

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE VLE: FOUNDATIONS I



Vineyard Church,

I am thrilled that you are one of so many Vineyard Churches across the US committed to fostering a culture of leadership development in your church. This work will have an immense impact, both in the life and health of your church and in the work of God's Kingdom. God is going to do big things within your church through this initiative!

The aim of **Vineyard Leadership Essentials (VLE)** is to equip and empower your church to embrace a paradigm of multiplication at every level, and to raise up the next generation of Vineyard leaders, church planters, and pastoral successors.

I hope you will take full use of our digital resources and accompanying guides that can stand alone as a comprehensive Vineyard leadership development program or can be used in combination with your existing leadership development work.

Above all, we desire to equip and empower you as you raise up the next generation of leaders for your church, for the Vineyard, and beyond.

I am grateful to be investing in this with you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christia Lowrey".

Associate National Director of Church Health and Development

VLE: Foundations I Facilitator,

I am thrilled that you are one of so many Vineyard Churches across the US committed to fostering a culture of leadership development in your church. As a Facilitator for VLE: Foundations I, you hold the vital role of bringing structure, vision, and momentum to this transformational discipleship process. More than just managing logistics, you are creating an environment where emerging leaders can thrive, mentors can invest deeply, and the Kingdom of God can be advanced through intentional leadership development.

Throughout history, God has raised up leaders through the guidance of people like you, who set the stage, clear the path, and provide the framework for growth. Your role is to ensure that this process is both impactful and sustainable, equipping your church to develop leaders who embody Vineyard values, Kingdom theology, and a heart for discipleship.

By organizing schedules, supporting mentors, and fostering community, you turn vision into reality. Your leadership will shape not just the participants in this program but the future of your church's leadership pipeline. You are laying the foundation for generations of Kingdom-minded leaders who will go on to disciple others, planting seeds of transformation that will bear fruit for years to come.

Thank you for stepping into this role with faithfulness and passion! Your work behind the scenes is the framework that makes discipleship possible, and your investment will have an eternal impact.

I am grateful to be investing in this with you.



Associate National Director of Church Health and Development



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	5
1.1 VINEYARD LEADERSHIP PATHWAY OVERVIEW	
1.2 VINEYARD LEADERSHIP ESSENTIALS OVERVIEW	
2. VLE: FOUNDATIONS I	7
2.1 OVERVIEW	
2.2 TARGET PARTICIPANTS	
2.3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	
2.4 SCHEDULE AND CONTENT	
2.5 RECRUITING MENTORS AND PARTICIPANTS	
2.6 LAUNCH RETREAT	
2.7 MENTOR MEETING COMPONENTS	
2.8 CLOSING CELEBRATION	
2.9 FACILITATOR TOOLS	
3. NEXT STEPS	19
3.1 VLE: FOUNDATIONS II	
3.2 SUPPORT TEAM	
4. VLE: FOUNDATIONS I TIMELINE AND CHECKLIST	20
4.1 APPLICATION	
4.2 MENTOR AND PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT	
4.3 LAUNCH RETREAT	
4.4 MENTOR MEETINGS	
4.5 VLE: FOUNDATIONS II APPLICATION	
4.6 CLOSING CELEBRATION	

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 VINEYARD LEADERSHIP PATHWAY OVERVIEW

We believe that churches flourish when leadership is shared among the congregation rather than placed on the shoulders of one or a few vocational leaders. This leadership distribution not only leads to healthier leaders but also a flourishing church community in which each person has the opportunity to recognize and utilize their specific gifts. Fostering this church environment requires supporting individuals at every stage of their leadership journey.

As leaders develop within your church, they progress along what we are calling the Vineyard Leadership Pathway. Individuals are gifted by God to lead in a variety of leadership roles - there is no hierarchy or levels of distinguished achievement in faithful ministry. While not all leaders will, or should, reach the final stages of the Leadership Pathway, the further along the Pathway a leader progresses, the more specific and specialized the training and support they will need.

