

At New Hope Church, we are **disciples who make disciples**. Because this is part of our Identity, it is essential that we nurture a process by which people can grow as both Disciples and Disciple-Makers. This process of dual-direction discipling works in tandem with the other aspects of our Identity, is guided by our Values, and is understood within the context of journey theology.

Definition of Terms

- Disciple* A Disciple is someone who, through relationship with others, is following Jesus, being changed by Jesus to be like Jesus, and is committing to the mission of Jesus.
- Disciple-Maker* A Disciple-Maker is someone who intentionally helps others progress in their journey as Disciples of Christ.
- Dual-Direction Discipling* Dual-direction discipling is participation in discipling relationships both as a Disciple and as a Disciple-Maker, both in being disciplined and in discipling others.
- Indicator* An Indicator is a characteristic which helps show what phase of growth a person is in.

Discover. Heal. Grow

These three words describe three significant activities that take place through discipling relationships. Certainly, people can discover, heal, and grow by other means, but we believe that discipling relationships are a primary space where God does this work in us. Through discipling relationships, Disciples will discover both who God is and who they are; God will heal Disciples from spiritual, emotional, and relational brokenness; and Disciples will grow more and more into Christ-likeness.

Discernment

We believe that discipling relationships should be formed and led through discernment. This discernment process is guided by the Holy Spirit, and the Disciple, the Disciple-Maker, and the Director of Discipling all participate together in the process. Through Spirit-led discernment, decisions will be made regarding who best fits together in a discipling relationship, what topics will be explored during discipleship meetings, and when and how discipling transitions will take place.



At New Hope Church, we **meet regularly with others for disciple-making**. Because this is one of our Core Practices, we foster a culture where discipling relationships can flourish. We believe that disciple-making happens through Life-on-Life engagement. Disciples and Disciple-Makers enter into each other's life spaces and become sacred companions on the journey. Each person is unique; therefore, each discipling relationship will be unique. There is no "one size fits all" in disciple-making.

Discipleship Meetings

Because each discipling relationship is unique, each discipleship meeting will be unique. While we do not expect discipleship meetings to conform to a standard format, there are a few characteristics that will probably typify most meetings.

- Duration* Approximately 1.5 hours

<i>Frequency</i>	Weekly; every other week
<i>Period</i>	Several months; one year or more; as the journey requires/enables
<i>Location</i>	Homes or dedicated spaces at the New Hope building; other spaces as agreed upon by participants Spaces that are private, quiet, comfortable, inviting, safe, and beautiful

Accountability

Disciple-Makers will be accountable to the Director of Discipling. The Director of Discipling will regularly check-in with Disciple-Makers to discuss how their discipleship meetings are going, whether there are questions or concerns within discipling relationships, when and how discipling transitions should take place, and how the Disciple-Makers are being disciplined themselves. This may include group or individual meetings where Disciple-Makers can share questions, challenges, and successes.

Assessment

Just as we watch plants, animals, and humans move through phases of developmental growth, we as Disciples experience phases in our spiritual growth toward Jesus. This is as natural a process as any that we see in creation, and as such, there is no value judgment placed on what phase a Disciple is in. It is helpful, however, to have ways of identifying and describing these phases so that we can best assist people in growing.

To this effect, assessment will play a significant role in the discipleship process. Different types of assessment, including self-assessment, progress-driven assessment, and Indicators, will help show what phase a Disciple may be in. The Director of Discipling will provide tools to Disciples and Disciple-Makers to aid in assessment. Assessments may help determine who best fits together in a discipling relationship, what phase of Disciple-Making a person is in (including how they should be trained, resourced, equipped, or held accountable), and what topics might be explored in discipleship meetings or midweek intensive classes.

Discipling Transitions

Discipling transitions may take place if people in a discipling relationship find they are not a good fit, if a person has grown such that they are ready to enter a next phase of being a Disciple-Maker, or if a person wants or needs to move into a different type of discipling relationship (e.g. from a dyad to a triad).

Tools and Resources

The Director of Discipling is responsible for training and equipping Disciple-Makers. She will lead and facilitate formal trainings which will reinforce the ideas presented above as well as provide tools and information designed to meet the needs and requests of Disciple-Makers. The Director of Discipling will also maintain a list of discipling resources organized by topic and, when appropriate, will assist Disciple-Makers in choosing resources for their discipleship meetings.

In a culture where discipling is a Core Identity, discipleship is a way of life. Discipling relationships are a regular topic of conversation; it is natural to speak and hear phrases like “in my discipleship meeting” or “who are you discipling with?” Dual-direction discipling is regularly referenced by leaders during Sunday morning worship services and other meeting times. Most significantly, there is visible evidence of active discipling relationships because people’s lives are continually being transformed. At New Hope Church, we are committed to Jesus’s command to “go and make disciples,” so we engage, encourage, and equip people in discipleship.