



COMMUNITY
BIBLE STUDY

MINISTRY MANUAL

The mission of Community Bible Study is to make disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ in our communities through caring, in-depth Bible study, available to all.

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Publisher’s note: Community Bible Study’s Ministry Manual, handbooks, and guidebooks, have been developed to be used in concert with one another to guide Community Bible Study leaders in operating excellent classes which faithfully reinforce the ministry’s vision, mission, Five Essentials, core values, and statement of faith.

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In every chapter of the Ministry Manual there are references to FISHER resources (videos and documents).

Resources are in *Italics*.

INTRODUCTION: Chapter 1

A. INTRODUCTORY LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This Ministry Manual, as well as all handbooks, guidebooks, and FISHER resources, has been prayerfully prepared to the glory of God for your equipping as a servant leader in Community Bible Study. May these resources enable you to shepherd the flock of God that is among you (1 Peter 5:2) with excellence and great joy.

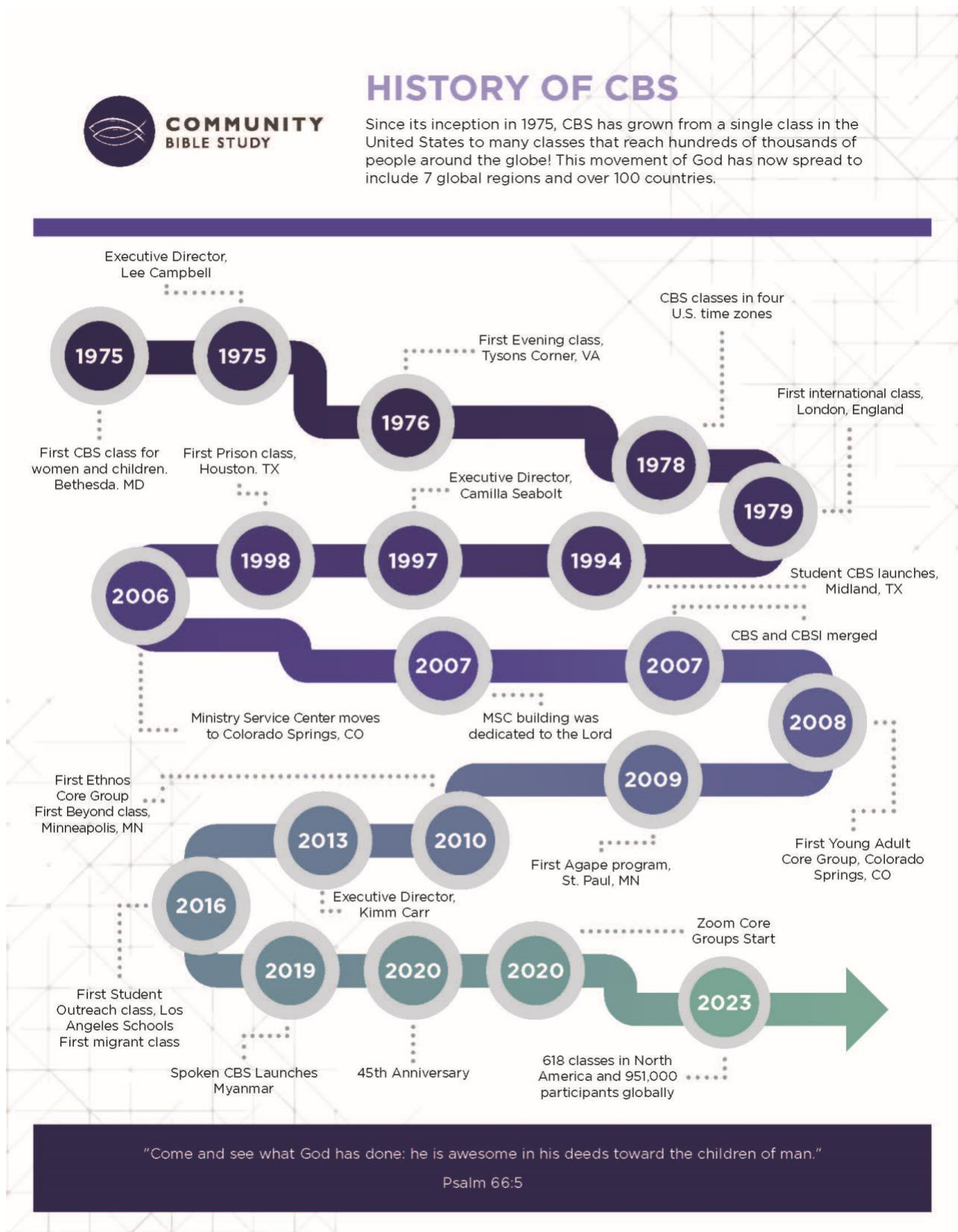
When followed in faith, the direction and wisdom found within these resources have proven fruitful, enabling classes to realize the CBS vision and mission of lives transformed through the Word of God as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ are made in communities through caring, in-depth Bible study, available to all.

If at any time these resources do not answer a question you have, please consult your Area Director for clarification. Duplication of any part of this manual is permitted for training of local class leadership. Please do not use this manual for any other purpose without the approval of your Area Director.

Thank you for serving our Lord Jesus through this beautiful ministry of the Word!

Kimm Carr
Executive Director

B. CBS MILESTONES INFOGRAPHIC



THE FOUNDATION: Chapter 2

Community Bible Study (CBS) is an interdenominational Bible study that brings people together around God's Word. All classes in countries around the world are built on the same foundation, with Jesus as the cornerstone. Whether a class is held in Kigali, Rwanda, or Austin, Texas, with a group of teens or in a correctional facility, each class around the globe shares a common vision, mission, Five Essentials, core values, and statement of faith.

A. VISION

Transformed Lives through the Word of God


B. MISSION

To make disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ in our communities through caring, in-depth Bible study, available to all.

C. FIVE ESSENTIALS

CBS classes are designed to be caring environments that support each participant as he or she engages God's Word both personally and corporately. In every CBS class—everywhere in the world—each participant engages with the Bible through the following Five Essentials.

1. **Individual Study:** Transformation happens as individuals engage with God in His Word. Stimulating study questions help participants apply the timeless truths of the Bible to their daily lives.
2. **Encouraging Discussion:** Participants gain additional insights and grow in their confidence with God's Word as they discuss Bible passages in a safe small group setting.
3. **Effective Teaching:** Trained teachers highlight and illustrate the central idea of the Bible passage and its practical application in participants' lives.
4. **Insightful Commentary:** Respected theologians help participants understand the passage's historical context and how it relates to the rest of Scripture.
5. **Caring Community:** Caring leaders pray for and encourage participants to grow spiritually and to connect with one another in a loving and supportive community.

 *Opening Video—Five Essentials of a CBS Class*
Five Essentials

D. CORE VALUES

- Prayer
- Trusting in God's Provision
- Excellence
- Integrity
- Transparency
- Servant Leadership

E. STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, is divine revelation and the inspired Word of God, inerrant in the original manuscripts. Its teaching is the final authority for all Christian life in matters of faith and practice.

We believe in the unity of the Godhead, eternally existing in three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and yet identical in nature: all-powerful, all-knowing, everywhere present, and unchangeable; and infinitely perfect in love, truth, righteousness, justice, goodness, grace, and mercy.

We believe the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is both truly God and truly man, two natures in one person. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He performed miracles to manifest His deity, lived a sinless life, suffered, and died as a completely satisfactory sacrifice for the sin of the whole world. He arose from the dead on the third day, and His bodily resurrection guarantees the resurrection of all who believe and trust in Him. He ascended to the right hand of God the Father where He reigns over the universe and intercedes for believers, and from where He will return to the earth to establish His kingdom.

We believe that humankind was created in the image of God but fell into disobedience by a voluntary decision and, as a result, became separated from God and therefore spiritually dead and subject to physical death. This fallen nature was transmitted to all humanity, except Jesus Christ, who lived a sinless life. The blood of Jesus Christ was shed for our redemption.

Only those who receive Christ by faith are forgiven and born of the Holy Spirit; thus, they become children of God. Faith alone is the condition of salvation, but good works and righteous living should accompany such faith and furnish evidence of its existence.

We believe the Holy Spirit indwells and seals every believer at the moment of saving faith. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ and, during this age, to convince men of sin; regenerate the believing sinner; and indwell, guide, instruct, and empower the believer for godly living

and service. We believe that all Christians should witness for Christ in His power and study the Bible with His help.

We believe that the church, composed of all who genuinely believe in and accept Jesus Christ as Savior, is united together into one body, of which He is the Head. As members of the church, we have a responsibility to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, supporting the local church and loving one another with pure hearts.

COMMUNITY BIBLE STUDY AT A GLANCE: Chapter 3

A. EVERY CBS CLASS IS BIRTHED IN PRAYER

Beginning a CBS class starts with an informal group called an Impact Group. Impact Groups are comprised of individuals who desire to make an impact for the Lord Jesus Christ in their communities by prayerfully seeking the Lord's will to establish a new CBS class. Each Impact Group is guided by a North American Ambassador who is called by God to cultivate interest in CBS and guide the Impact Group process.

