

Adult Sunday School Organization Guide

Finding your
place of
service



SUNDAY SCHOOL/
OPEN GROUP
MINISTRIES



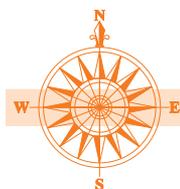
An Open Group Adult Sunday School Class is...

- **Foundational**—the fundamental beginning place for involving adults in doing the work of the Great Commission. It is an entry point for unbelievers and new believers and is foundational for believers to mature as they study God’s Word and learn to serve.
- **Ongoing**—meets regularly for Bible study and builds ongoing relationships with class members and prospects. A plan is in place for ongoing ministry, outreach, and fellowship.
- **Evangelistic**—has as its primary objective to win the lost. The climate encourages believers to invite, engage, and share Christ with the lost.
- **Focused on Bible Study**—the study of God’s Word. This is accomplished through ongoing small-group study as well as personal Bible study with the purpose of guiding adults toward conversion, maturity, and ministry.
- **Multipling**—open groups challenge class members to discover their place of service as class leaders. As members mature, they are constantly encouraged to serve elsewhere as youth, children, preschool, or adult leaders. The overarching goal is to start another unit or class. Open groups prepare to start a new unit or class every two years.
- **Intentional**—planning and evaluation takes place to ensure that the class functions as an open group.

Organizing for a Purpose

By its nature, organization is a tool. Like a hammer or saw is used to help build a home, organization is used to build a system by which groups of people can achieve their goals in efficient and effective ways. In adult Sunday School work, organization is the tool by which leaders and members are engaged in the strategic areas of work of the church and Sunday School. The class is the basic unit of adult Sunday School work. The organizational structure suggested for a class should be flexible and fluid based on the gifts and abilities of the people who make up its membership. Class organization can be shaped many ways, based on how teachers and class leaders approach leadership and subsequently share duties with one another and with members. Class leaders are enlisted by the teacher to assist with the total work of the class in one or more of the following five areas:

1. **Evangelism:** Leaders create an atmosphere that encourages unsaved adults to place their faith in Jesus Christ and encourages believers to lead others to Christ.



2. **Discipleship:** Leaders create an atmosphere that encourages believers to grow in maturity in Christ, monitor the discipleship needs of believers, and provide learning opportunities that help Christians grow toward spiritual maturity.
3. **Fellowship:** Leaders create an atmosphere conducive to members building relationships with one another as together they build on their relationship with God. They lead actions to help new members be assimilated into the fellowship of the class, team, or group to which they are assigned.
4. **Ministry:** Leaders create an atmosphere in which members and prospects experience direct care and concern for life needs and avenues through which they may identify and implement ministry and missions projects that make the best use of the gifts and abilities of class members. Leaders also lead out in intercessory prayer as an integral part of the ministry and missionary efforts of the class.
5. **Worship:** Leaders create a worshipful atmosphere, lead small-group worship experiences, encourage members and prospects to develop personal and family worship experiences in their homes, and challenge participants to learn the value of and participate in corporate worship.

Enlisting Class Leaders

Every person in every adult class can have at least one responsibility. That responsibility might be greeting others at the door and making them feel important whenever they attend, making weekly visits to prospects, calling absentees to let them know they were missed, or teaching the Bible for spiritual transformation. Leaders should be enlisted in a personal visit by the person to whom the prospective leader would be responsible. Prospective leaders should be given a written job description, asked to think and pray about the position, and assured that the enlisting leader will be praying for the prospective leader. The enlisting leader should return later for an answer and accept the answer without pressure if the prospective leader declines.

The Adult Sunday School Leadership Team

When leaders understand expectations and their role as part of the leadership team, they are more likely to respond positively to the call to lead or serve and to be effective in their jobs.

ADULT DIVISION DIRECTOR

An Adult Division Director is responsible to the Sunday School Director for the total ministry of the Adult Division, which includes planning, organizing, enlisting



department directors, and evaluating the work. The Division Director serves on the Sunday School Leadership Planning Team/Sunday School Council and works closely with other members of that team as well as with the Adult Division and department leaders.

