

THE CHRISTIAN CARE MENTOR

Ministry Leader Guide



Practical Wisdom for Guiding and Supporting Others



The Christian Care Mentor Program Leader's Guide



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OVERVIEW

Christian Care Program Leadership is primarily a ministry of shepherding. Leaders are entrusted not only with processes and safeguards, but more importantly with people—mentors and caregivers whom God loves deeply. This guide frames leadership as Christian stewardship rather than organizational control. Drawing from the life and teaching of Jesus, it integrates servant leadership, discernment of gifts and administration, so the ministry remains loving, safe, and sustainable over time.

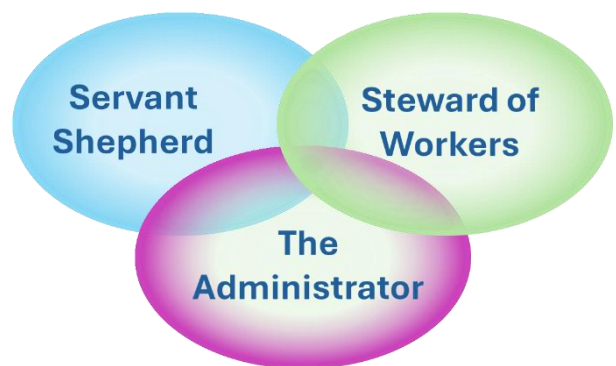
Prioritizing simplicity and low administrative overhead, this guide serves as a discussion and planning tool rather than an organizational handbook. Where needed, leaders need to supplement this guide with other tools and content that reflect their risk tolerance and organizational preferences.

Three Expressions of Shepherding

The Scripture presents leadership as shepherding—knowing the people, guarding their well-being, equipping them for service, and trusting God for the growth.

Within this ministry, leadership is expressed through **three distinct but integrated roles**. These roles are not hierarchical or sequential; they operate together and must be held in spiritual balance.

- **First: The Servant Shepherd (Presence & Care)**, Modelling Christ's humility by remaining available to mentors, offering presence, prayer, and timely support.
- **Second: The Steward of Workers (Strength-Based Assignment)**, Discerning the gifts, limits, and lived experience God has given each mentor and assigning roles accordingly.
- **Third: the Administrator (Process & Records)**, Stewarding the administrative and structural foundation of the program, including documentation, matching protocols, and oversight.



1. THE SERVANT SHEPHERD (PRESENCE & CARE)

Role Overview

The Servant Shepherd models Christ's humility by remaining available to mentors, offering presence, prayer, and timely support. This role focuses on *care before control* and *presence before problem-solving*, ensuring that mentors are spiritually and emotionally supported as they walk alongside caregivers.

Biblical Foundation: Servant Leadership

Jesus redefined leadership through acts of humble, attentive care. He washed His disciples' feet (John 13:1–17) and later prepared breakfast for them on the shore after a long and discouraging night (John 21:7–13). In both moments, Jesus noticed fatigue, met practical needs, and restored hearts before assigning responsibility.

These encounters reveal a leadership posture that values attentiveness, humility, and relationship over authority and efficiency. Leadership begins with seeing people clearly and responding with compassion.

Core Practices of the Servant Shepherd

For the Program Leader, servant shepherding is expressed through the following practices:

- **Prayerful Support:** Praying with and for mentors, entrusting burdens to God together.
- **Availability:** Being present when mentors experience emotional weight.
- **Presence Before Solutions:** Listening without fixing, correcting, or rescuing.
- **Gentle Encouragement:** Anticipating needs and offering quiet, timely reassurance.

The Servant Shepherd does not rescue, control, or micromanage. Instead, the leader walks alongside mentors with steadiness and grace, ready to serve when needed.

Caring for the Mentors

Ministry of Presence

The Program Leader serves as the *first point of pastoral support* for mentors. When mentors feel discouraged, anxious, or emotionally burdened, the leader responds with calm presence, empathy, and clarity. This may include:

- Listening attentively without trying to solve the situation.
- Normalizing emotional responses to caregiving conversations.
- Offering prayer and spiritual encouragement.
- Reaffirming purpose, role boundaries, and hope.