 *North American Ambassador Handbook*

B. RELATIONSHIPS WITH LOCAL CHURCHES

- As a community composed of people from many churches, CBS is designed to complement, not compete with, local church congregations or denominations.
- CBS recognizes that the Lord has chosen local church congregations and denominations as His main channel of ministry. There are many things that CBS does not offer that the local church provides (e.g., full family fellowship, the sacraments, pastoral counsel, and ministries, etc.).
- As CBS leaders grow in faith and knowledge of God's Word, they have a responsibility to attend, actively support, and become better servants in their local church congregation or denomination.
- Every class participant should be encouraged to be active in his or her local church.
- If approached by a participant unhappy with their church, CBS leaders should encourage the individual to pray and seek the Lord's direction.

C. GENERAL CLASS STRUCTURE

- A CBS class is a weekly gathering of adults and/or children and youth from a community who come together to study the Word of God.
- A class consists of three major groups: The Servants Team, other leadership, and class participants.
- Leaders Council (local class leaders) meets to prepare for class time, including prayer, discussion of study questions, and leadership development.
- Class time is built around a biblical passage with small group discussion, teaching, and worship.
- Individual study during the week includes reading a commentary and answering questions.
- All participants and leaders of a class are cared for and shepherded.

D. CLASS TYPES

- Adults: options for adults include day and evening classes. Depending on the needs of the community, female-only, male-only, and coed classes may be offered.
- Infants through teens: options for children and youth are offered both nested in adult classes and as stand-alone classes.

See Additional Class Opportunities: Chapter 10

E. CURRICULUM

- CBS has developed curriculum to be used by all classes. There are currently courses covering most of the Old and New Testaments. Every year the Servants Team of each class prayerfully decides which course to study.
- The Curriculum Department at the Ministry Service Center (MSC) in Colorado Springs exists to provide quality Bible study materials that are doctrinally sound, historically accurate, culturally relevant, and visually appealing. The team of experienced editors, writers, and graphic designers oversees the development and revision of CBS courses used by all ages, both in the North American Region and globally.

 *Class Curriculum*

See communitybiblestudy.org for more information.

SUPPORT FOR LEADERS AND CLASSES: Chapter 4

CBS desires to encourage, equip, and support each leader and class through shepherding, organizational leaders, Ministry Support Teams, leadership training and development, FISHER, and the Ministry Service Center.

“I am the Good Shepherd, I know my own and my own know me. Just as the Father knows me and I know the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep.”

John 10:14–15

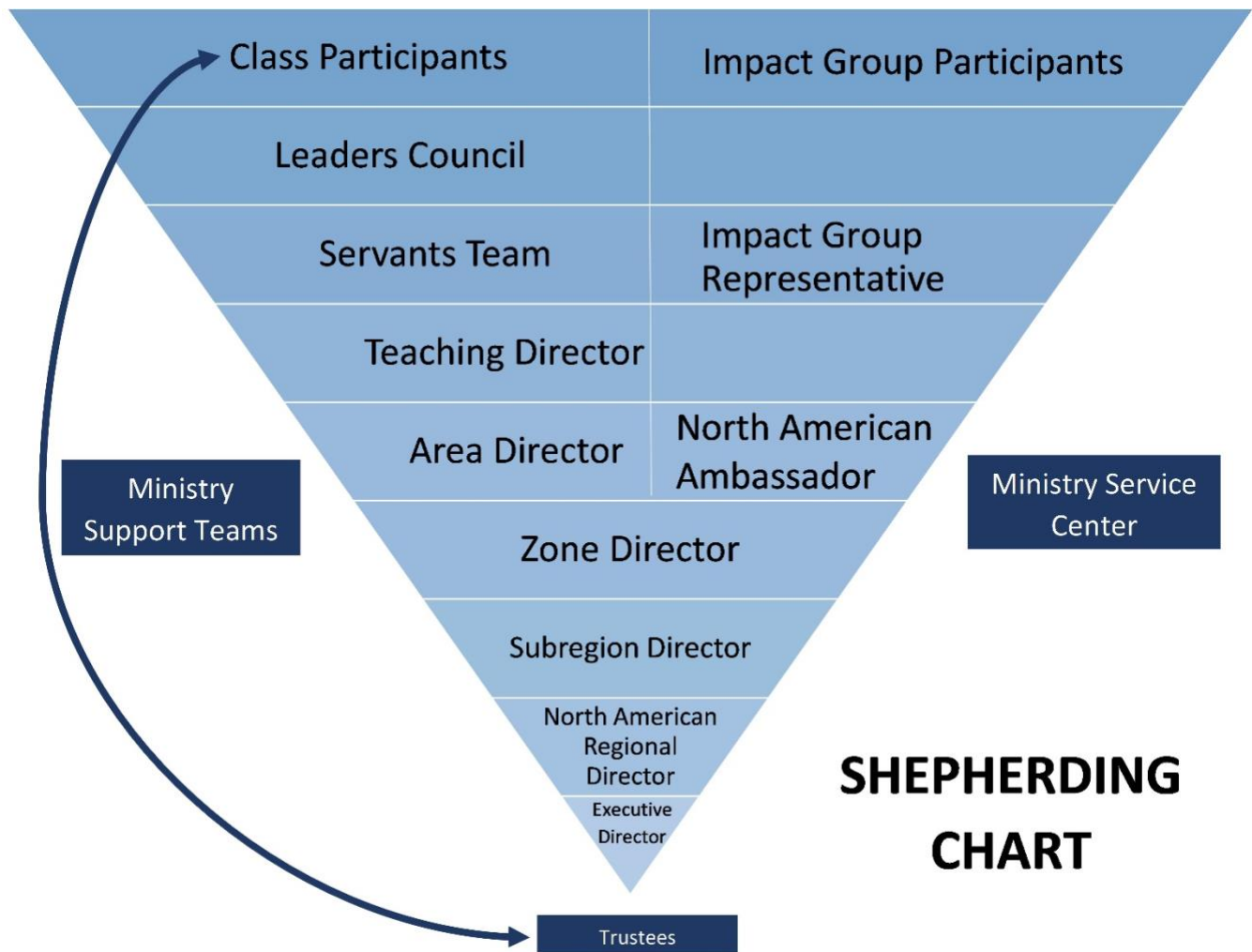
A. SHEPHERDING

- Each CBS leader is called by God to give of His love as a shepherd and servant leader, following the model of Jesus, the Good Shepherd.
- To be an effective shepherd in CBS, each servant leader should take to heart the goal of CBS:
 - For each person to come and be comfortable.
 - For each person to know they are cared for.
 - For each person to be confident in God’s Word.
- Shepherding differs according to the role in CBS, and includes frequent, meaningful connections with a person for the purpose of encouragement, accountability, and support.
- Leaders shepherd the flock entrusted to them. Leaders with servant hearts are committed to encouraging a personal relationship with Christ for some, and a deeper spiritual walk for others.

“Making disciples is what we do...
Shepherding is how we do it.”

 *Shepherding Role Descriptions*

“Care for the flock that God has entrusted to you. Watch over it willingly, not grudgingly—not for what you will get out of it, but because you are eager to serve God.”
 1 Peter 5:2 (NLT)



B. ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERS

- **North American Regional Director:** Person called by God to oversee, pray, inspire, direct, and shepherd the North American Region.
- **Subregion Directors:** Persons called by God to oversee, pray, inspire, direct, and shepherd specific Subregions of the North American Region.
- **Zone Directors:** Persons called by God to pray, inspire, direct, and encourage the work that the Lord will do through His servants in specific Zones of the North American Region.
- **Associate Zone Directors:** An Area Director of the opposite gender than the Zone Director who will shepherd Area Directors and North American Ambassadors of his or her same gender within the Zone. An Area Director in this role may or may not have classes to shepherd.
- **Area Directors:** Persons called by God to give His love in a shepherding role by connecting, coaching, and administrating a small number of classes within a specific Zone of the North American Region.
- **North American Ambassadors:** Persons called by God to cultivate and guide those who desire to impact their community for the Lord Jesus Christ by forming new CBS classes within a specific Zone of the North American Region.

C. MINISTRY SUPPORT TEAMS

Ministry Support Teams consist of persons called by God with expertise in various areas of the ministry who develop and provide resources, advise on operational matters, give feedback to improve operations, and provide training support, all undergirded with prayer.

- **Adult Class**
This team supports adult classes in the North American Region. Advisors of Agape, Ethnos, and InPrison & Beyond are also part of the Adult Class Support Team.
- **Curriculum**
This team provides field review of all new or newly edited curriculum for use in the North American Region.
- **Impact Group**
This team provides support and guidance in the development of new Impact Groups.

- Leadership Development
This team provides ongoing leadership development support throughout the ministry.
- Leadership Training
This team develops and provides training for leaders.
- NextGen
This team serves the next generations as they are part of adult classes or as they make up stand-alone classes.
- Prayer
This team undergirds all aspects of the North American Region in prayer and provides resources and ongoing training to Prayer Chairs.
- Resource Management
This team ensures that resources on FISHER are consistently formatted to ease the search for information.

D. LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

CBS operates through servant leaders called by God to their roles, who give of their time and talents out of love for Him. A vital part of the leadership experience results from the intentional investment made through leadership development. The ministry places a high priority on equipping, encouraging, and educating leaders for their roles within CBS.

The opportunity to receive leadership development training is made available in a variety of formats and timeframes.

- Class Leadership Development
 - Annual Leaders Council Training is conducted by the Servants Team before each class year starts.
 - Weekly Leaders Council includes dedicated time for leadership development to sharpen skills and strengthen the spiritual life of the class leaders.
 - Retreats and workshops are offered throughout the class year for specialized training.
- Leadership Training: Leadership Training is available to educate and prepare Organizational Leaders and Servants Team Leaders.
- Leadership Conferences: Leadership conferences are held geographically to sharpen leadership and shepherding skills of class leaders and to provide vision for the future growth of the ministry.

- Access to Leadership Resources: Access to resources is available through FISHER with each resource developed to encourage personal spiritual growth, role-specific equipping, and/or increased Bible knowledge.

 *What is Leadership Development?*

E. FISHER

FISHER is the web-based computer system for all CBS class participants in the North American Region.

- Access to online lessons and recorded teachings for class participants.
- Administrative and leadership development support for class leaders.

FISHER help is available at answers.communitybiblestudy.org or by emailing answers@communitybiblestudy.org.

 *Introduction to FISHER for Servants Teams
First Looks at Resources*

F. MINISTRY SERVICE CENTER

The Ministry Service Center (MSC) exists to serve and support leaders and classes around the world. Those working at the MSC in Colorado Springs include:

- Executive Leadership
- International Operations
- MSC Operations
- Finance
- Communications
- Facilities and Logistics
- Information Technology
- Curriculum

The servants at the MSC, as part of their ministry, pray daily for the CBS ministry, its leaders, and its participants. While CBS is primarily a volunteer-led ministry, those serving at the MSC do receive compensation.

Address: 790 Stout Road, Colorado Springs, CO 80921-3802

Toll-free: 800-826-4181

Local: 719-955-7777

Fax: 719-955-7770

Email: answers@communitybiblestudy.org

SERVANT LEADERS: Chapter 5


All leaders in CBS are chosen based on prayer, discernment, and demonstrated Christian maturity. CBS desires that each leader sense God's confirmation to serve and possess a willingness to shepherd and be shepherded. For each class, it is important to have a strong, unified, and enjoyable leadership team made up of people who attend various churches, vary in age, and possess diverse giftedness.

In addition to meeting certain qualifications and expectations, CBS leaders are required to agree with the CBS's Christian beliefs and Christian Behavior Policy, read and sign the Annual Leadership Commitment, as well as comply with the *Protection Policy* and the Additional Background Information process, as needed.

“He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.”
1 Thessalonians 5:24

A. QUALIFICATIONS OF LEADERS

- Profess a saving relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Believe in and value the power of prayer.
- Know their position in Christ.
- Are called by God, ready and willing to fulfill their specific shepherding role.
- Agree with and sign the CBS Annual Leadership Commitment which includes the CBS *Statement of Faith* and CBS's Christian beliefs and Christian Behavior Policy.
- Have a fair degree of sound biblical knowledge.
- Are active and supportive in their local church.
- Demonstrate a servant's heart and a teachable spirit.
- Have an appreciation for teamwork.
- Possess a pleasant, likable, positive personality.
- Are responsible, discreet, kind, loyal, and of good reputation.
- Have the ability or be willing to learn to access online information through FISHER.
- Demonstrate a willingness to communicate by email or text in a timely manner.

 *Annual Leadership Commitment Sample
Protection Policy*

B. EXPECTATIONS OF LEADERS

- Relationship to Christ: The CBS leader seeks a life devoted to Christ, daily nurturing a personal relationship with Him. Seeking God’s guidance and obediently submitting to His Word and His will enables a leader to grow into a disciple who is capable of offering servant leadership to others.
- Prayer: The CBS leader prays faithfully for those he or she shepherds. The leader prays for wisdom, insight, and discernment in shepherding people with diverse needs, personalities, and degrees of spiritual development, recognizing that the Lord equips those He has called. Regular, consistent prayer is the leader’s best shepherding tool.
- Relationship to Others
 - In a CBS leader who is devoted to the Lord and growing in Him, Christ’s love will naturally overflow into the lives of those he or she shepherds. CBS leaders are called to connect with and to build caring relationships with those they shepherd in order to provide support, friendship, and accountability.
 - CBS shepherds are trained to observe leaders under their care with the goal of identifying areas for encouragement and development. Leaders are expected to humbly consider and accept shepherding advice when given.
- Ministry Responsibilities
 - All leaders must participate in a CBS class.
 - CBS leaders are expected to abide by CBS policies and practices. They are expected to comply with the wisdom and instructions that have been developed over decades of refining experience. This includes policies that are required to comply with various laws, as well as those aspects of operating a CBS class that are based on successful experience.
 - CBS leaders are expected to fulfill the commitment of their roles with faithful attendance of Leaders Council and class each week as well as leadership conferences, meetings, and training events as applicable, for their roles.

C. CBS CHRISTIAN BELIEFS AND CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR POLICY

Community Bible Study is a ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our statement of faith expresses our position within the mainstream of the literal historical interpretation of Scripture. As such, we are committed to the authority of the Bible in all aspects of our ministry. We are committed to maintaining our witness before a lost and fallen world by living with the highest standards of ministry, personal ethics, and Christian behavior. It is essential to the exercise and expression of our beliefs and mission that each leader agree with the Statement of Faith and CBS’s Christian beliefs

and Christian Behavior Policy as an expression of living a life committed to Jesus Christ. This is reflected in both His salvation and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

CBS believes that the Bible, as God's Word, has instituted marriage as a covenant relationship between one man and one woman. Mark 10:6–9: "But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female,' 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." CBS believes that God creates human beings in His image as two distinct, complementary sexes (genders), male and female, that together reflect the image and nature of God, and that the intended sex (or gender) of an individual is determined by such individual's biological sex at birth. Genesis 1:27: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."

CBS recognizes that the Word of God is clear in that we all are sinners and fall short of His glory (Romans 3:23). However, consistent with the Scriptures, teachers and other leaders are held to a higher standard. We require our employees and leaders to model our Christian beliefs and endeavor to comply with our Biblical standards of conduct. Among other things, unrepentant moral conduct which is inconsistent with God's Word will preclude someone from holding a leadership position, see, for example, 1 Corinthians 6:9–11 "Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.", and Galatians 5:19–24 "Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against these things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." CBS will always seek to uphold Biblical standards. We will always strive to do so in Christian love.

The exhortation to live a life free of sin is throughout Scripture. Though not exhaustive, some references include Romans 1:18–27, 1 Timothy 1:8–10, and Hebrews 13:4. Acknowledging that "...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith" (Romans 3:23–25a), CBS leaders should live a life that evidences not only salvation (forgiveness of sin) but also growth in Christ (sanctification). CBS employees and leaders are chosen based on prayer, discernment, and demonstrated Christian maturity.

While CBS's leaders are chosen carefully, we welcome everyone to participate in our classes and to study God's Word in a Core Group environment where the leader makes sure that every person is comfortable, knows they are cared for, and becomes confident in God's Word.

D. ANNUAL LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT

Each year, every leader is asked to complete the Annual Leadership Commitment form. The process includes reading the *Statement of Faith*, CBS's Christian beliefs and Christian Behavior Policy, and the ministry relationship statement. The leader then answers five questions:

1. Do you sense God's call on your life to serve in Community Bible Study?
2. Have you read and do you agree with the CBS *Statement of Faith*?
3. Have you read and do you agree with CBS's Christian beliefs and Christian Behavior Policy?
4. Are you walking closely with the Lord, trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit to help you pursue the biblical standards outlined in the CBS Christian Behavior Policy?
5. Do you understand and agree with the support and services CBS will typically provide as well as the expectations of leaders?
6. Have you read and do you agree to follow the CBS AI policy?

See Compliance: Chapter 12

E. PROTECTION POLICY AND ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION PROCESS

CBS cares deeply about the safety and well-being of the children and Agape adults who attend CBS classes. For this reason, CBS developed the *Protection Policy* and the Additional Background Information process.

- **Protection Policy:** The *Protection Policy* outlines policies and procedures to promote safety, accountability, and comfort for all minors (age 0–18 years old), Agape adults, and the leaders who serve them. Before serving with children, youth, or vulnerable adults, all leaders and occasional helpers, including Core Group helpers, must read and complete the *Protection Policy*.
- **Additional Background Information (ABI) process:** All regular leaders and caregivers—those who serve six times a year or more—serving in any classroom with minors or vulnerable adults must complete the ABI process prior to serving. The ABI process is comprised of a criminal background check to look for judicial actions, a questionnaire to assess current stability and suitability to serve, and character references to find out what others think of a candidate's suitability for serving with these groups. The process also includes 2–4 hours of recognition of child abuse training. Additional information can be found in Chapter 12, Compliance.