VINEYARD LEADERSHIP PATHWAY

Leading Self: Emerging leaders (and established ones) grow in an understanding of how their individual wiring and gifting, as well as their own spiritual and emotional health, are integral to their leadership of others.

Leading Others: Through ongoing spiritual and emotional growth, leaders develop the skills to lead others in their ministry contexts.

Leading Leaders: As leaders progress in the Vineyard Leadership Pathway, they shift from leading others to facilitating and fostering the leadership of other leaders, who in turn support a new generation of emerging leaders.

Leading Ministry: From a solid foundation of leadership skills, leaders are equipped to step into ministry-specific leadership roles in the church and beyond. Leaders learn to integrate leadership essentials with the specific competencies required to lead in their ministry contexts.

Leading Churches: Some leaders will be called to step into church leadership as church planters, lead pastors, or second-chair pastors. New church leaders need mentors' support to develop strategic plans and healthy rhythms that allow the church and the leader to thrive for years to come.

1.2 VINEYARD LEADERSHIP ESSENTIALS OVERVIEW

Vineyard Leadership Essentials (VLE) is a leadership development initiative designed to support local churches in developing leaders from within and facilitating progress along the Vineyard Leadership Pathway. We aim to equip and empower your church to embrace a paradigm of multiplication at every level and to raise the next generation of Vineyard leaders, church planters, and pastoral successors. We believe that a shift from fishing to farming will promote health in our movement and for generations to come!

VLE: Foundations was created collaboratively by Vineyard USA's National Leadership Team, led by Associate National Director Christina Lowery, to guide participants through the key tenets of leadership in the context of a Vineyard church.

Foundations I is a nine-month program that lays the groundwork of Vineyard DNA and distinctives, Kingdom theology, healthy spirituality, and leadership. Local mentorship and development will focus on leading self and leading others.

Foundations II is a nine-month program that builds on the content of Foundations I and explores leadership development, vision, and discernment in calling. Local mentorship and development will focus on leading leaders and apprenticeship for leading ministry.

2. VLE: FOUNDATIONS I

2.1 OVERVIEW

VLE: Foundations I is the heart of what Vineyard Leaders should be, know, and do. It's built to equip lead pastors and high-level leaders as you mentor potential, emerging, and current leaders in your church, providing a starting point to develop and train participants for advanced leadership opportunities.

2.2 TARGET PARTICIPANTS

VLE: Foundations I is a great starting place for potential, emerging, and current leaders:

- People you see leadership potential in
- People who discern a call to leadership on their life
- Small Group Leaders
- Team Leaders
- Assistant Leaders
- Pastors or Leaders of churches joining the Vineyard

VLE: Foundations I is built to be scalable - you can mentor one participant or build a team of mentors for 100 participants.

2.3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

We have built this program to empower local churches to develop leaders from within and are committed to coming alongside and assisting you in your leadership development efforts. To be successful, it's important to understand the roles and responsibilities in terms of launching VLE in your local church. *Depending on your church size and leadership needs, you may have one leader fill the roles of Pastor, Facilitator, and Mentor, or you may choose to recruit a team of leaders to fill the various roles.*

Vineyard USA provides ongoing support for pastors, facilitators, mentors, and participants throughout the entire VLE process, to include:

- Managing all aspects of the application and registration process for churches and participants
- Managing the online Learning Management System (LMS) with content for participants to complete (consisting of videos, reading assignments, discussion forums, etc.)
- Hosting webinars throughout for all participants nationwide, which will include conversations with some of Vineyard's finest voices and friends of the Vineyard

The **Lead Pastor** provides support to the church facilitator, mentors, and participants, to include:

- Applying through Vineyard USA to launch VLE at your church
- Appointing a church leader to serve as the Facilitator

- Championing VLE from stage, through internal church communication channels and in-person
- Working closely with the Facilitator to recruit and select mentors and participants
- Hosting a Launch Retreat (at the beginning) and Closing Celebration (at the end) for participants in your church
- Following along with the online material your mentors and participants are engaging with
- Participating in periodic Lead Pastor check-ins provided by Vineyard USA and providing feedback