Ongoing Support and Communication

Servant shepherding is proactive rather than crisis-driven. The Program Leader ensures that mentors have:

- Regular communication and updates.
- Access to relevant resources and training materials.
- Safe opportunities to share concerns, questions, or additional training needs.
- Consistent communication reduces isolation and builds trust within the mentoring community.

Measuring Health: Love as the Key Indicator

In this ministry, **love is the primary Key Performance Indicator** (John 13:34–35). Administrative metrics are secondary to relational health.

The ministry is healthy when mentors can truthfully say:

- “I feel supported.”
- “I am seen and valued.”
- “I am appreciated.”
- “I am not expected to serve alone.”

When mentors experience genuine care, love naturally flows through them to caregivers. The Program Leader intentionally cultivates a culture of gratitude, community, and shared prayer so that love remains the defining mark of the ministry.

The Servant Shepherd role safeguards the heart of the ministry. Through presence, prayer, and humble care, the leader creates the conditions in which mentors can serve faithfully and sustainably.

2. THE STEWARD OF WORKERS (STRENGTH-BASED ASSIGNMENT)

Role Overview

The Steward of Workers discerns the gifts, limits, and lived experience God has given each mentor and assigns roles accordingly. This role treats people not as resources to be deployed, but as gifts to be stewarded with prayer, wisdom, and respect. Faithful stewardship protects mentors, strengthens relationships, and honours the Lord who sends the workers.

Biblical Foundations

Workers as God's Gift (Matthew 9:37–38)

Jesus reminds His disciples that workers belong first to God: “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.”

In this ministry, mentors are not interchangeable volunteers filling organizational gaps. They are entrusted servants, each carrying a unique story, capacity, and calling. Stewardship, therefore, requires attentiveness, discernment, and prayer. Assigning roles and responsibilities is not based on organizational demands but obedience to the direction of The Lord, who has gifted each worker with specific gifts for specific roles.

Love as the Measure of Faithfulness (John 13:34–35)

Jesus gave His disciples a single defining outcome:

- “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”
- Love is the primary Key Performance Indicator in stewarding workers. Numbers, activity levels, and efficiency are secondary. The essential question is:

- *Do mentors feel loved, valued, and appreciated?*

When mentors feel seen and supported, love naturally flows to caregivers. When they do not, the ministry becomes transactional and fragile. The Program Leader guards this outcome through listening, affirmation, prayer, and gratitude.

Core Practices of the Steward of Workers

Faithful stewardship of mentors includes the following practices:

- **Honouring Lived Experience:** Recognizing each mentor's caregiving journey as their primary qualification.
- **Discerning Readiness:** Attending to emotional healing, perspective, and self-awareness.
- **Respecting Limits:** Acknowledging season of life, health, and capacity.
- **Strength-Based Assignment:** Matching mentors and caregivers based on shared experience, maturity, and calling rather than urgency or convenience.
- This approach honours both the worker and the Lord who sends them.

Recruiting and Equipping Mentors

Identifying Calling and Readiness

Christian Care Mentors are selected primarily for lived experience and Christlike character, not professional expertise. During screening, leaders listen for:

- Experience as an unpaid caregiver.
- Evidence of healing and perspective.
- Humility, teachability, and compassion.
- A sense of calling to walk alongside others.

Formation Insight: Just as Jesus restored Peter before entrusting him with shepherding others (John 21:15–17), mentors must have processed their caregiving journey sufficiently to serve without rescuing or reliving unresolved pain.

Onboarding and Screening

Before any match is approved, mentors must:

- Complete an application form.

- Participate in a screening interview focused on character, boundaries, and readiness.
- Provide references where appropriate.

This process protects caregivers, mentors, and the integrity of the ministry.

Required Agreements

All mentors must sign a **Confidentiality and Liability Agreement** prior to matching. This agreement:

- Establishes trust and safety.
- Clarifies role boundaries.
- Protects both participants and the ministry.