Additional Background Information Implementation
Additional Background Information Sample
California AB506 and Live Scan and Fingerprinting FAQs
Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law

SERVANTS TEAM OPERATIONS: Chapter 6

A. SERVANTS TEAM

Leadership in CBS is modeled after Jesus Christ, who, “came not to be served but to serve...” (Matthew 20:28). Therefore, within leadership, there is a smaller group called the Servants Team who serves the class. The Servants Team oversees the prayer, shepherding, teaching, training, and administration of the class. Members of this team must be able to work well together and have a natural or God-given enjoyment of each other. To ensure the “community” aspect of the group, leadership should represent various denominations.

- The Servants Team includes the following leaders:
 - Teaching Director
 - Associate Teaching Director
 - Coordinator
 - Prayer Chair
- As Applicable:
 - NextGen Director (all Adult classes)
 - Senior Leader(s)
 - Agape Director

 *Role Specific Handbooks*
Recommended Numbers in Leadership
Guide to Calling Servants Team and Organizational Leaders
Recognizing God’s Called Leader


B. SERVANTS TEAM PRINCIPLES OF RELATIONSHIPS

A Servants Team will serve together through joyful times and challenging times. Members of the team should commit to model the following principles in their relationships with each other under all circumstances.

“Walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.”

Ephesians 4:1–3

- Love
- Availability
- Prayer
- Confidentiality
- Openness
- Sensitivity
- Honesty
- Accountability

 *Servants Team Principles of Relationships*
Team Dynamics

C. SERVANTS TEAM SUPPORT OF TEACHING DIRECTOR

“Therefore encourage one another and build one another up...”

1 Thessalonians 5:11

- The Servants Team should be a source of Christian friendship for the Teaching Director that loves, helps, and even corrects, if necessary.
- The Servants Team is a strong arm of support that helps implement class goals.
- The Servants Team will care for the individual needs of the leaders they shepherd. (Teaching Director will not be able to care for all the leader needs.)

D. MAINTAINING THE UNITY OF THE CLASS

One of the most exciting aspects of the class is that people of varied backgrounds and doctrinal beliefs come together in oneness in Christ to study His Word. This will not be possible unless the leadership of the class has a vision to maintain unity.

- The only essential truth represented in class is the gospel.

“... that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried,
that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures”
1 Corinthians 15:3–4

- Teaching Directors may teach their interpretation of a Bible passage, but should give credence to other viewpoints.
- Leadership should set a neutral tone regarding the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit (e.g. tongues, prophecy, etc.).
- Worship should provide a mixture of hymns and praise music.

E. SERVANTS TEAM MONTHLY MEETINGS

The Servants Team should meet at least monthly to share prayer needs and discuss class issues. These regular meetings, away from the routine of Leaders Council and class, are vital for maintaining healthy team ministry.

- Benefits
 - Extended prayer time for class and personal needs.
 - Burdens and workload can be shared.
 - Unity built across leadership functions.
 - Focused time to plan for upcoming months.
 - Better decisions are made when seeking the Lord together.
- Guidelines
 - Teaching Director is chair (ATD will serve in TD absence).
 - Meetings are held monthly outside of the class time, generally for a couple of hours. Prayer for class and personal needs is a priority.


“As goes the Servants Team, so goes the Leaders Council, and so goes the class.”

Servants Teams also benefit from having a retreat at least once a year. Formats range from half-day to overnight.

 *Servants Team Retreat*

F. SHARING THE GOSPEL

The Servants Team should ensure that all leaders are well-trained in sharing the gospel.

 *Sharing the Gospel*

G. DAY OF PRAYER AND FASTING

The Servants Team is encouraged to participate in the CBS Day of Prayer and Fasting held on the first Thursday of each month. The Servants Team may extend participation to the Leaders Council and/or class participants.

 *Day of Prayer and Fasting*


LEADERS COUNCIL OPERATIONS: Chapter 7

A. LEADERS COUNCIL

Every Leaders Council (local class leaders) meets to prepare for class time. The Leaders Council is a means for class leadership to gather and edify one another in order to equip all leaders to serve class participants with excellence. This meeting time includes prayer, discussion of study questions, and leadership development.

- The Leaders Council includes the following leaders:
 - The Servants Team
 - Core Leaders
 - Substitute Core Leaders

- As Applicable:
 - Children's Director
 - Youth Director
 - NextGen Leaders
 - Administrative Team Members
 - Other Agape Leaders

 *Role Specific Handbooks
Recommended Numbers in Leadership
Guide to Calling Class Leaders*


B. LEADERS COUNCIL MEETINGS

- Regular Meetings

The day and time for Leaders Council varies from class to class, but the following elements are a vital part of every Leaders Council. Some classes conduct Leaders Council on a different day from class day, while others meet immediately before and/or immediately after class.

- Elements of Regular Meeting

- Worship
- Devotional
- Prayer
- Memory Work
- Announcements
- Discussion of Study Questions
- Leadership Development

 *Fundamentals of an Excellent Class*

Time Elements for Leaders Council and Class

Scheduling Considerations for Leaders Council and Class

Conversational Prayer

Devotional Guidelines

Leadership Development Resources

- Fellowships

Leaders Councils are encouraged to have fellowships to build and strengthen community. Some of the fellowships will be intended just for leaders, while others may include spouses and family. Although the frequency will vary from class to class, holding these events should be considered a priority by the Servants Team.

 *Leaders Council and Core Group Fellowships*

Sample Fellowship Discussion Topics

- Annual Events

- Annual Leaders Council Training
- Retreat
- Leaders Council Sharing

 *Annual Leaders Council Training*

Leaders Council Retreat

Leaders Council and Class Sharing

ABCs of Sharing

CLASS OPERATIONS: Chapter 8

A. CLASS MEETINGS

Class meetings provide a caring community where participants engage in encouraging discussion and listen to an effective Teaching on a weekly Bible passage.


- Regular Meetings
The day and time for class meetings varies from class to class, but the following elements are a vital part of every class.

- Elements of a Regular Class Meeting
 - Opening (optional)
 - Discussion of Study Questions

Core – n. The part of something that is central to its existence or character.

CBS small groups are called Core Groups. Core Groups create a comfortable, caring environment where class participants connect both with the Word of God and each other.


- Teaching by the trained Teaching Director or Associate Teaching Director

 *Fundamentals of an Excellent Class*
Time Elements for Leaders Council and Class
Class Opening
Music and Musicians
Core Leader Handbook
Teaching Director Handbook
Associate Teaching Director Handbook

- Fellowships
The aim for regular fellowship times is that genuine friendships develop within each Core Group, that participants will be encouraged and strengthened in their own faith by hearing what God is doing in other lives, and that love and caring will find means of expression as needs are known within the group. Although the frequency will vary from class to class, holding these events should be considered a priority by the Servants Team.

 *Leaders Council and Core Group Fellowships*
Sample Fellowship Discussion Topics

- Class Sharing
 - Important time of fellowship and celebration at the end of the class year.
 - Participants have the opportunity to share their personal stories of life transformation through the study of God's Word.

 *Leaders Council and Class Sharing
ABCs of Sharing*

B. VISITORS AND NEW PARTICIPANTS

- Visitors should be encouraged and welcomed on any class day.
- Visitors will have the opportunity to register and receive materials.
- All new participants will go through an orientation with a member of the Servants Team prior to being placed in a Core Group.

 *Visitors and New Participants*


C. CLASS CALENDAR

- Each class will compile this important resource on FISHER that shows the dates of class meetings and the lesson to be discussed on each date.
- Class Cancellations
 - Each class should have a plan for class cancellations due to inclement weather or other causes.
 - The plan should be shared with the class at the beginning of the class year with reminders when appropriate.
 - The class website will host the class calendar as well as up-to-date information in case of a cancellation.

 *Class Cancellation Plan*

D. CLASS SCHEDULES

Classes, depending on their type, may follow different schedules, but will always include the same meeting elements.

 *Class Type Variations
Time Elements for Leaders Council and Class
Scheduling Considerations for Leaders Council and Class*


CLASS OPERATIONS MONTHLY CHECKLIST: Chapter 9

This checklist is a month-by-month guide designed to help Servants Teams operate an excellent CBS class. Important ministry deadlines are noted and should encourage Servants Teams to plan as a team so that the mission of CBS is accomplished in each class. This is not a list of all Servants Team responsibilities; those are articulated well in the role specific handbooks located on FISHER. Also, because start and end dates differ for classes, some of the tasks may need to take place in an earlier or later month. Each month, the Servants Team should read *The Collective* for the latest helpful tools, important information, and encouragement for CBS leaders.

