



San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church

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Characteristics of Small Groups

at San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church

SMALL GROUPS

foster spiritual growth and commitment,
bringing together persons
who want to become faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

These include faith development groups,

activity focused groups.
and groups focused in service to others.



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Connecting with others through dynamic small groups is intended to move us, of the San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church, forward in our vision to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ. Our goal is to enhance small group ministry in ways that enable deeper spiritual growth and commitment.

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Background:

Several years ago, SRVUMC adopted the ChristCare Small Group Program. Over the years, members of our congregation received extensive training as ChristCare leaders and faithfully served as leaders. The foundation of ChristCare is based on the four components of community building, worship, Bible study, and service. Groups meet on a regular basis, forming a covenant with one another and observing confidentiality to offer a safe environment for sharing.

Later in the process of defining small groups, activity and mission/service groups that were not initially part of ChristCare were included in the small group ministry. The leaders of these groups were invited to participate in leadership training by the the Small Group Advisory Board.



The Administration of Faith Development Groups

A Small Group Advisory Board supports the current faith development groups by providing publicity, ongoing education, and resources for the leaders. All faith development groups are encouraged to incorporate the four components, which originated with the ChristCare program. At regular leadership meetings, current successes and challenges are shared and discussed so that leaders may learn from and support one another. Program evaluation is also a part of the leadership discussions. Leaders of activity and mission/service groups are welcome to attend regular leadership meetings.

Small Group Leader Training

The Small Group Advisory Board is responsible for assuring that leaders are appropriately trained. At a minimum, each leader of a faith development group will receive orientation training to acquaint them with the small group process and cover basic facilitation skills. Leaders will be requested to identify and mentor apprentices in their groups who may be invited to serve as future leaders. Activity and mission/service group leaders are welcome to participate in leadership training.

Semester System

The Small Group year consists of two terms: Fall and Spring. The Fall Term begins in September and ends in mid-December. The Spring Term begins in January and ends April 30. Small Group Leaders meet on the 3rd Sunday of the odd months (January, March, May, July, September, November). The Small Group Advisory Board meets on the 2nd Sunday of the odd months and as needed.

Small Group Semester System Calendar

July-August

- ◇ Define which existing groups will resume in the Fall Term
- ◇ Determine the need for new groups to be offered in Fall Term
- ◇ Recruit/contact potential group leaders

- ◇ Conduct new leaders' training

Fall Term

September

- ◇ Fall Term begins.
- ◇ Publicize small groups for Fall Term – brochures, pulpit, Messenger, etc
- ◇ Signups for groups on Kickoff Sunday

November/December

- ◇ Define which existing groups will resume in the Spring Term
- ◇ Determine the need for new groups to be offered in Spring Term
- ◇ Recruit/contact potential group leaders
- ◇ Conduct new leaders' training
- ◇ Fall Term ends mid December

Spring Term

January

- ◇ Spring Terms begins
- ◇ Publicize small groups for Spring Term – brochures, pulpit, Messenger, etc
- ◇ Signups for groups each Sunday

April

- ◇ Spring Term ends April 30

May-June

- ◇ Evaluation/Planning for the upcoming year's ministry

Fall Term (repeat the cycle)

Incorporation of the Four Components

Faith Development Study Groups are expected to incorporate four components: community building and care, Biblical reflection/study, prayer/worship, and missional service.

Activity and Mission/Service Groups are encouraged to also include the four components into their programs, as is appropriate.

Perhaps an easier way to remember these components is through the 4Ws: (1) **Welcome** (2) **Worship** (3) **Word**, and (4) **Works**.



Small Group List by Category

FAITH DEVELOPMENT GROUPS

1. Big Boys Club

[Leader: Bill Van Bezey, 925-838-4104, vanboneye@comcast.net]

Meet: Wednesdays, 7:15 – 9:00 PM, Library

Focus: Men exploring their faith while having fun building friendships.

2. Chatty Crones

[Leader: Elaine Halliday, 925- 944-5194]

Meet: The 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month from 10:00 AM to 12:00 noon in the home of one of its members at Rossmoor

Focus: Faith-sharing women's group reading books selected for study.