Training Model: Formation Through Conversation

Mentors are equipped through a **formation-based training model** designed for adult learners:

- Mentors prepare independently through reading and listening.
- Group sessions emphasize facilitated conversation, reflection, and application.
- Leaders guide learning rather than lecture.

This model reinforces that mentors are companions and learners, not experts, and supports ongoing growth rather than one-time instruction.

The Steward of Workers role ensures that mentors are placed where they can serve with integrity, joy, and sustainability—reflecting God’s care for both the harvest and the workers He sends.

3. THE ADMINISTRATOR (PROCESS & RECORDS)

Role Overview

The Administrator stewards the administrative and structural foundation of the Christian Care Mentoring Program. In this ministry, administration is not merely procedural—it is an act of love. Clear processes and careful records exist to protect people, support accountability, and sustain the ministry over time.

Wise administration creates the conditions in which trust can grow, boundaries are honoured, and mentors and caregivers can engage safely and confidently.

Biblical Foundation

Structure in this ministry does not replace relationship; it serves it. Administrative clarity frees mentors to focus on presence and care, while protecting caregivers from confusion, dependency, or harm.

In this role, the Program Leader practices *shepherding through structure*—ensuring that no one carries responsibility alone and that the ministry remains healthy and sustainable.

Core Responsibilities of the Administrator

The Program Leader, acting as Administrator, oversees:

- The matching process between caregivers and mentors.
- Accurate, confidential, and appropriate record-keeping.
- Clear start and end points for mentoring relationships.
- Capacity limits that prevent burnout, role drift, and dependency.

Each of these responsibilities exists to safeguard people rather than to control outcomes.

Managing the Harvest: Matching and Oversight

Matching Protocol

All mentoring relationships follow a clear and consistent process:

- Caregiver submits a situation profile.
- The Program Leader reviews and approves the profile.
- Caregiver selects a potential mentor.
- The Program Leader confirms suitability and approves the match.
- Mentor initiates contact within 1–2 days.

This shared responsibility honours caregiver agency while maintaining appropriate oversight and discernment.

Stewardship of Records

The Program Leader maintains records that are accurate, minimal, and confidential. These typically include:

- Mentor profiles (using first names only where appropriate).
- Matches start and end dates.
- Brief call summaries created and maintained by mentors.

Records exist to support care, continuity, and accountability—not surveillance. They help leaders notice patterns of fatigue, concern, or growth and respond with timely support.

Capacity and Sustainability

To promote long-term health and prevent dependency:

- Mentors commit to a one-year service term.
- Individual matches are recommended to last six months.
- Extensions require mutual agreement and leader approval.

The Administrator watches attentively for signs of emotional fatigue, boundary strain, or overextension. Early intervention may include rest, rotation, additional support, or planned closure.

Safety, Boundaries, and Oversight

Safety Responsibility

The Program Leader holds responsibility for safety and risk oversight. Mentors are instructed to contact the leader immediately if:

- A caregiver expresses self-harm or harm toward others.
- There are signs of abuse, neglect, or severe emotional distress.
- Boundaries feel compromised or unclear.

Maintaining Healthy Boundaries

To protect all participants and the integrity of the ministry:

- Mentoring is **phone-based only** (no in-person meetings).
- Mentors do **not provide advice** (medical, legal, or counselling).
- Mentors actively discourage **dependency**, encouraging broader support networks where appropriate.

Boundaries are framed not as restrictions, but as expressions of love, wisdom, and mutual respect.

Match Closures and Transitions

When a match must end early or reach its natural conclusion:

- The Program Leader facilitates the closure.
- The reason for closure is documented appropriately.
- Care is taken to affirm dignity, gratitude, and trust on both sides.

Endings are handled prayerfully and respectfully, recognizing that healthy closure is itself an act of care.

In the Administrator role, structure serves as shepherding. Through wise processes, careful oversight, and clear boundaries, the Program Leader creates a safe and faithful framework in which love and ministry can flourish.