The Collective

JUNE/JULY

- Organize Servants Team meeting (or retreat). (TD)
- Communicate ST openings to AD. Pray and work with AD to identify replacements. (ST)
- Prepare for Annual Leaders Council Training. (ST)
- Finalize class calendar, including class vacation breaks, retreat dates, Servants Team meetings, and Leaders Council and class fellowship events. (ST)
- Begin discussion on ideas for leadership development topics and class Openings. (ST)
- Schedule lesson planning with the NextGen team. (NGD with support of ST)
- Send May financials to the MSC by June 15. (CO)
 - Class Funds in excess of \$2,000 are forwarded to the MSC in the May report.
- Send June financials to the MSC by July 15. (CO)
 - The fiscal year ends June 30. Submit complete June financial reports by July 15 even if there is no June activity. The financial report that includes June 30 must be sent as soon as the statement is received from the bank so that the fiscal year for the ministry may be closed.
- Confirm that all Leaders Council members and worship leaders completed the ALC. Send confirmation, including any exceptions, to AD by August 1. (TD)
- Take time to REST and REFRESH! (ST)
- OPTIONAL: Hold leadership prayer times; informational coffees or social events to promote CBS. (ST)

 *Guide to Calling Servants Team and Organizational Leaders*
What is Leadership Development?
Annual Leaders Council Training

AUGUST

- Organize Servants Team meeting. (TD)
- Communicate class calendar to host church or facility and AD. (CO)
- Confirm completion of the ABI process for those serving with minors or vulnerable adults. (TD)
- Work on plans for the Leaders Council retreat (if planned for fall). (ST)
- Send welcome communication to Leaders Council and AD confirming Annual Leaders Council Training details. (TD)
- Prayerfully assign Core Groups for the year. (ST)
- Prepare training on conversational prayer and Leaders Council devotionals. (PC with support of TD)
- Develop calendar for class Openings and leadership development topics for the fall. (ST)
- Email a class welcome communication through FISHER two to three weeks before first class. (TD)
- Hold Annual Leaders Council Training (may be in September for classes with later starts). (ST)
- Share Core Group/class rosters with leaders, including participant information reports (Form 112s), and train leaders on *First Connections with Class Participants*. (ST)
- Confirm that preparation is complete to record and post teachings. (CO)
- Arrange for class greeters. (CO)
- Update the *Class Safety Plan Checklist and Handout* and distribute to leaders and AD. (CO)
- Review *Nurturing Host Church or Facility Relationships*. (ST)
- Review and update class website. (CO)
- Write a class welcome letter using the *Welcome Letter Outline*. (TD)
- Utilize *First Class Information* resources to plan the first class meeting. (ST)
- Confirm completion of *Protection Policy* forms from everyone who will serve with minors or Agape adults at any time during the class year. (CO/NGD)
- OPTIONAL: Hold a class informational or kick-off event.

 *Assigning Participants to Core Groups*

NextGen (Nested) Guidebook

NextGen (Stand Alone) Guidebook

Conversational Prayer

Prayer Chair Handbook

Class Year at a Glance

Leadership Development Resources

Class Opening

Annual Leaders Council Training

First Connections with Class Participant

Class Safety Plan

Class Safety Plan Checklist

Class Safety Plan Handout

Nurturing Host Church or Facility Relationships

Welcome Letter Outline

Protection Policy

Adult First Class Information for Teaching Directors
Adult First Core Group Information
NextGen (Stand Alone) First Class Information for Teaching Directors
NextGen (Stand Alone) First Core Group Information

SEPTEMBER

- Organize Servants Team meeting. (TD)
- Evaluate Annual Leaders Council Training and first class session. (ST)
- Send July/August financials to the MSC by Sep 15. (CO)
- Review available course choices for the next class year in *The Collective* and pray for selection discernment. (ST)
- Schedule Leaders Council devotionals for the fall. (PC)
- Plan TD and ATD visits to Core Groups and Core Group fellowships. (TD/ATD)
- Arrange fall visit with AD. (TD)
- Run FISHER report to view list of participants who did not give photograph and video recording consent. (CO)
- Invite AD to share an Opening during fall visit (or spring, if preferred). (ATD)
- Review the total class enrollment. (Classes below class minimums, implement plans for growth.) (ST)

 *The Collective*

Core Group Visitation Record

Servants Team Preparation for an Area Director Visit

Ideas to Promote Growth in Community Bible Study

OCTOBER

- Organize Servants Team meeting. (TD)
- Review *Fundamentals of an Excellent Class*. (ST)
- Discuss how the Servants Team is modeling shepherding (Are meaningful connections being made with leaders?). (ST)
- Send September financials to the MSC by Oct 15. (CO)
- Finalize and submit course selection information through the Ordering Module on FISHER by the October due date. (ST)
- Work on plans for the Leaders Council retreat (if planned for mid-year). (ST)

 *Fundamentals of an Excellent Class*

Leaders Council Retreat

NOVEMBER


- Organize Servants Team meeting. (TD)
- Discuss plans to highlight CBS class types and global reach. (ST)

- Review class attendance, look for shepherding opportunities, and update the roster. (ST)
- Send October financials to the MSC by Nov 15. (CO)
- Share 1st Financial Presentation with adult participants. (CO)
- Plan Christmas Leaders Council & class fellowships. (ST)
- Pray about Servants Team commitment for next year. (Decisions by Dec 1st) (ST)

 *Financial Presentation*


DECEMBER

- Organize Servants Team meeting. (TD)
- Discuss how visitors and new participants are being welcomed to the class. (ST)
- Consider the effectiveness of class fellowships. (ST)
- Send November financials to the MSC by Dec 15. (CO)
- Communicate ST openings to AD. Pray and work with AD to identify replacements. (TD)
- Recognize host church or facility custodians with an honorarium, if applicable. (CO)
- Have Christmas fellowships for Leaders Council and class. (ST)

 *Guide to Calling Servants Team and Organizational Leaders*
Recognizing God's Called Leader
Nurturing Host Church or Facility Relationships
Leaders Council and Core Group Fellowships


JANUARY

- Organize Servants Team meeting. (TD)
- Use *Mid-Year Thoughts* self-evaluations as a shepherding tool with leaders. (ST)
- Send December financials to the MSC by Jan 15. (CO)
- Continue to pray and work with AD to identify ST replacements. (ST)
- Evaluate effectiveness of leadership development. (ST)
- Develop calendar for class Openings and leadership development topics for the spring. (ST)
- Schedule a time to meet with host church or facility representative to confirm commitment to host the class in the upcoming year. (ST)
- Review and update class website. (CO)
- Schedule Leaders Council devotionals for the spring. (PC)
- Finalize plans for the Leaders Council retreat (if planned for spring). (ST)
- Arrange spring visit with AD. (TD)

 *Role Specific Mid-Year Thoughts*
Class Year at a Glance
Leadership Development Resources
Leaders Council Retreat
Servants Team Preparation for an Area Director Visit


FEBRUARY

- Organize Servants Team meeting. (TD)
- Review *Fundamentals of an Excellent Class*. (ST)
- Review class attendance, look for shepherding opportunities, and update the roster. (ST)
- Send January financials to the MSC by Feb 15. (CO)
- Ask Leaders Council participants to pray about commitments for next year. (Decisions due March 1.) (ST)
- Follow instructions in *Annual Leadership Commitment Implementation*. (TD)
- Train Core Leaders in discerning leadership and using leadership recommendation forms. (ATD)
- Verify information on FISHER for annual host church or facility gift. (CO)
- Plan end of the year visitor sessions to enroll new participants. (ST)

 *Fundamentals of an Excellent Class*
Annual Leadership Commitment Implementation
Annual Leadership Commitment Sample
Guide to Calling Class Leaders
Visitors and New Participants

MARCH

- Organize Servants Team meeting. (TD)
- Discuss how the Servants Team is preparing for the future through succession leadership planning. (ST)
- Send February financials to the MSC by Mar 15. (CO)
- Share 2nd Financial Presentation with adult participants. (CO)
- Follow instructions found in *The Collective* to update International Link selection. (CO)
- Begin registration of current class participants for next year. (CO)
- Plan an Opening to encourage participants to invite new people to CBS. (ATD)
- Pray over leadership recommendation forms and begin seeking God's called leaders for next year. (ST)
- Plan Leaders Council and class sharing times. (ST)
- Plan and share important leadership dates for next year (include retreats, summer gatherings, Annual Leaders Council Training, Leaders Council fellowships, etc.) (ST)
- Plan summer calendar for Servants Team meetings/retreat. (ST)

 *Succession Leadership Planning*
Financial Presentation
The Collective
Guide to Calling Class Leaders
Recommended Numbers in Leadership
Leaders Council and Class Sharing
ABCs of Sharing
Servants Team Retreat

APRIL

- Organize Servants Team meeting. (TD)
- Send March financials to the MSC by April 15. (Host church checks are computed using financials through February 28, online donations through March, and the completed online Church Gift Form.) (CO)
- Finalize plans for Leaders Council and class sharing times. (ST)
- Continue seeking class leadership for next year. (ST)
- Initiate ABI process for next class year's leaders of minors and vulnerable adults, if applicable. (ABI is renewed every five years, except in California where it is every two years.) (CO)
- Confirm all leaders for next year have a signed ALC on file. (TD & CO)
- Review and update class website. (CO)
- Register returning participants. (CO)
- Conduct visitor sessions to register new participants for next year. (ST)
- Plan summer informational events to register new participants. (ST)

 *Leaders Council and Class Sharing*

ABCs of Sharing

Guide to Calling Class Leaders

Additional Background Information Implementation

Additional Background Information Sample

Annual Leadership Commitment Implementation

Annual Leadership Commitment Sample

Visitors and New Participants

MAY

- Organize Servants Team meeting. (TD)
- Send April financials to the MSC by May 15. (CO)
- Gather for Leaders Council and class sharing times (if not in April). (ST)
- Thank pastor or leader of host church or facility for support and present CBS check. (TD)
- Give honorariums to host church or facility custodians. (TD or CO)
- Review time elements of Leaders Council and class in preparation for the upcoming year. Adjust as needed to align with recommended time frames. (ST)
- Continue to register new and returning participants. (CO)
- Finalize plans to promote registration through the summer. (ST)
- Plan Servants Team summer retreat agenda. (ST)
- Plan Leaders Council retreat (if planned for fall). (ST)
- Start planning for August/September Annual Leaders Council Training. (ST)

 *Leaders Council and Class Sharing*

ABCs of Sharing

Nurturing Host Church or Facility Relationships

Time Elements for Leaders Council and Class

Servants Team Retreat
Leaders Council Retreat
Annual Leaders Council Training

ADDITIONAL CLASS OPPORTUNITIES: Chapter 10

In support of the mission of CBS, the following additional class opportunities have been developed to reach more of the population for Christ. Some of the following options are nested within adult classes, while others are stand-alone classes.

A. OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE ADULTS

- **Agape**
A specialty Core Group nested within an adult class that serves adults with intellectual disabilities.
- **Ethnos**
A specialty Core Group nested within an adult class for people living in North America whose first language is other than English.
- **Remote Core Group**
A Core Group of a class that meets at a different time and/or place from the class.
- **Online Core Group**
A Core Group of a class that meets live online.
- **InPrison**
A class for incarcerated adults.
- **Beyond Class**
A class for former inmates.

 *Agape Guidebook*

Ethnos Guidebook

Remote Core Groups

InPrison & Beyond Guidebook

B. OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE THE NEXT GENERATION

- NextGen (Nested)
 - Classes for children of all ages nested within an adult class using age specific materials.

- NextGen (Stand Alone)
 - ASK (After School Kids)—A class for elementary school children.
 - eTeen—A class for early teenagers in middle school.
 - Teen—A class for high school students.

- NextGen Remote Core Group
 - A NextGen Core Group meeting on another day and/or time from their home class.

- NextGen Online Core Group
 - A NextGen Core Group that meets live online.

- InPrison
 - A class for incarcerated juveniles.



Class Type Variations
NextGen (Nested) Guidebook
NextGen (Stand Alone) Guidebook
NextGen Remote Core Groups
InPrison & Beyond Guidebook

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW: Chapter 11

Since its beginning in 1975, the philosophy of CBS has always been to be an every-person's Bible study, available to all. CBS welcomes class participants from every background, status, and walk of life. Every man, woman, teen, and child will be cared for with love and respect. All giving in CBS is voluntary, and class participants who are unable to contribute should continue to attend without feeling any pressure to give.

A. REGISTRATION FEES

- Help defray operating costs.
- Are not mandatory, scholarships are always available.
- Are not tax-deductible.
- Provide less than 25% of the costs required to fulfill the mission of CBS.

B. TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS

Generous and voluntary tax-deductible donations from class participants enable more people to know God through His Word. Each year, adult classes are told what the current CBS annual budget breaks down to per each adult participant in the North American Region. Examples of areas supported by the North American Region budget include:

- Development of global lessons and translations into heart languages.
- Support for International regional directors and countries that cannot raise funds to operate the ministry within their borders.
- Creation of materials for InPrison and Beyond Classes.
- Development and revision of curriculum for all class types.

C. ACCOUNTABILITY

CBS is committed to transparency and is a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA.) The latest audited financial statements are available on the CBS website. Each class is also committed to transparency and must give a financial report two times per year.

D. GIVING


- Methods of Giving
 - Cash gifts online, by mail, or in a local class
 - Gifts of Securities
 - Legacy Giving
- Giving to CBS should be over and above the money a participant would give to support his or her local church.

See communitybiblestudy.org/giving for more information.

E. OVERSIGHT

The Coordinator is the Servants Team member who oversees finances for the class.

- Facilitates collection of registration fees and contributions.
- Works with the class Treasurer to ensure fees, weekly contributions, special gifts, and other contributions are recorded and processed carefully.
- Ensures any paid caregivers are paid using a third-party such as the host church or licensed staffing agency.
- Gives two Financial Presentations to the class each year.
- Helps cast the vision of generous giving to CBS with the support of the Servants Team.
- Uses the Finance Department at the MSC as a resource.

 *Coordinator Handbook*
Treasurer
Ministry Funds
NextGen Caregiver
Financial Presentation

COMPLIANCE: Chapter 12

“we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.”

1 Thessalonians 2:12

Just as Paul and Silas exhorted each believer in Thessalonica to walk in a manner worthy of God, CBS leaders are called by God to the same end. How we go about the ministry of CBS reflects not only on us, but on the God we serve. We desire every encounter with CBS to be a winsome opportunity for someone to meet Jesus through our actions and through His Word. It is in this spirit that the following is provided.

A. LEADERSHIP AND INTEGRITY

1. Annual Leadership Commitment

All class and organizational leaders with responsibilities in the North American Region must read and sign the Annual Leadership Commitment (ALC).

- Includes the Statement of Faith, CBS’s Christian beliefs and Christian Behavior Policy, ministry relationship statement, and an execution page to sign.
- Strengthens CBS’s claim as a ministry to the protections for religious organizations that are available under U.S. law, in addition to focusing all CBS leaders on the standards and common beliefs.
- The ministry relationship statement summarizes the relationship between CBS and its leaders as found throughout the *Ministry Manual*. It provides a simple reminder of those things a leader commits to do as he or she serves the Lord through CBS.

 *Annual Leadership Commitment Implementation*
Annual Leadership Commitment Sample

2. Alcohol and Drugs

CBS believes the truth found in Romans 14:13–19. As a result, we have chosen not to consume alcoholic beverages at any CBS function, including conferences, team meetings, class fellowships, retreats, etc., so that those who are strongly opposed to alcoholic consumption will not be

offended. This policy also applies to illegal drugs, including marijuana, even if it is legal in the state.

“Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother... So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.”
Romans 14: 13, 19

3. Coed Classes

A coed class adheres to the following three criteria:

- Male and female adults participate.
- Leadership reflects the male/female ratio (percentage) of the class.
- Strictly follows the coed shepherding requirements.

 *Coed Class Guidelines*

4. Coed Shepherding

Recognizing the potential for inappropriate conduct and relationships, or the appearance of such, especially in a coed ministry, CBS policy is based on Ephesians 5:3 (NIV)

“But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people.”

- The highest degree of integrity must be maintained in coed shepherding in order to ensure that the ministry of CBS and the people involved are protected.
- When males and females are in class together there may be a need for limited coed shepherding. If possible, this should be done only at the Servants Team level. The Area Director for the class should be consulted when there is a perceived need to have coed shepherding relationships beyond the Servants Team level.
- In a class moving toward becoming a coed class, coed shepherding may take place between a Senior Leader and a Core Leader.
- Coed shepherding between a Core Leader and an adult class participant is not permissible under any circumstance.
- The following requirements apply to all coed shepherding circumstances where one or both people are married, regardless of the level at which it occurs.

- Honor the Lord
 - Never meet alone: Do not allow even a “hint of evil.”
- Honor the Spouse
 - The spouse must be supportive of a working relationship that meets the coed shepherding requirements.
 - Do not telephone more than necessary. Most communication should be done by email or text.
 - Limit personal sharing (i.e., it is inappropriate to share personal marital issues). Personal sharing should be done when a third person is present or in a group setting.

5. Bereavement Guidelines

Notification:

The Teaching Director or other Servants Team member should notify the Area Director in the case of a death of a Leaders Council member or child or spouse of a Servants Team member.

The Area Director will notify the Zone Director and the North American Administrative Assistant (answers@communitybiblestudy.org) at the MSC so that a sympathy card may be sent on behalf of CBS.

Sending Flowers:

In accordance with the shepherding structure, the immediate shepherd would be the one responsible for sending flowers. The person sending the flowers would sign a card accompanying the flowers with his or her name, “on behalf of the CBS Family”.

- In the case of the death of a member of Leaders Council or a child or spouse of a member of the Servants Team, the Teaching Director would be the one responsible for sending flowers.
 - The cost of flowers may be reimbursed up to \$75 from the Local Operating Fund and be expensed as bereavement flowers.
- In the case of the death of the Teaching Director or the child or spouse of the Teaching Director, the Area Director would be the one responsible for sending flowers.
 - The cost of flowers may be reimbursed up to \$75 by submitting an *Expense Voucher for Zone Directors and Area Directors* to the MSC and using the “other” category of expense.

