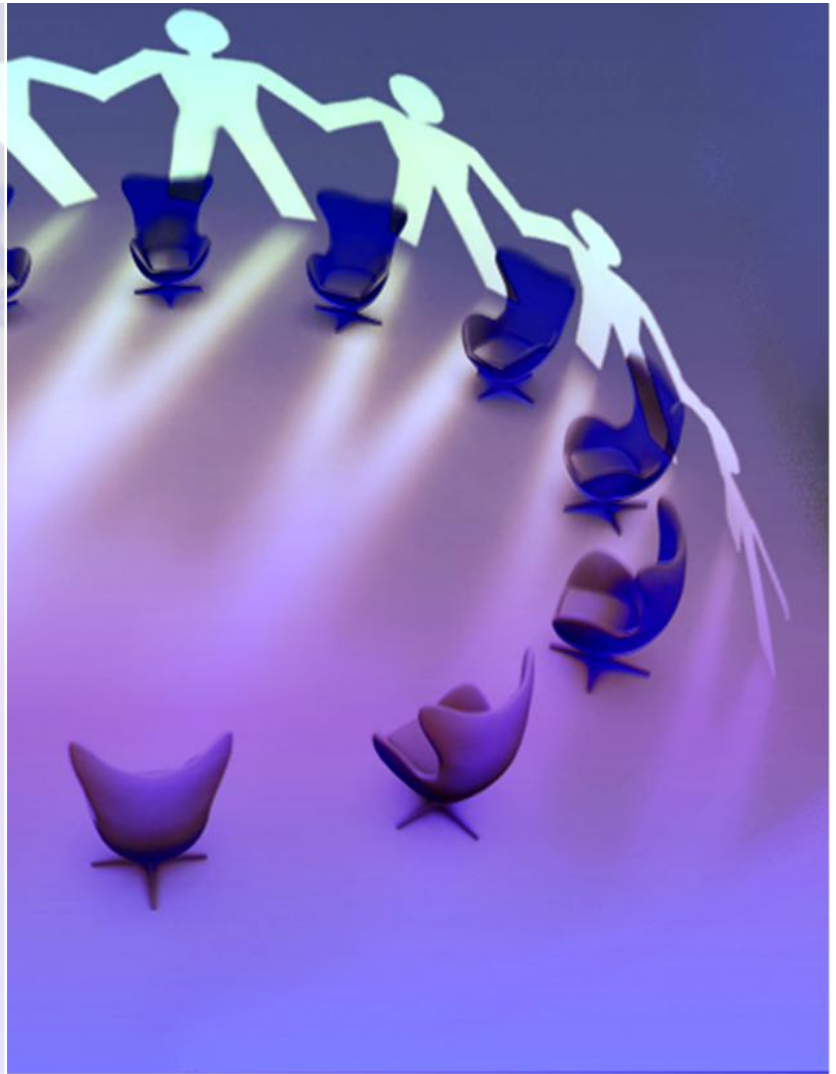


Small Group Informational Meeting

Marion Aldersgate, Marion, IL 62959

2009



Welcome to the *Small Group Leadership Informational Meeting*. If you have already chosen to be a part of our upcoming Small Group Ministry this fall – welcome aboard. If you are still in the discernment process we hope you will find the answers you’re looking for and the encouragement you need to answer God’s call.

So, sit back, relax, enjoy the refreshments and the fellowship; ask questions, pay attention, and engage the process.

Marion Aldersgate UMC
www.marionaldersgate.org
www.Godiscloser.org

We’re glad you’re here!

Overview

- Groups Meet For 6 Sessions
- Members Serve Together For 1-2 Hour Ministry Service Project
- We Gather For Worship Sunday Night, November 15th

FAQ

- I'm Not Sure I Can Be A Leader
- When Do We Start?
- How Many Weeks Do We Meet?
- Where Do We Meet?
- Is Childcare Provided?
- Is There A Maximum/Minimum Number of participants?
- What Do I Need To Provide?
- Is There A Charge For The Material?
- What If Someone Can't/Doesn't Pay?
- Do We Have To Do A Servant Ministry Project?
- Where Can We Do Our Servant Ministry Project?
- What Administrative Duties Do I Have?
- How Do I Prepare For A Session?
- What Does A "Normal" Session Look Like?

Resources

- For FAQs about small groups, leadership insights and great on-line training videos to help you lead a small group go to <http://www.smallgroupexchange.com>
- Our own website: <http://www.Godiscloser.org>

I'm Not Sure I Can Be A Leader...

➤ Online Videos #1, Alan Danielson

Alan Danielson

Confidence in leadership is a challenge for most people.

I'm actually comforted when I hear something like that. Join the club.

Think about the people Jesus asked to be a part of his small group. He asked fishermen and IRS agents and just average people and in many cases below average people.

When Do We Start?

- September 20 – October 4 is the “Get Connected” opportunity to sign up for groups.
- October 4-10 is the week we launch our small groups.

How Many Weeks Do We Meet?