The **VLE: Foundations I Facilitator** provides ongoing communication with Vineyard USA, as well as support to the mentors and participants, to include:

- Serving as the Vineyard USA point person for VLE: Foundations I at your church, as well as the VLE: Foundations I point person for participants at your church
- Determining the VLE: Foundations I start date, Launch Retreat date, and Closing Celebration date
- Working closely with the Lead Pastor to recruit and select mentors and participants and assigning participants to mentors (if applicable)
- Working closely with the mentors to develop a monthly mentoring schedule
- Hosting a Launch Retreat (at the beginning) and Closing Celebration (at the end) for participants in your church
- Following along with the online material that your participants are engaging with
- Checking in with mentors throughout the program and providing them with pertinent information from Vineyard USA
- Participating in periodic Facilitator check-ins provided by Vineyard USA and providing feedback

The **VLE: Foundations I Mentor** supports, encourages, and challenges their participants through:

- Actively participating in the Launch Retreat and Closing Celebration
- Following along with and completing the online material your participants are engaging with
- Familiarizing yourself with recommended resources for additional learning
- Utilizing the VLE: Foundations I Mentor Guides for each module with participants
- Providing mentoring meetings twice a month for assigned participants (can be large group, small group, or one-on-one) utilizing the VLE: Foundations I Mentor Guides for discussion
- Participating in periodic Mentor check-ins provided by Vineyard USA and providing feedback

The **VLE: Foundations I Participant** learns, practices, and grows in their leadership through:

- Attending both the Launch Retreat and Closing Celebration hosted at their local church
- Completing all assignments in a timely manner
- Attending mentoring meetings twice a month with their assigned mentor
- Participating in periodic webinars hosted by Vineyard USA for all participants nationwide, which will include conversations with some of Vineyard's finest voices and friends of the Vineyard

- Remaining faithful, available, and teachable as they engage with the content and their mentor
- Providing feedback to Vineyard USA through self-assessments and stories

2.4 SCHEDULE AND CONTENT

SCHEDULE

VLE: Foundations I is a nine-month program that begins in September and ends in May, with a break in December¹. Each month has a dedicated module, and each module is divided into two sessions. Following completion of the module, participants will meet with their mentors twice a month.

Mentor meetings are an opportunity to discuss the material and its application, connect relationally, and pray together. Additionally, there will be a Launch Retreat at the beginning, periodic webinars hosted by Vineyard USA throughout, and a Closing Celebration at the end.



The Facilitator should work closely with the mentors to schedule a rhythm for mentor meetings prior to the start of VLE: Foundations I. Depending on the size of your group and number of mentors, these meetings can be a combination of large group, small group and one-on-one format. We recommend you schedule at least 90 minutes per mentor meeting. Meetings can be in-person and online, but we do suggest that you have at least one in-person meeting per month. In-person will always be preferred when it comes to mentoring, as we all know, it's a lot easier to lay hands and pray for each other in person! If you meet virtually, we highly encourage meeting via a video-based call.

¹ If your church chooses, you can adapt the VLE: Foundations I start and end to suit your existing leadership development efforts.

CONTENT

40% of VLE: Foundations I will consist of content provided by Vineyard USA (as listed below), but 60% will be the discipling and mentoring that happens between the mentor and the participants once the module is completed.

Module One: Vineyard Distinctives (September)

Sessions One and Two: Eleanor Mumford (Vineyard Global Director) teaches you what it looks like to be a person in the Vineyard family and what makes the Vineyard distinctive.

Module Two: Self-Discovery & Stewardship (October)

Session One: Becca Knudson (Executive Pastor, Mile High Vineyard) teaches you how you can begin (or continue) to discover how God has shaped you (your personality, spiritual gifts, abilities, passions, and experiences) and what that means for you as a leader.

Session Two: Amber George (Executive Pastor, Crossroads Church) teaches you what stewardship means in the Kingdom of God and helps answer the question, “How can I faithfully steward all that God has given me?”

Module Three: Emotional Health (November)

Sessions One and Two: Allison Groenendyk (Co-Lead Pastor, Vineyard Church of Chester Springs and VUSA Coordinator for Emotionally Focused) teaches you how emotional health connects directly to ministry health and provides helpful tips on growing more emotionally healthy in your life and ministry.

Module Four: Spiritual Formation (January)

Sessions One and Two: Danielle Pathak (Associate National Director of Pastoral Health and Formation, Vineyard USA) teaches you why spiritual formation is so important to your life and leadership and how different spiritual practices can help you grow as both a disciple and leader.

Module Five: Kingdom Ministry (February)

Session One: Rich Nathan (Founding Pastor, Columbus Vineyard) teaches you an important Biblical and historical introduction to what Vineyard pastors mean when they talk about Kingdom theology and what that means for you as a leader.

Session Two: Steve Nicholson (Founding Pastor, Evanston Vineyard) teaches you how to listen and respond to the Holy Spirit, particularly in times of ministry.

Module Six: Disciple-Making (March)

Sessions One and Two: Joel Lowery (Co-Lead Pastor, Crossroads Church) and Christina Lowery (Associate National Director of Church Health and Development, Vineyard USA) teach you the discipleship model used by Jesus and walks you through the discipleship pathway.

Module Seven: Developing Leaders (April)

Session One: Geno Olson (Lead Pastor, South Suburban Vineyard Church) teaches you what it looks like to lead like Jesus using Jesus' leadership model and how it will shift your priorities and definition of success.

Session Two: Jay Pathak (National Director, Vineyard USA) teaches you a leadership development process that will help you raise up and release more leaders, including ICNU conversations, apprenticeship, and activation/commissioning.

Module Eight: Growing A Healthy Team (May)

Sessions One and Two: Melanie Forsythe-Lee (Lead Pastor, Life Vineyard Church) teaches you, as a leader, how to intentionally build a healthy, growing team and the necessary components of a healthy team culture.

2.5 RECRUITING MENTORS AND PARTICIPANTS

We recommend you start with recruiting mentors within your church and then begin recruiting participants. By recruiting mentors first, you'll know what your participant capacity is and allow time for your mentors to become familiar with VLE: Foundations I and complete their mentor training.

MENTORS

Each church should identify at least one mentor to facilitate VLE: Foundations I for the participants. Ideally, this is the Lead Pastor or someone with a similar leadership role. The more mentors available to invest in the program, the better (and the more participants you can pour into).

Most mentors can effectively mentor three to five participants. Mentoring more than five participants at one time can potentially dilute the attention and support each participant receives, impacting the overall quality of mentorship.

Because the goal of mentorship is to build deeper relationships through more focused attention on the individual participants and provide personalized feedback and encouragement tailored to the participant's specific needs, we recommend not having more than five participants per mentor.

We'll provide suggestions throughout this guide on scaling for groups of five or fewer participants and groups larger than five participants.

Mentors commit to:

- Actively participating in the Launch Retreat and Closing Celebration
- Following along with and completing the online material your participants are engaging with
- Familiarizing yourself with recommended resources for additional learning
- Utilizing the Mentor Guides for each module with participants

- Providing mentoring meetings twice a month for assigned participants (can be large group, small group or one-on-one) utilizing the Mentor Guides for discussion
- Participating in periodic mentor check-ins provided by Vineyard USA and providing feedback

Prior to the start of VLE: Foundations I, the Facilitator should work closely with the mentors to schedule a rhythm for mentor meetings for the next nine months (to include schedule, location, and duration). We recommend you schedule at least 90 minutes per mentor meeting.

- *For groups of five participants or less:* Consider having one small group meeting with all participants using the suggested agenda (2.7 *Mentor Meeting Components*) and then one-on-one meetings with the participants for more personalized connection, celebration, and challenge.
- *For groups of more than five participants:* Consider having one large group meeting with all mentors and participants using the suggested agenda (2.7 *Mentor Meeting Components*) and then one small group or one-on-one meeting with the mentor and assigned participants for more personalized connection, celebration, and challenge.

All mentors must complete the [VLE: Foundations I Application](#) to be enrolled in the program. Once you've identified your mentors, established your mentor meeting schedule, and submitted the VLE: Foundations I Program Information Form to Vineyard USA, you are ready to recruit participants!

PARTICIPANTS

VLE: Foundations I is a great starting place for potential, emerging, and current leaders. No previous leadership experience is required for individuals to participate; instead, churches should recruit participants who show a desire and aptitude for further leadership in the church, at whatever level that might entail - from potential Small Group Leader to Associate Pastor.

While current leaders are a great choice and an easy place to start inviting, we encourage the Lead Pastor, Facilitator, and mentors to work together to pray about who God is looking to grow in this season and then personally invite those people to join. This includes people you see leadership potential in (even if they're not serving in a leadership role right now) and people who personally discern a call to leadership in their life and are looking for the next step.

Participants commit to:

- Attending both the Launch Retreat and Closing Celebration hosted at their local church
- Completing all assignments in a timely manner
- Attending mentoring meetings twice a month with their assigned mentor
- Participating in periodic webinars hosted by Vineyard USA for all participants nationwide, which will include conversations with some of Vineyard's finest voices and friends of the Vineyard

- Remaining faithful, available, and teachable as they engage with the content and their mentor
- Providing feedback to Vineyard USA through self-assessments and stories

The expected time commitment for participants is 5-6 hours per month, with the majority of that time being dedicated to mentor meetings.

- **Launch Retreat** (typically Friday evening and Saturday morning through afternoon)
- **Monthly Content and Meetings**
 - 2 video sessions within the Module (approximately 40-50 minutes total)
 - 4-5 Personal Reflection Questions per video session within the Module (approximately 45 minutes total)
 - 1 Activation Assignment within the Module (approximately 45 minutes total)
 - 2 Mentor Meetings (approximately 1.5 hours each)
- **Closing Celebration**

Because the most important characteristics of a disciple are faithfulness, availability, and teachability, we do not recommend this program for participants who are unable or unwilling to commit fully. While someone may be interested in leadership development, their current circumstances or stage of life may not allow them to commit at this time fully, and that's OK! We hope that this iteration of VLE: Foundations I is the first of many at your church!

RECRUITING TOOLS

- [VLE: Foundations I Promo Video](#) is a great one-minute introduction for churches
- [Invitational and informational email templates](#) can be used and edited for church communications
- **Offer an informational Zoom call or meeting** for those who are interested in VLE: Foundations I to share your vision for leadership development, present a general overview of the program, and provide space for questions
- Churches may choose to **develop an internal interview/application process** before enrollment with Vineyard USA to help identify potential participants

All interested participants must complete the [*VLE: Foundations I Application*](#) to be enrolled in the program. We recommend you set a deadline for applications to help participants enroll on time and ensure they don't miss out!

Once participants have been enrolled, they will be assigned a mentor, complete a Self-Assessment, and be granted access to the Learning Management System (LMS).

2.6 LAUNCH RETREAT

Your Launch Retreat is where the fun begins! This is the first time you will gather to cast a vision, lay the groundwork, and build a foundation for the next nine months together. We encourage you to schedule your Launch Retreat to begin before jumping into the VLE: Foundations I content, but you have flexibility as to when works best for you and your church!

KEY ELEMENTS

Because VLE: Foundations I is designed to be centered within your local church, the Launch Retreat will be as well. We provide two suggested agendas below (a two-day and a one-day), but you may tweak and amend the schedule. We encourage you to make it your own; however, there are a few key elements that we ask you keep in your schedule, as they are foundational to VLE: Foundations I:

Worship and Ministry Time: Please make this a priority and plan accordingly. Vineyard leaders are “people of His Presence,” and the Launch Retreat will be an incredible opportunity for potential and emerging leaders to experience that in a real and powerful way. We *expect* them to encounter and engage with the Holy Spirit throughout the retreat – and you, the leader, should work towards creating an environment for them to do so.

Session One and Three Video Messages: Participants will hear from Jay Pathak (National Director, Vineyard USA) and Christina Lowery (Associate National Director of Church Health and Development, Vineyard USA). In Session One, Jay discusses calling and how we can discern God’s call for our lives. In Session Three, Christina and Jay discuss the importance of our individual stories and how God wants to grab hold of us in a way that will shape or transform our stories.

Mentoring Sessions: Two mentoring sessions occur after the video messages in Sessions Two and Three. The quality time you spend with participants is where transformation and growth happen. We will provide a Mentoring Guide for both Sessions with discussion questions, but feel free to tweak it to meet the needs of your unique participants.

FUN: Last but not least, look for ways to make this retreat enjoyable for participants! Be playful, and let there be laughter! We want participants to learn and grow, but we also want them to build relationships and have a blast with one another!

SUGGESTED TWO-DAY AGENDA

FRIDAY	
6:00 PM - 6:30 PM	REGISTRATION AND RECEPTION <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Doors Open

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name Tags • Snacks / refreshments and mingling
6:30 PM - 9:30 PM	SESSION ONE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6:30 PM - Welcome • 6:33 PM - Ice Breaker / Team Building Activity • 7:00 PM - Worship • 7:30 PM - Intro and Vision from Lead Pastor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The WHY and WHAT of the Launch Retreat • 7:40 PM - VIDEO: Intro to VLE: Foundations I • 7:50 PM - Group Discussion with Mentors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What do you hope to get out of VLE: Foundations I? • 8:10 PM - VIDEO: How to Discern God's Will for Your Life • 9:00 PM - Ministry Time • 9:30 PM - Dismiss

SATURDAY	
8:30 AM - 9:00 AM	COFFEE AND REFRESHMENTS
9:00 AM - 11:30 AM	SESSION TWO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:00 AM - Welcome • 9:03 AM - Group Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was your big takeaway from last night's session? What did the Holy Spirit speak, impart, or challenge you with? • 9:20 AM - Lectio Divina • 9:40 AM - Worship • 10:10 AM - Pray for Each Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups of 2-3 • 10:30 AM - Break • 10:45 AM - Mentoring Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Session One Discussion Questions from Mentoring Guide • 11:30 AM - Dismiss for Lunch
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM	LUNCH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On your own, provided, or as a group - up to you!
1:00 PM - 3:30 PM	SESSION THREE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:00 PM - Worship • 1:20 PM - VIDEO: The Power of a Story

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2:20 PM - Mentoring Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Session Three Discussion Questions from Mentoring Guide • 3:00 PM - Final Blessing and Prayer • 3:30 PM - Close and Dismiss
--	---

SUGGESTED ONE-DAY AGENDA

**Omits Session Two*

SATURDAY	
8:30 AM - 9:00 AM	REGISTRATION AND RECEPTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doors Open • Name Tags • Coffee/refreshments and mingling
9:00 AM - 11:30 AM	SESSION ONE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:00 AM - Welcome • 9:05 AM - Worship • 9:30 AM - Intro and Vision from Lead Pastor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The WHY and WHAT of the Launch Retreat • 9:40 AM - Intro to VLE: Foundations I • 9:50 AM - Group Discussion with Mentors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you hope to get out of VLE: Foundations I? • 10:10 AM - VIDEO: How to Discern God's Will for Your Life • 11:00 AM - Ministry Time • 11:30 AM - Dismiss for Lunch
11:30 PM - 1:00 PM	LUNCH AND MENTORING SESSION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Session One Discussion Questions from Mentoring Guide
1:00 PM - 3:30 PM	SESSION THREE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:00 PM - Worship • 1:20 PM - VIDEO: The Power of a Story • 2:20 PM - Mentoring Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Session Three Discussion Questions from Mentoring Guide • 3:00 PM - Final Blessing and Prayer • 3:30 PM - Close and Dismiss

2.7 MENTOR MEETING COMPONENTS

Participants will meet with their mentors twice a month. The way mentor meetings look may fluctuate depending on your group size and if you're meeting in a large group, small group, or one-on-one format; however, we have a suggested 90-minute agenda you can use below to ensure mentor meetings are balanced and healthy.

- *For groups of five participants or less:* Consider having one small group meeting with all participants using the suggested agenda below and then one-on-one meetings with the participants for more personalized connection, celebration, and challenge.
- *For groups of more than five participants:* Consider having one large group meeting with all mentors and participants using the suggested agenda below and then one small group or one-on-one meeting with the mentor and assigned participants for more personalized connection, celebration, and challenge.

Connection Time (10 minutes): The relationships formed among participants and mentors is central to the process, not secondary. Avoid rushing into content at the start of the meeting; instead, this is an opportunity for you to encourage and connect people from different ministry areas, neighborhoods, stages of life, etc.

Celebration Time (10 minutes): Ask your participants what they have seen God do in their lives or ministry in the past two weeks that they'd like to share. This is an opportunity for you, the mentor, to affirm and reinforce the growth happening in your participants.

Processing Time (35 minutes): Walk through key reflection questions and the activation assignment from the module. Rather than go question by question, we encourage you to use this time to focus on application of the content and ask the participants:

- What did you learn about leadership or discover about yourself from this module?
- What does that mean for your own life and work or your leadership of others?
- What would you like to do differently based on your new understanding of yourself or of leadership?

Ministry Time (30 minutes): This is arguably the most important part of your meetings. In ministry time, we provide space for the work of the Holy Spirit among us.

What's Next? (5 minutes): This is an opportunity to highlight important events (like upcoming VUSA webinars), introduce the next module topic, and remind participants when your next meeting is scheduled.

2.8 CLOSING CELEBRATION

Congratulations! You, your mentors, and your participants have made it to the end of VLE: Foundations I, and now it's time to celebrate! Churches should take this opportunity to celebrate this

achievement, acknowledge the growth in your participants, and highlight any leadership advancement your participants have experienced while in VLE: Foundations I.

The number one rule of a celebration is to HAVE FUN! Make sure you plan some fun elements for your celebration - bring in cupcakes, come up with fun superlatives for each participant, cater or go out to dinner - the possibilities are endless!

Certificates of completion will be provided to the Facilitator before your Closing Celebration and can be used in the Closing Celebration.

2.9 FACILITATOR TOOLS

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (LMS)

Vineyard USA has created a web-based LMS to deliver, manage, and track the VLE: Foundations I content. All video-based modules, Reflection Questions, and Activation Assignments will occur and be documented in the LMS. Facilitators, mentors, and participants will be granted access to the LMS by Vineyard USA.

DASHBOARD

Within the LMS, facilitators and mentors will use the Dashboard to track the progress of their participants through the eight modules. Facilitators and mentors are encouraged to check the Dashboard monthly as a discipleship tool to encourage and challenge participants to stay on schedule and not miss assignments.

VINEYARD USA WEBINARS

Vineyard USA will provide periodic Facilitator and Mentor check-ins to encourage, update, and answer questions. We encourage you to prioritize attending these, both for the information and the community!

3. NEXT STEPS

3.1 VLE: FOUNDATIONS II

Launching in September 2025, VLE: Foundations II is a nine-month program that builds on the content of VLE: Foundations I and explores leadership development, vision, and discernment in calling. Local mentorship and development will focus on leading leaders and apprenticeship for leading ministry.

Toward the end of VLE: Foundations I, the Lead Pastor and Facilitator will receive an invitation to register their church for VLE: Foundations II. If continuing with VLE: Foundations II, mentors should begin discussing next steps with their assigned participants and whether they want to continue in the process.

3.2 SUPPORT TEAM

We, the Vineyard Leadership Pathway Team, are here to support you as you launch and run VLE: Foundations I in your church. Should questions or technical issues arise, please reach out to:

Amy Carnall, Vineyard Leadership Pathway Coordinator

amy.carnall@vineyard.usa

Jessica Fox, Vineyard Leadership Essentials Support Coordinator

jessica.fox@vineyard.usa

4. VLE: FOUNDATIONS I TIMELINE AND CHECKLIST

4.1 APPLICATION

- ☐ Lead Pastor expresses interest in VLE to Vineyard USA
- ☐ Lead Pastor appoints a Facilitator
- ☐ Lead Pastor completes and submits *Pastor Application* to Vineyard USA
- ☐ Vineyard USA creates church-specific cohort in LMS
- ☐ Vineyard USA provides facilitator *Facilitator Guide*, Dashboard and LMS access via email

4.2 MENTOR AND PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT

- ☐ Facilitator works closely with Lead Pastor to recruit mentors (must have a minimum of one, recommend one mentor for every three to five participants)
- ☐ Mentors complete *VLE: Foundations 1 Application*
- ☐ Facilitator works closely with mentors to develop a rhythm for mentor meetings twice a month for the next nine months, to include schedule, location, and duration (see meeting options according to group size in *2.7 Mentor Meeting Components*)
- ☐ Facilitator determines date and format for Launch Retreat and date for Closing Celebration
- ☐ Facilitator submits *VLE: Foundations I Information Form* to Vineyard USA
- ☐ Facilitator works closely with Lead Pastor and mentors to identify how they will communicate VLE launch within the church and what internal processes they want to implement for participants
- ☐ Facilitator, Lead Pastor, and mentors identify potential, emerging, and current leaders to personally invite
- ☐ Participants and mentors complete *VLE: Foundations I Application*
- ☐ Vineyard USA adds participants and mentors to the church-specific cohort in LMS
- ☐ Facilitator and Lead Pastor assign participants to mentors (if more than one mentor)
- ☐ Participants complete initial Self-Assessment and identify mentor
- ☐ Vineyard USA provides participants and mentors LMS access via email

4.3 LAUNCH RETREAT

- ☐ Facilitator communicates Launch Retreat date, nine-month mentor meeting schedule, and Closing Celebration date to all participants and mentors
- ☐ Facilitator works with mentors to plan and prepare for Launch Retreat using suggested agendas
- ☐ Facilitator communicates Launch Retreat reminder and logistics to all participants and mentors
- ☐ Launch Retreat occurs

4.4 MENTOR MEETINGS

- ☐ Facilitator works with mentors to plan and prepare for mentor meetings using provided mentor meeting components (2.7 *Mentor Meeting Components*) and Mentor Guides per module
- ☐ Mentors communicate meeting reminders and logistics to assigned participants prior to each meeting
- ☐ Facilitator and mentor review participant progress in Dashboard prior to each meeting
- ☐ Mentor meetings occur twice per month (see meeting options according to group size in 2.7 *Mentor Meeting Components*)
- ☐ Participants complete mid-point Self-Assessment upon completion of Module Three Activation Assignment

4.5 VLE: FOUNDATIONS II APPLICATION

- ☐ Vineyard USA communicates with Facilitator and Lead Pastor in Month Seven regarding Closing Celebration and link to register for VLE: Foundations II
- ☐ If continuing to VLE: Foundations II, Facilitator completes VLE: Foundations II Information Form
- ☐ If continuing to VLE: Foundations II, mentors identify which participants want to/are recommended to move to VLE: Foundations II
- ☐ If continuing to VLE: Foundations II, Facilitator and Lead Pastor communicate with Vineyard USA which participants are moving on to VLE: Foundations II
- ☐ Vineyard USA creates church-specific VLE: Foundations II cohort in LMS and adds participants

4.6 CLOSING CELEBRATION

- ☐ Participants complete final Self-Assessment upon completion of Module Eight Activation Assignment
- ☐ Facilitator works with Lead Pastor and mentors to plan and prepare for Closing Celebration
- ☐ Vineyard USA provides Facilitator certificates for participants
- ☐ Facilitator communicates Closing Celebration reminder and logistics to all participants and mentors
- ☐ Closing Celebration occurs
- ☐ If continuing to VLE: Foundations II, Facilitator provides advancing participants with next steps