 *Expense Voucher for Organizational Leaders*

6. Use of CBS Materials (copyrighted and recorded)

- CBS lesson materials are copyrighted and should not be reproduced except as directed.
- The Servants Team approves any duplication/distribution of material to class participants.
- CBS copyrighted materials may not be used outside of the CBS ministry.
- CBS has provided adult class participants access to view lessons or listen to the weekly Teaching on FISHER.
- Teachings by CBS leaders are to be posted only on FISHER and only in audio or video formats. A link to a private YouTube channel may also be provided to class participants.
- Teachings may not be published on a public YouTube channel or any other public spaces such as Facebook, iTunes, or personal websites.
- If desired, Teaching Directors and Associate Teaching Directors may send the audio or video of a teaching to a requesting party via email, but only to a limited few outside of CBS.
- CBS has also developed Engage Bible studies (engagebiblestudies.com) that are available for purchase by those who are inside and outside the ministry.


7. Proper Notations of Bible Translations

CBS has been granted blanket permission to use the ESV for all our curricula and communications, including audio recordings.

- The copyright page in each study clearly states that our standard is the ESV and that any translation used other than the ESV is always noted.
- It is not necessary or desirable to put (ESV) on every slide quoting the ESV Bible.
- It is important to note any other translations quoted on slides, handouts, etc., such as (NASB), (NIV), (NLT). It is also a courtesy for the people in the audience to know the source.

8. Use of Copyrighted Hymns, Songs, and Videos

- Classes that meet in person may enjoy a limited exemption from certain aspects of the copyright law. There are specific details that are important in determining if the exemption applies to a specific situation so review the resources on this topic carefully.
- Recordings of any teaching or other CBS activity may not capture any performance of copyrighted music, images, or literary work.
- CBS events outside the traditional, in person class experience do not enjoy the exemption from copyright law. Review the copyright compliance resources carefully to determine how to comply with the law. These events include Servants Team meetings, Leaders Council Retreats, Area Director, and Zone gatherings.

 *Copyright Compliance*
Copyright Compliant Resources
Music and Musicians

B. HEALTH AND SAFETY

1. Protection Policy

CBS places a high priority on maintaining a safe environment for children, youth, and vulnerable people as well as their leaders. Because of this, all leaders and regular and occasional caregivers (including any classroom helpers, paid and unpaid babysitters) for any classroom with minors or vulnerable adults must read and sign the *Protection Policy* annually.


- For day and evening classes, a copy of the *Protection Policy* will be in each adult lesson book. In addition, the *Protection Policy* can be activated in any participant's FISHER profile and may be completed online.
- A completed *Protection Policy* is required to be retained in FISHER in perpetuity.
 - Online completion is automatically retained in FISHER.
 - If a paper copy is completed, it must be uploaded to each person's FISHER profile by the Coordinator (or other appropriate Servants Team member) and then the paper copy is destroyed.
- The signature on the *Protection Policy* indicates that a leader or helper agrees with and will abide by the *Protection Policy* as he or she serves.

 *Protection Policy*

2. Additional Background Information

The Additional Background Information (ABI) process is designed to check the stability and suitability of leaders proposed for serving with minors or vulnerable adults in the ministry. The ABI process ensures that CBS is consistent with best ministry practices and host church or facility expectations. Any person who serves with children, youth, and Agape adults six times or more during the class year must complete the ABI process prior to serving. Crucial aspects of the ABI process include:


- Criminal background check using the social security number to look for judicial actions.
- Questionnaire to assess stability and suitability for serving with these groups.
- Three character references.
- Process includes 2–4 hours of child abuse recognition training for each leader.
- Online process hosted by vendor, Safe Hiring Solutions, which uses secure encryption technologies required by law to ensure that information is handled securely at all times. Safe Hiring Solutions results are reviewed and marked complete in FISHER by a team at the MSC.
- The ABI process is completed every five years unless state, local, or host church or facility practices require greater frequency.
- In addition to the ABI process, classes are also expected to meet the requirements of any state child protection practices. The states that require additional compliances are noted below.

 *Additional Background Information Implementation*
Additional Background Information Sample
Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law
Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law for Coordinators
California AB506 and Live Scan Fingerprinting FAQs

3. Class Safety Plan

Every year, each Servants Team is required to work with the host church or facility to address safety related issues for the class, provide the safest possible experience for class participants, and avoid injury to children and adults. The framework to accomplish these is in the *Class Safety Plan*.

- *Class Safety Plan* documents should be completed and reviewed with all class leaders and, at the discretion of the Servants Team, made available to all class participants.
- Completed copies are to be forwarded to each Area Director.

 *Class Safety Plan*
Class Safety Plan Checklist
Class Safety Plan Handout

4. Incident Reporting

The *Incident Report* is used to document a medical injury event in a class or to document possible inappropriate behavior by a participant or leader in a class. The form is available on FISHER and must be completed for:

- Any emergency medical event or any time 911 is called.
- Any injury, other than a superficial bump, bruise, or scrape, to a CBS participant that occurs on the premises of the host church or facility during a CBS event.
- Any possible inappropriate behavior by a participant or leader during CBS.


Whenever an *Incident Report* is created, a copy should be provided to the:

- MSC via email to answers@communitybiblestudy.org.
- Area Director.
- Host church or facility contact person.
- Injured person or the parent or guardian if a child was involved.

The original incident report is retained by the class only for the current class year and is then destroyed.

All *Incident Reports* should be forwarded to the MSC. *Incident Reports* involving minors will be kept for 20 years and reports involving adults will be kept for seven years by the MSC.

Any person who learns of or suspects abuse, exploitation, or other illegal misconduct in relation to a minor or protected adult while at a CBS activity, whether the suspected abuse occurred at CBS or not, must report it to the appropriate civil authorities in compliance with local laws. In addition, the information must be reported to the NextGen Director or Teaching Director immediately. For additional information on reporting abuse or suspected abuse, please see *Protection Policy*.

 *Incident Report
Protection Policy*


5. Insurance

- CBS carries general comprehensive liability insurance for all CBS activities, protecting the ministry in the event of civil lawsuits. However, reliance on the Lord through faith and prayer is still the best preventative measure.
- If the host church or facility requires a certificate of insurance, please contact the MSC.

6. Infectious Disease Guidelines

The teaching of Scripture is central to the development of a policy governing how CBS ministers to all individuals. The love and compassion Jesus had for the sick must be considered. For example, Jesus did not hide Himself from those afflicted with leprosy, the most feared disease of His day; He actually exhorted His disciples to minister to them (Matthew 10:8). Disease must not become a reason not to minister to an individual's spiritual needs. We seek to balance the above statements with concerns for the health of class participants.

- All class participants should exercise wisdom regarding class attendance when not feeling well or when possibly contagious.
- Parents with sick children are asked to refrain from bringing them to class in order to avoid exposing other children to disease.
- Medical guidelines have been developed to assist Servants Teams considering how to meet the needs of children with infectious diseases.

 *Participation of Minors with Medical Conditions
Should I Bring My Child to Community Bible Study?*

C. PRIVACY PROTECTION

1. Privacy Policy

- All CBS leaders are expected to respect the privacy of all CBS participants by protecting their personal information, including names, addresses, email addresses, birthdates, or any other personal information.
- This information may only be used to conduct the ministry with excellence. It may not be used for any other non-CBS purpose. It may not be shared, sold, rented, loaned, traded, or leased for any reason.
- CBS leaders are asked to review and comply with the CBS Privacy Policy as part of the annual class registration process.
- CBS leaders are also asked to review and sign the CBS Personal Information Protection Agreement before they can access their leadership role on FISHER.

2. Photo and Video Permission

- CBS Adult and NextGen registration forms include an opportunity for participants to decline consent to be photographed and/or video recorded while participating in CBS.
- Consenting to be photographed and/or video recorded while participating in CBS will reflect the following:

- Any likeness, voice, or image will only be used for CBS promotional and other purposes.
- No individuals will be identified by name.
- No one will be compensated in any way.
- A class report of participants who decline consent to be photographed and/or video recorded is available through FISHER.
FISHER will retain this information in perpetuity.

 *Quick Guide for Photographs and Videos*

D. HOST CHURCHES OR FACILITIES


1. Host Church or Facility Relations

- The leadership and class participants should thank the Lord often for the church or facility that is so graciously hosting CBS. It is important to remember that CBS is the guest.
- Classes should be thoughtful about their relationship with the church or facility of both Leaders Council and the class.
 - The leadership and the class should leave things in better condition after class than they were before class.
 - The church or facility staff should not receive too many requests from CBS.
 - All reserved parking spaces (for clergy, church staff, etc.) should be respected and not used by CBS participants or leadership.

 *Nurturing Host Church or Facility Relationships*

2. Host Church or Facility Identification

- Identifying God's choice and trusting in His provision for meeting space is critical to a class.
- Guidelines have been developed for Servants Teams and Area Directors who are searching for a new meeting location.

 *Finding a Host Church or Facility
Host Church or Facility Request Form*

E. GIFT-GIVING

1. Gift-Giving Among Individuals in CBS

CBS policy is to discourage giving gifts (Christmas, birthday, end-of-year, etc.) within the Servants Team, Leaders Council, and class for the following reasons:

- Some class participants cannot afford to contribute to a gift for the Core Leader or Teaching Director and are embarrassed when others are doing so.
- Some Core Groups might give wonderful gifts to their leaders and other Core Leaders feel left out when their groups have not done so.
- Many leaders are not able financially to give gifts to their group participants or to each other.

Teaching Directors should announce several times throughout the year that CBS policy is to refrain from giving anything that costs money.

Exceptions:

- Small gifts given during the sharing session, such as a plant or a book, for the service of helpers like the pianist/guitarist and other regular helpers who are not members of Leaders Council.
- Small love gifts from children to teachers.
- Small gifts from NextGen Leaders to children (if funds are available) may be given at Christmas and at the end of class year.

2. Gift-Giving to Others (CBS to Others)

- As a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation and in keeping with our founding documents, it is important that ministry resources only be used to further the CBS mission. This is both a legal and ethical requirement.
- Classes may not collect donations or give funds directly to any individual person, regardless of their participation or service in CBS, or to any other organization or ministry, regardless of their non-profit or ministry identity.
- Classes may not send money directly to International Ambassadors or countries. All such fund transfers and gifts must be arranged through the Finance Department at the MSC.
- Classes may from time to time choose to support other CBS giving opportunities.
 - Instructions will be made available to the class concerning proper procedures at the time of the opportunity.
 - Questions should be referred to the Finance Department at the MSC.

F. COMMUNICATIONS

1. CBS Brand Guide

- The CBS Brand Guide is an important element in CBS's communication strategy. It is important that all in CBS represent the brand standards uniformly and consistently.
- For public or ministry-wide communications, CBS brand standards are non-negotiable.
- Local class materials should comply with the CBS brand standards whenever possible.

 *Brand Guide*

2. Communication with Class Participants

Class leaders routinely need to communicate with class participants to make connections and to pass along important information.

- FISHER provides a “Create Notification” feature to assist in class communications to individuals or groups. (i.e., Teaching Director welcome email, weather related closings, schedule changes, and class reminders). For questions see answers.communitybiblestudy.org.
- Other means of communication such as phone calls, personal emails, personal texts, or other private messaging services may be used.
- In all forms of communication, the wishes of the individual participant should be respected.

3. Web and Internet Guidelines

- Each class has a public web page provided via the FISHER system (classname.cbsclass.org).
- Designated Servants Team members have the ability to edit this web page through the FISHER “Site Editor” tab.
- Information such as meeting times, calendar, contact information, and the host church or facility location are populated directly from the FISHER System. It is important for the class Coordinator to make sure the information in the system is accurate.
- For the protection and privacy of CBS participants, no names, phone numbers, or addresses of any participants or leaders may be published on the class web page without prior specific written permission of that individual.
- Links to any websites other than CBS sites may not be posted on the class page.
- CBS lessons may not be posted on any website, including the class website.

- For NextGen classes, FISHER will automatically provide the option to download upcoming lessons in the calendar section.
- Care should be taken to avoid posting any copyrighted material on the class web page.
- Class teaching files (audio or video) may only be posted on FISHER, not on any public site, including the class website.
- Classes may not create alternative or mirror web sites.

4. Social Media Use

Social media is a communications tool that classes may utilize to further connect with class participants and the community in an effort to engage more people with God's Word.

- Social media should be thought of in the context of the mission of CBS.
- Social media is just one of many ways that a class could choose to communicate and is not required for any class.
- Social media is not a substitute for real community and should not be the primary shepherding tool.
- Common uses for social media:
 - Engage and communicate with class participants and with the community.
 - Supplement to the class website.
 - Tell stories about lives changed, families restored, communities brought together through God's Word (Be sure to respect privacy and obtain appropriate permissions).
 - Allow leaders to connect with one another.
- CBS leaders should be mindful of personal use of social media. As a disciple of Christ, a person's conduct reflects on the testimony of Him in addition to personal character.

 *Social Media Guidelines*

5. Communication with the Public

The best way to attract new class participants is by personal invitation.

Other permissible forms of publicity:

- Class website
- Host church or facility communications
- Social media
- Community calendar listing
- Radio broadcast announcement
- Display at local community event
- Materials left at local businesses (with permission)
- Other forms as approved by Area Director

Check with your Area Director before:

- Consenting to media interviews about the class or a participant in the class.
- Accepting invitations for the Teaching Director to teach on the radio or television.

Please do not:

- Repurpose email or contact lists from other organizations or groups.
- Send bulk (spam) emails—personal invitation (even if by email) is always best.

 *Media Toolkit*

6. Announcements Pertaining to Outside Causes or Ministries

One of the best qualities of CBS is that it is a safe place for every person to study the Bible. CBS keeps the main thing the main thing—making disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. People trust CBS and view it as a refuge because the focus is always Bible study. Participants appreciate not being burdened with additional expectations that they may or may not personally value. In order to protect the every-person’s Bible study atmosphere, CBS does not:

- Promote outside causes or ministries in class.
- Circulate petitions.
- Promote or discuss politics.
- Present any program or proposal that would result in financial gain to any individual, company, or ministry other than designated CBS ministries.
- Make any announcements regarding collections for a group or individual, see Chapter 12 E 2.

Because each class is part of a community, participants may request that local worthy causes either be announced or presented as an Opening. Special consideration can be given regarding making an announcement for the host church or facility. All requests should be presented to the Servants Team, which may:

- Make a blanket policy for the class that none of these presentations will be allowed, thus avoiding conflict and the appearance of showing partiality, or
- Prayerfully consider individual requests as they arise and decide as a team what is best for the class in keeping with the vision and mission of CBS. The Area Director should be consulted before proceeding with any announcements.

G. BANKING AND ADMINISTRATION

1. Banking Regulations

- Each class should establish a class bank account within specific guidelines in the name of Community Bible Study, Inc.

- Two bank account signers are required and must be current CBS class leaders, one being the Coordinator and one being the Treasurer, when possible.
- All signers on a class bank account must complete the *Banking Accountability Form* and return it to the MSC. This should occur when adding a signer to the account or changing a signer due to leadership changes.
- CBS is listed with the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) corporation.
- The CBS Federal Tax ID number is 51-0233462

 *Treasurer*

Banking Accountability Form

2. Records Retention

- Financial Documents
 - The MSC is responsible for retaining all class financial records for an extended period in order to fulfill annual audit and IRS compliance purposes.
 - The class Treasurer is responsible to transmit the required monthly class financial packet in a timely fashion. This packet contains almost all the financial records required to be held by the MSC.
 - The local class should retain financial records for two years, after which these records should be destroyed.
 - Documentation regarding the class bank account should be retained as long as the account is in use. In addition, the *Banking Accountability Form* should be forwarded to the MSC whenever there is a change in the class bank account or in one or more of the class account authorized signers.

- Non-Financial Documents

Certain non-financial documents must be retained for extended periods of time due to the legal ramifications of these documents. Other documents should not be kept beyond the stated time.

- Annual Leadership Commitment Form (ALC)—activated and completed through a leader’s FISHER profile and retained in perpetuity.
- Additional Background Information (ABI) process—documentation related to the ABI process is retained by Safe Hiring Solutions.
- Protection Policy—activated and completed online, or a paper copy must be completed, signed, and uploaded to each person’s FISHER profile. Any paper copies must be destroyed after they are uploaded. Retained in perpetuity by the MSC.
- Incident Reports
 - Involving minors, retained for twenty years by the MSC.
 - Involving adults, retained for seven years by the MSC.

- Permission to be Photographed/Video-Recorded—included in the registration process as a consent that may be withdrawn or opted into at any time.
- Annual Registration—completed online by participant, or on paper by participant and submitted to the Coordinator for completing online. Paper registration forms must be destroyed once the information is entered online.
- All documents pertaining to adult participation—seven years (except registration forms)
- Guardian Forms—retained only for the current class year, then destroyed.

Local class records should be made available to the Area Director upon request.

3. Class Minimums

- The expectation for day and evening adult classes is a minimum of 60 participants, including leaders, by the third year.
- The expectation for NextGen (Stand Alone) classes is a minimum of 30 participants, including leaders, by the third year.
- The expectation for InPrison & Beyond classes is a minimum of five participants.
- The Area Director will guide class leaders toward resources to aid in growth when there are challenges.
- In the event that a class is moving toward closure, the Area Director will guide the process.

4. Tax-Exempt Purchasing

- Purchases of class supplies may be entitled to exemption from state sales tax.
- Since the rules vary widely from state to state, contact the MSC for assistance in determining whether purchases qualify for exemption.
- The CBS Federal Tax ID number is 51-0233462. This is not a tax-exempt number but may be required if a local store requires registration as a tax-exempt entity.

5. STAPLES Discount Program

Since 2012, CBS has partnered with Staples through the “Staples Business Advantage” program to bring significant discounts on copy/print needs to classes. An online order option is available with direct shipping. If there is not a Staples store near a class, the plan prices may be helpful in negotiating similar discounts with other local copy facilities. If appropriate, a class may also wish to approach their host church or facility regarding the use of their equipment. Questions regarding this program can be addressed to the MSC at answers@communitybiblestudy.org.

6. Communication with the MSC

The MSC is available to help with technical and procedural questions. For CBS policy questions, the Area Director should be contacted first.

To contact the MSC:

- Call 1-800-826-4181 from 8am to 4pm Mountain Time
- Email answers@communitybiblestudy.org
- Additional FISHER system support is also available online at answers.communitybiblestudy.org