3. ChristCare Book Group

[Leader: Gloria Fenton, 925-828-6307, gloriafromsanramon@sbcglobal.net]

Meet: The 4th Wednesday of the month at 10:00 AM in the church library

Focus: All age group of women reading selected books.

4. Church-Wide Study: Lent & Advent Groups

[Coordinator: Dave Coombs, 925-837-5915, dfcassoc@comcast.net]

Meet: Various dates/times during Advent and Lent

Focus: Seasonal study groups discussing a common topic/book

5. Couples with Children (or Grandchildren)

[Leaders: Val Miller, 925-309-4835, vemiller65@gmail.com]

Meet: The 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, 7:00 - 9:00 PM, Miller's Home, 66 Grado Ct., Danville 94506.

Focus: Fellowship, Reading, and Discussion. Explore your faith while building relationships.

6. Disciple Bible Study

[Coordinator: Bill Rust, 925-820-9047, wrusjrarb@aol.com]

Meet: Various dates/times

Focus: It includes 34-week, 24-week, and 8-week long study groups, and drop-in faith and Bible groups for everyone, wherever you are on

your faith journey. (Widely acclaimed United Methodist-developed ecumenical Bible study programs used by millions of people in many denominations and faiths.)

7. Discovery Class

[Leaders: Pastor Ron, rdunn@srvumc.org, Pastor Lorraine, lmcneal@srvumc.org; Kathleen Saghafi, ksaghafi@srvumc.org]

Meet: Various dates/times

Focus: This class is specifically designed for those considering membership at SRVUMC. It offers an introduction to what it means to be a Christian, a United Methodist, and a member of SRVUMC. During our time together, you'll engage in a Small Group experience, get to know our ministerial staff, find your unique place in our community of faith, and make new connections with other members of your class.

8. Feeding Your Faith (Based on "Disciple 2," "Into the Word, Into the World")

[Leader: Bill Rust, 925-820-9047, wrusjarb@aol.com]

Meet: Sundays, 10:45-11:45 AM, Fireside Room

Focus: Faith Development and Faith in Action study/discussion; for everyone, wherever you are on your faith journey.

9. Freedom: 12-Steps to Forgiveness, Healing and Wholeness

[Leader: Nancy Benvenuto, 925-784-1955, nancy@nancybenvenuto.com]

Meet: Mondays from 1:00-2:30 for 12 weeks, on campus

Focus: Pastor Kathi McShane's 2016 sermon series based on the AA 12 step program. The link will be emailed every week and you can either listen to, or read the sermon. We will then meet to discuss Pastor Kathi's message and how we can live the connection of the 12 step Program.

10. Friday Coffee Group ("Drop in")

[Leader: Bill Rust, 925-820-9047, wrusjarb@aol.com]

Meet: Fridays, 8:30-10:00 AM, Bagel Street Café, Alamo Plaza

Focus: Informal faith development discussion; all are welcome.

11. Friday Morning Men's Group

[Leader: Pastor Ron Dunn, 925-837-5243, rdunn@srvumc.org]

Meet: Fridays, 6:30 - 8:30 AM, Wesley 202

Focus: A discussion group covering a variety of books to reflect on faith and life.

12. Learning in Faith Together (LIFT)

[Coordinators: Debbie Kelly, 415-385-8088, gsanddeb@sbcglobal.net;
Sandy Gsand, 925-989-7880, sangsan@aol.com]

Meet: Thursdays, 9:15-11:15 AM; Sundays 4:00-5:30 PM

Focus: For women who would like to be lights in our community by studying the word of God and growing in faith while sharing what we learn.

13. Living Out Loud (LOL) Women

[Leader: Katy Mannell, 925-984-3691, katymannell@sbcglobal.net]

Meet: Tuesdays, 7:00 - 8:30 PM, Wesley 202

Focus: For busy Christian women seeking ways to live more fully.

14. Meditation Group

[Leader: Linda Stone, 925-648-1850, llstone2@comcast.net]

Meet: The 1st & 3rd Wednesdays, 10:30 AM, in Wesley 202

Focus: Meditation with scripture, silence, journaling, and sharing.

15. Men's Faith Sharing

[Contact: Terry Sherman, 925-735-0475, dtsh@sbcglobal.net]

Meet: Saturday mornings (except 3rd Sat), 8:00-10:00 AM, