organizational Structure

Hillary discussed the early church's organizational structure, emphasizing how it was built around meeting practical needs rather than hierarchical leadership. She explained how the church organized itself through feeding ministries and specific roles like deacons and apostles, contrasting this with modern hierarchical church structures. Hillary also described the balance required in pastoral leadership, referencing Jesus's advice to be "wise as serpents and gentle as doves," and noted the importance of combining both heart and head in leadership while maintaining accountability and integrity.

Small Group Leadership Guidelines

Hillary discussed how small group leaders should balance pastoral care with maintaining group boundaries when members have ongoing crises that dominate discussions. She emphasized the importance of leadership integrity in small groups, including proper administration and accounting practices. Hillary also highlighted the church's practices of anti-racism and safeguarding training as ways to ensure groups operate with Christian values and create safe environments for all members.

Leadership Recruitment and Succession Strategies

Hillary discussed the importance of recruitment and succession in leadership, drawing from biblical examples like Jesus sending out groups of two and the early church's organizational structure. She emphasized the value of having multiple leaders to prevent burnout and ensure longevity, while also addressing the challenges of welcoming new members into established groups. Hillary used Paul's metaphor of grafting olive branches to illustrate how incorporating new members can strengthen the group and lead to new growth, while emphasizing the need for careful integration.

Spiritual Gifts in Administration

Hillary discussed the importance of administration and mentoring as spiritual gifts in the early church and Jesus's ministry. She explained how Jesus's financial support likely came from women traveling with him, emphasizing the crucial role of administration in managing resources and logistics. Hillary

highlighted that effective facilitation, including teaching practical skills like using Realm and managing group resources, is a vital act of Holy Spirit hospitality for small groups.

Mentorship Programs at St. Columbus

Hillary discussed the importance of mentorship and teaching in the Christian faith, drawing from examples like Jesus and the desert mothers and fathers. She emphasized how mentorship benefits both mentors and mentees, and encouraged the group to consider implementing mentorship programs at St. Columbus. Hillary also stressed the importance of continuous learning for those in mentorship roles, using the phrase "may the dust of your rabbi always be on your face" to illustrate the close following of Jesus.

Ministry Discernment Tools and Training

Hillary discussed the importance of discernment in ministry leadership, introducing a discernment tree tool that helps evaluate new ministries based on spiritual and practical considerations including budget and staff time. She reviewed the equipping received over the past three weeks, which included biblical study methods, prayer practices, Holy Spirit guidance, and organizational principles following the ancient church model. The session concluded with a prayer from Ephesians 3 and information about accessing the course materials on the website's Equipping the Saints page.