The primary responsibilities are to:

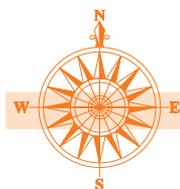
- Meet regularly with the Sunday School Leadership Planning Team/Sunday School Council.
- Coordinate the work of the division and determine organizational needs.
- Discover, enlist, and train new leaders.
- Evaluate, encourage, affirm, and direct adult leaders in their ministry.
- Meet regularly with department leaders for planning and evaluation.
- Evaluate needs related to space, budget, Bible study curriculum materials, supplies, and other resources. Recommend actions related to needs.
- Set a positive example for others by living as an authentic witness of Christ and being fully involved in the life and ministry of the church.

ADULT DIVISION OUTREACH-EVANGELISM DIRECTOR

The Adult Division Outreach-Evangelism Director works with the Adult Division Director and the Sunday School Outreach-Evangelism Director to lead the Adult Division in outreach and evangelism. This leader works closely with adult department leaders.

The primary responsibilities are to:

- Coordinate all evangelism and outreach activities of the division.
- Coordinate prospect-discovery efforts for the division.
- Assist in training division and department leaders and members.
- Evaluate, encourage, affirm, and direct adult leaders in their evangelism and outreach efforts.
- Promote outreach and evangelism objectives with other leaders and members.
- Maintain active division and department prospect records.
- Greet visitors and guide them to the meeting place for their Bible study group.
- Set a positive example for others by living as an authentic witness of Christ and being fully involved in the life and ministry of the church.



ADULT DIVISION SECRETARY

The Adult Division Secretary provides vital support related to record keeping, reports, and other communications; ordering Bible study curriculum, supplies, and other resources; and coordinating the distribution of resources.

The primary responsibilities are to:

- Meet regularly with the division leadership team.
- Process and maintain general records for the division and compile reports as requested, including prospect information.
- Coordinate ordering and distribution of Bible study curriculum materials, supplies, and other resources.
- Set a positive example for others by living as an authentic witness of Christ and being fully involved in the life and ministry of the church.

ADULT DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR

An Adult Department Director is responsible to the Adult Division Director for the total ministry of the department. The Department Director works closely with teachers, encouraging them and assisting them in fulfilling their responsibilities.

The primary responsibilities are to:

- Lead in planning and administering the total work of the department.
- Meet regularly with teachers for prayer, planning, and making assignments related to evangelism, outreach, fellowship, ministry, and Bible teaching.
- Serve as a greeter or host for the department.
- Evaluate needs related to space, budget, Bible study curriculum, supplies, and other resources. Recommend actions related to needs.
- In non-departmentalized Sunday School, maintain attendance records and other participant information that strengthens the group's pursuit of the overall purpose and mission of the Sunday School.
- Set a positive example for others by living as an authentic witness of Christ and being fully involved in the life and ministry of the church.



ADULT DEPARTMENT OUTREACH-EVANGELISM LEADER

An Adult Department Outreach-Evangelism Leader works with the Adult Division Outreach-Evangelism Director, Adult Department Director, and Adult Teachers to lead an adult department in outreach and evangelism.

The primary responsibilities are to:

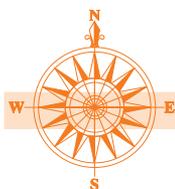
- Coordinate all evangelism and outreach activities of the department.
- Coordinate prospect-discovery efforts for the department.
- Assist in training department leaders and members in evangelism and outreach.
- Evaluate, encourage, affirm, and direct adult leaders in their evangelism and outreach efforts.
- Promote outreach and evangelism objectives with other leaders and members.
- Maintain active department prospect records.
- Greet visitors and guide them to the meeting place for their Bible study group.
- Set a positive example for others by living as an authentic witness of Christ and being fully involved in the life and ministry of the church.

ADULT DEPARTMENT SECRETARY

An Adult Department Secretary assists department and class leaders by providing vital support related to record keeping, reports, and other communications; ordering Bible study curriculum materials, supplies, and other resources; and coordinating of resources.

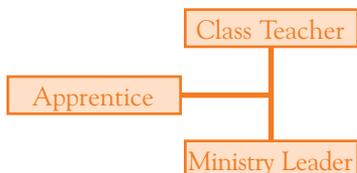
The primary responsibilities are to:

- Meet regularly with the department leadership team.
- Process and maintain general records for the department and compile reports as requested, including prospect information.
- Set a positive example for others by living as an authentic witness of Christ and being fully involved in the life and ministry of the church.



The Adult Sunday School Leadership Team

Basic (Enrollment 3-10)

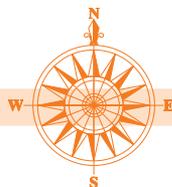


ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER

An Adult Sunday School Teacher is responsible for leading people toward faith in Christ and guiding them to serve Him through evangelism, discipleship, fellowship, ministry, and worship. In pursuing this mission, a teacher must understand that teaching moves beyond the Bible study session into the daily living of participants. A teacher must look for opportunities to mentor participants before and after Bible study sessions, ensure that a positive ministry environment is provided during the session that facilitates the work of the Holy Spirit, invest himself or herself in building positive relationships with participants, and involve learners in meaningful Bible study.

The major responsibilities are to:

- Lead a small group of adults in meaningful Bible study.
- Build positive relationships with participants and prospects and ensure that they are contacted regularly in order to meet their needs.
- Maintain attendance records and other participant information that strengthens the group's pursuit of the overall purpose and mission of Sunday School.
- Lead participants toward faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and guide them to serve Him through evangelism, discipleship, fellowship, ministry, and worship. Organize the class to support that work effectively.
- Enlist an apprentice from the group for the purpose of teaching a new adult class or working in another group as a teacher within two years.
- Set a positive example for others by living as an authentic witness of Christ and being fully involved in the life and ministry of the church.
- Prepare his or her life as the primary leader of the class.
- Enlist a ministry coordinator that will help organize the class to function as an open group.



- Lead the class to continue personal Bible study following the class session.
- Lead the class to multiply by working with church leaders to start new units and by sending members out to serve.

MINISTRY COORDINATOR (ADULT CLASS SECRETARY)

A Ministry Coordinator (Adult Class Secretary) provides vital support related to record keeping, reports, and other communications; ordering Bible study curriculum materials, supplies, and other resources; and coordinating the distribution of resources.

The primary responsibilities are to:

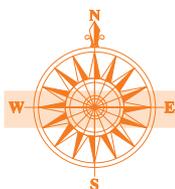
- Meet regularly with the class leadership team.
- Process and maintain general records for the class and compile reports as requested, including prospect information.
- Coordinate ordering and distributing Bible study curriculum materials, supplies, and other resources.
- Set a positive example for others by living as an authentic witness of Christ and being fully involved in the life and ministry of the church.
- Register guests and keep accurate attendance records.
- Develop and implement plans for leading the class in evangelism, including training and follow-up of guests and prospects.
- Develop and implement plans to care for class members.
- Develop and implement plans involving the class in fellowships outside of Sunday School to build ongoing relationships.
- When appropriate, enlist leaders included in the Expanded and the Expanded Plus organization who will multiply the work of the class.

APPRENTICE

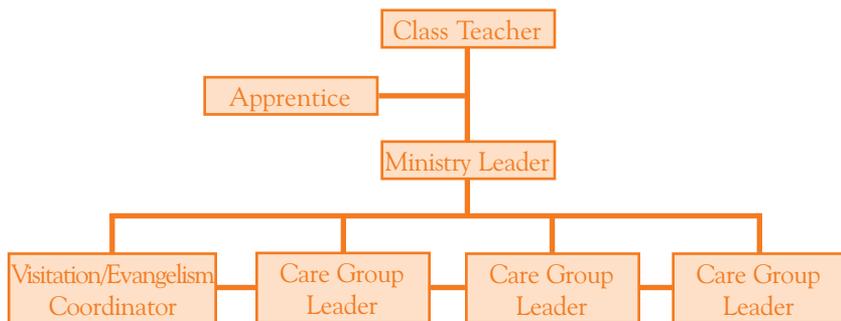
An Apprentice is enlisted from an adult class to assist a teacher in his or her major responsibilities and/or to prepare to start a new Bible study unit within two years. An apprentice serves as a substitute when the teacher is absent.

The primary responsibilities are to:

- Teach a minimum of once every six weeks and more often as the class prepares to start a new class.
- Work with the teacher and the ministry coordinator to lead the class to function as an open group.
- Assist the teacher in encouraging the spiritual and service growth of class members.
- Plan, encourage and participate with members in discipleship studies beyond Sunday School.



EXPANDED (Enrollment 11-20)



VISITATION-EVANGELISM COORDINATOR

A Visitation-Evangelism Coordinator works with the department outreach-evangelism leader to lead the class in outreach and evangelism. They work with the ministry coordinator, teacher, and apprentice to develop and implement a class evangelism strategy.

The primary responsibilities are to:

- Coordinate all evangelism and outreach activities of the class.
- Coordinate prospect-discovery and prospect-enlistment efforts of the class.
- Lead class members to create an atmosphere that encourages unsaved people to place their faith in Christ and encourages believers to lead others to Christ.
- Maintain class prospect records.
- Set a positive example for others by living as an authentic witness of Christ and being fully involved in the life and ministry of the church.
- Develop a process to assure that guests are properly welcomed and registered.
- Plan for consistent follow-up of guests.
- Train class members to share their faith.
- Personally enlist class members to help implement these processes and strategies.



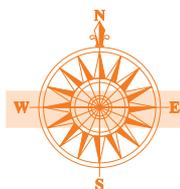
CARE GROUP LEADER(S)

“A care group is simply a grouping of people for the expressed purpose of making regular contacts for prayer, communication, and the discovery and meeting of needs.” (*Revitalizing the Sunday Morning Dinosaur*, page 123)

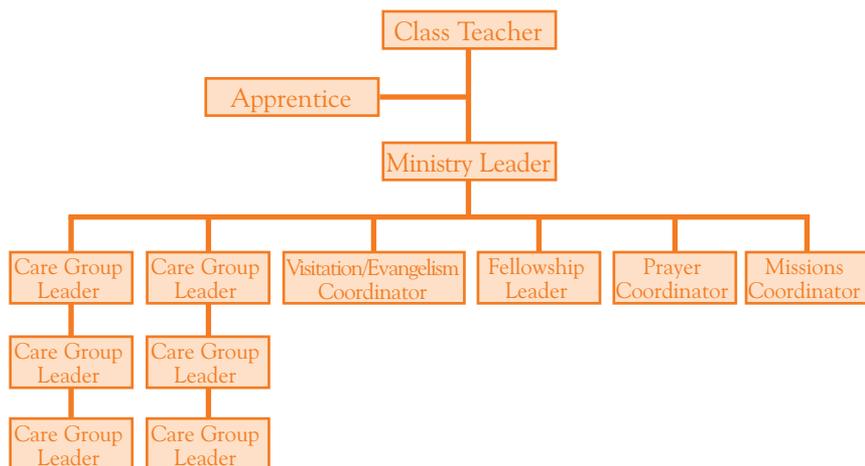
The goal is to provide one Care Group Leader for every four to six members and members-in-service. The Care Group Leader(s) work with the ministry coordinator, teacher, and apprentice to ensure that every class member is contacted regularly including absentee contacts, crisis contacts, encouragement contacts, and evangelistic contacts.

The primary responsibilities are to:

- Be a personal example of a caring, growing Christian and faithful church member.
- Develop a meaningful personal relationship with the care group members.
- Contact every care group member weekly to thank them for attendance, faithfulness, and participation, ask them for prayer requests if they were absent, and inform them of class/department plans.
- Minister to care group members by maintaining confidential information shared. Seek to be aware of and to meet any special needs of care group members.
- Organize the class to assist in times of emergency or crisis.
- Communicate with the church office, adult class leader, and prayer leader when special needs arise.
- Remember special dates (birthday, anniversary, etc.) by sending a card or making a call.
- Pray for care group members at least weekly knowing their joys and concerns.
- Visit care group members in their home at least two times per year.
- Keep a record/journal of contact with each group member.
- Attend Sunday School worker’s meetings and any other planned activity that will strengthen your ministry and your class’s effectiveness.



EXPANDED PLUS (Enrollment 21-40)



FELLOWSHIP COORDINATOR

The Fellowship Coordinator works with the ministry coordinator and other class leaders to develop ways to encourage closer friendships and personal relationships. They plan ongoing activities and events to bring people together for fun and fellowship. They are responsible for providing opportunities for the class to build a sense of community.

The primary responsibilities are to:

- Plan monthly Sunday morning fellowships.
- Plan, coordinate, and lead all class fellowship events every five to seven weeks outside the Sunday morning Bible study time.
- Promote fellowship events through care group leaders, including the in-service members.
- Serve as a greeter for the class in order to assist guests and members.
- Work with church hostess and/or the hospitality committee in church-wide events.
- Participate in Sunday School leadership team meetings that relate to the specific area of fellowship.
- Communicate with church office and staff members in planning events to ensure no conflicts and proper promotion for the event.
- Encourage “get acquainted” activities with the class.



PRAYER COORDINATOR

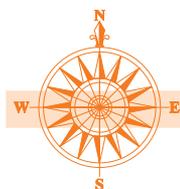
The Prayer Coordinator guides the class toward spiritual transformation through encouraging personal daily devotional and Bible study activities. They lead the class to become involved in the prayer ministry of the church and coordinate the prayer ministry of the class.

The primary responsibilities are to:

- Develop an awareness of the needs of the class members, prospects, and the church.
- Maintain a consistent daily personal prayer life that includes intercession for the class members, prospects, and the church.
- Organize a class network of prayer through the care group leaders.
- Maintain and update a weekly class prayer list with all requests and reports of answered prayers.
- Encourage participation in the church's prayer ministry and special prayer emphasis time.
- Send a prayer-gram to members and prospects who have requested prayer.
- Call every member each month to ask if there are any special prayer needs.
- Distribute devotional guides to class members
- Encourage class members to lead their families in Bible study and worship.
- Gather prayer requests and coordinate prayer time on Sunday mornings.

MISSIONS COORDINATOR

The Missions Coordinator leads the group to support missions giving and participate in missions education and ministry projects. They work with the ministry coordinator, other class leaders, and church leaders to plan and coordinate class involvement in church and class sponsored mission and ministry projects.



Other Options

ADULT CLASS COORDINATOR

An Adult Class Coordinator may be enlisted to direct the overall work of the class, relieving the teacher of administrative responsibilities. A class coordinator works closely with both the teacher and class team leaders to ensure that all key areas of work are addressed appropriately. The coordinator also ensures that the class is properly organized and mobilized for its mission of leading people to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and building Great Commission Christians through involvement in evangelism, discipleship, fellowship, ministry, and worship.

ADULT CLASS LEADERS

Adult Class Leaders are enlisted by the teacher of an adult Bible study class to assist with the total work of the class. Class leaders work in one or more of the five key areas of Sunday School work in either a leader-based approach or a team-based approach. (See *Organizing for a Purpose* on pages 1-2 for a detailed list for each area of work.)

PARTICIPANTS

Adults who attend Sunday School classes and Bible study groups are not merely the intended recipients of Sunday School's Great Commission ministry. They are the grass roots ministers. Adult Sunday School is all about building Great Commission Christians. All class leaders, teachers, directors, and pastoral leaders needed now or in the future may be found on the membership or prospect lists of Sunday School classes today. Every participant should receive the opportunity to serve according to the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

Primary responsibilities are to:

- Participate in personal and group Bible study regularly, giving attention to the leadership of the Holy Spirit in one's life.
- Be receptive to God's efforts to draw people to faith in Christ through His Work, His Spirit, and His people.
- Actively participate in efforts to lead others toward faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Participate individually and with the class to serve Christ through evangelism, discipleship, fellowship, ministry, and worship.
- Follow God's leadership in responding to opportunities to grow spiritually and to serve God's people in leadership roles.

The Adult Sunday School Leadership Team Is Important!

Depending on the needs and size of your church, the Adult Sunday School Leadership Team may be small or large. No one person has to do it all! The team divides the responsibilities to impact the lives of people.

Find your place of service!



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The **PURPOSE** of Sunday School/Open Group Ministries of the Georgia Baptist Convention is to partner with churches, associations, and regions to build healthy ministries in the local church that fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandment.

The **VISION** of Sunday School/Open Group Ministries is that every Georgia Baptist church would have a healthy and growing Sunday School and/or Open Group ministry.

The **GOALS** of Sunday School/Open Group Ministries, that define a healthy/growing Sunday School, are to see the following results in Georgia:

- An increasing Sunday School **ENROLLMENT**
- An increasing Sunday School **ATTENDANCE**
- An increasing number of **SUNDAY SCHOOLS**
- An increasing number of **TEACHING UNITS** (Classes)
- An increasing number of **BAPTISMS**
- An increasing number of Sunday School **LEADERS TRAINED**
- An increasing number of Sunday Schools that report an increased **ENROLLMENT** and **ATTENDANCE**

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Sunday School/Open Group Ministries
Georgia Baptist Convention
6405 Sugarloaf Parkway
Duluth, GA 30097-4092
1-800-RING-GBC or 770-936-5285
Fax: 770-452-6580
Website: ssog.gabaptist.org



**Georgia Baptist
Convention**

*Serving & Sharing Christ
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