APPENDICES: LEADERSHIP TOOLS AND TEMPLATES

The following tools are written in a form-oriented style. Prioritizing simplicity, they should exist to serve people, protect relationships, and support prayerful discernment—not to create unnecessary burden.

Appendix A: Mentor Screening Interview Guide

Purpose: To discern calling, readiness, and character rather than technical skill.

Formation Posture for the Leader: Listen slowly. Attend to tone, humility, and self-awareness more than polished answers.

Sample Core Questions:

- How do prayer and faith shape the way you listen to others?
- Tell us about your caregiving journey. What shaped you most?
- What has God been teaching you through that experience?
- Where do you still notice tenderness or limits in your story?
- What draws you to walk alongside another caregiver at this season of life?
- How do you typically respond when someone is overwhelmed or emotional?
- What helps you maintain healthy boundaries when you care deeply?

Leader Reflection (after the interview):

- Is there evidence of humility and emotional perspective?
- Does this person listen more than fix?
- Is their desire rooted in calling rather than rescuing?

Appendix B: Confidentiality and Liability Agreement (Summary)

Purpose: To establish trust, safety, and clarity for all participants.

Mentors agree to:

- Treat all shared information as confidential, except in situations involving safety concerns.
- Respect role boundaries and refrain from giving medical, legal, or counselling advice.
- Use the mentoring relationship solely for phone-based support. - Refer concerns immediately to the Program Leader when safety or boundaries are at risk.

The ministry agrees to:

- Provide oversight, support, and clear escalation pathways
- Maintain secure and appropriate record-keeping practices.

Formation Reminder: Boundaries are not barriers to love; they are expressions of wisdom and care.

Appendix C: Mentor Call Summary Form (Guided Reflection)

Purpose: To support accountability and mentor notes without intruding on confidentiality.

After each call, mentors briefly note:

- Date of call - General themes discussed (no identifying details)
- Emotional tone of the conversation
- Any follow-up needed - Personal reflection: How am I feeling after this call?

Leader Use: These summaries help leaders notice patterns of fatigue, concern, or growth and respond with timely support.

Appendix D: Match Feedback Survey

Purpose: To discern whether the ministry's core outcome—love—is being experienced.

Sample Questions for Caregivers:

- I feel like I listened to and understood.
- I feel less alone in my caregiving journey.
- My mentor respects my pace and boundaries.
- This relationship reflects care and compassion.

Open Reflection: “What has been most helpful about this mentoring relationship?”

Using This Guide: A Note for Churches and Ministries

This Program Leader's Guide is designed to be adaptable across denominational, cultural, and organizational contexts while remaining rooted in biblical shepherding.

How to Use This Guide: - Read prayerfully before implementing structures. Adapt administrative details to local policies while preserving relational intent. Train leaders in posture and presence, not only procedure. Revisit this guide regularly as a formation tool, not a one-time manual.

What This Guide Is—and Is Not: - It *is* a framework for spiritually grounded leadership. - It *is not* a replacement for professional counselling or crisis services.

Ministries are encouraged to integrate this ministry alongside pastoral care, prayer teams, and community support.

Leader Formation Covenant

This covenant reflects the heart posture and spiritual commitments expected of those entrusted with leadership in the Christian Care Mentoring Program.

As a Program Leader, I commit to:

- Serve mentors with humility, availability, and prayer.
- Shepherd people before managing processes.
- Honour confidentiality and safeguard trust.
- Assign roles based on God-given strengths and limits.
- Maintain healthy boundaries for myself and others.
- Seek wisdom, accountability, and rest.
- Measure success by love rather than outcomes alone.

I acknowledge: - This ministry belongs to God. - I am not the Saviour; Jesus is. - Faithfulness matters more than visibility or growth.

Prayer of Commitment:

“Lord Jesus, Chief Shepherd, I receive this calling with humility. Grant me wisdom to lead, compassion to serve, courage to guard boundaries, and grace to trust You with the outcomes. Amen.”