- 6 – 8 weeks, depending on the options you select.
- Official group sessions run for 6 weeks.
- You may choose to add an additional group period in order to do your servant ministry project.
- We will meet together on Sunday night November, 15th for communion, testimonies and a celebration of our small group experiences.

When Do We Meet?

- It is totally up to you. We are hoping to have at least one group on almost every day of the week in order to give people the maximum opportunity to find a day and time that meets their schedule.
- However, we are suggesting that most groups not meet on Sunday morning to keep away from competition with ongoing Sunday school classes. We also suggest not putting too many groups on Wednesday night as we hope adults will be involved in the Wednesday Gospel

September 2009						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9 Wed. Meals Start	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Aldersgate Revival						
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Connection-Small Group Signup						
27	28	29	30			
Connection-Small Group Signup						

October 2009						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
Connection-Small Group Signup						
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Small Group Kickoff-Groups Meet						
11 Small groups	12 Small groups	13 Small groups	14 Small groups	15 Small groups	16 Small groups	17 Small groups
18 Small groups	19 Small groups	20 Small groups	21 Small groups	22 Small groups	23 Small groups	24 Small groups
25 Small groups	26 Small groups	27 Small groups	28 Small groups	29 Small groups	30 Small groups	31 Small groups

November 2009						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Small groups	2 Small groups	3 Small groups	4 Small groups	5 Small groups	6 Small groups	7 Small groups
8 Small groups	9 Small groups	10 Small groups	11 Small groups	12 Small groups	13 Small groups	14 Small groups
15 Small Group Celebration	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Hour and/or serving with the youth and children; although, this may work for groups with children, (see below “Is childcare provide?”)

Where Do We Meet?

- There are a variety of options available.
- We prefer groups meet in the home, but there will be limited opportunity to meet at the church, especially for those who may have handicap accessibility issues.
- You may meet in your home every week or the home of someone else willing to host.
 - we suggest one location rather than moving around, as it makes it easier to remember where your group is meeting this week.
 - if your home is unavailable and you don’t know who to ask, let us know and we’ll work with you to find an alternate location.

Is Childcare Provided?

- If your group meets on a Wednesday night there will be built in childcare at the church, (see above concerns, “When do we meet?”)
- We are looking into offering one other evening when childcare will be offered at the church; Sunday night may be an option.
- If you choose a night/day when childcare is not provided at the church, it is up to your group to decide how to handle this. As long as you respect our Child Protection Guidelines:
 - you may ask someone to watch the children at your location
 - you may ask someone to watch the children at a separate location
 - you may ask another group to trade off the responsibility

Is There A Maximum/Minimum Number of Participants?

- The maximum number of your group is first determined by the size of the home you are using.
 - We highly recommend shooting for the maximum number you believe your home can handle, because by week 4 you will most likely have lost a few people.
 - So, if your home can accommodate 15 – shoot for 15; if it’s 20 shoot for 20; if it’s 10 shoot for 10, etc. However. . .
- The maximum number of any group is limited to 20 people – beyond this the group dynamics are no longer a small group.
- The minimum number in any group is limited to 8 – any smaller than this and the group dynamics begin to fall apart.
 - Here’s why – there are at least four kinds of roles people play in every – every – group. The roles are: crisis producer, the constant talker, the silent type and the good contributor. It becomes harder to manage the crisis producer, talker, and silent type the smaller the

group. For example: in a group of 12 – 1 is the crisis producer, 1 is the constant talker, 1 the silent type and 9 are good contributors. In a group of 6 – 1 is the crisis producer, 1 is the constant talker, 1 the silent type, and only 3 are good contributors.

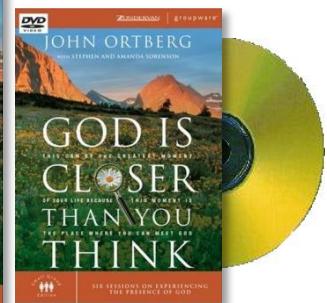
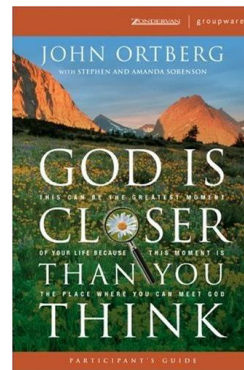
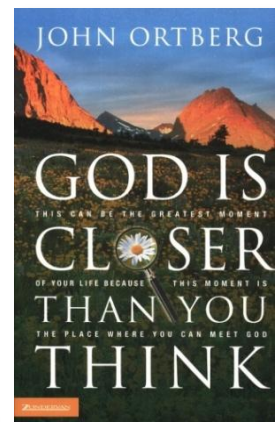
- Note: these roles may change from week to week depending on what is happening in the life of the group members. One week someone may be way too chatty, and the next far too silent. Having enough members to have good group contributors will help support those who are struggling in the moment.

What Do I Need To Provide?

- A warm and friendly welcome – really.
- A location - preferably in a home.
- A TV and DVD player, if you do not have one ask us and we'll see about loaning one to you.
- Refreshments – at least for the first night, afterwards you may select others from the group to provide refreshments.
- A willingness to let God use you to facilitate making disciples.

Is There A Charge For The Material?

- Yes and no
- For participants, yes there is a charge.
 - Book, “God Is Closer Than You Think” (optional but recommended) \$12
 - “Participant’s Book” (required) \$10
- For you, a leader, there is no charge for the material. You (per household) will receive:
 - 1 copy of the Book, “God Is Closer Than You Think”
 - 1 copy of the “Participant’s Guide”
 - 1 copy of the DVD which includes the “Leader’s Guide”



What If Someone Can't/Doesn't Pay?

- See supplemental guide, “How To Hold Children, Spouses or Pets for Ransom.”
- Seriously, we aren’t worried if a few people are unable to pay. Simply be gracious and offer a complimentary copy of the material.

Do We Have To Do A Servant Ministry Project?

- Yes, stop whining.
- It is important that we develop well rounded disciples who -
 - learn about the Christian faith, and
 - put their faith into practice.

Where Can We Do Our Servant Ministry Project?

- We will be providing a list of places to give you a few ideas,
- However - you may choose to serve in the church, in the community, in the county, in the state, in the country, or overseas. Actually, anywhere that your group determines would be a good place to find Jesus and join him in the work he is doing.

What Administrative Duties Do I Have?

- Get everyone's phone, address and e-mail address.
- Take attendance weekly.
- Distribute material, collect payment, forward to the office.
- If not already done, select a co-leader to help with housekeeping and willing to fill-in when you may be unavailable for a session.
- Determine who – if not you – will provide refreshments.
- Determine how to handle childcare if needed.
- Help your group to select a Servant Ministry Project and follow up, or assign a group member to follow up, to work out the details and logistics.
- Call/e-mail group members with reminders about chapters to cover, refreshments, prayer concerns, and other housekeeping issues. (this may be delegated to a co-leader or group-secretary as needed.)
- Keep church leadership/staff informed of group, individual or personal needs.

Jenny Boyett

This isn't about leading it is about what God will do through you in facilitation.

You don't have to know all the answers.

Being a good leader is also about being a good student.

We would absolutely not want someone who is a teacher to be leading the group. (*One who knows it all*)

➤ Online Videos #2, Jenny Boyett

How Do I Prepare For A Session?

- Make a few calls/e-mails:
 - to whoever is in charge of refreshments as a reminder
 - to your co-leader to ask if they are prepared and if there is anything they want to talk about from the material
 - to your group and remind them of the time, location, chapters covered and any other housekeeping items they need to be working on. You may wish to include a gentle reminder about homework.
- Familiarize yourself with the Leader’s Guide and with DVD operation.
- Read the chapter(s) in the book, *God Is Closer Than You Think*. The *Leader’s Guide* will tell you what chapter(s) are covered each week on the DVD.
- Preview the DVD lesson. (a good question to ask yourself/others is, “What caught my attention?”)
- Choose the appropriate questions in the *Participant’s Guide*.
 - there are more questions than you will have time to cover
 - choose the ones that are best suited for your group and/or the ones you believe will generate the most productive discussion
 - it is **not** important that you cover all the material – this is about group building, spiritual formation, discipleship training, and practicing the faith together (to name a few important small group goals) – and far less about achieving 100% completion of all the material.
- Decide on an icebreaker to get things going.
 - we have a list of over 100 questions to ask; from, “What color is your toothbrush?” to “If you overheard God talking about you with God’s angels what would you hear?”
 - there are other options that you may be aware of, feel free to use whatever is appropriate to loosen the group and begin to get them comfortable with one another
 - avoid things that require a “huge” risk, cause stress due to personal disclosure, embarrassment, or things that are just plain goofy. Remember, we want people feeling comfortable enough to begin to trust one another.

What Does A “Normal” Session Look Like?

- Beforehand setup:
 - pray for your group and yourself
 - set out the refreshments
 - cue the DVD to the right lesson
 - anything else you need to do before people arrive.

- Welcome the guests.
- Gather the group around the TV.
- Use of an icebreaker is optional.
- Watch the DVD.
- Turn to the corresponding page in the Participant’s Guidebook.
- Ask the “right” questions.
- Help move the conversation along.
- Watch the closing segment of the DVD.
- Ask if anyone has anything they would like to add.
- Ask for prayer concerns - close in prayer.
- Take care of any closing “house” business –i.e who is up for snacks next week, collect \$, etc.

➤ Online video #3, Dr. Will Miller

➤ DVD: “Leaders Watch This First”

Dr. Will Miller

People are often times *unnecessarily*
timid about what they can do to
lead a small group.

First, the *materials* we have will guide you through the process.

Second the *leader* is not really the person who *directs* what is going on.

The first burden is to *convince* people to get *started*.

You are asking people to take *risks*.

Guess what becoming a Christian is taking a *risk*.

Meetings:

Sunday, July 19th is a Make-up Informational Meeting

Sunday August 16 and/or 23

Training and a “Run-through” of the First Session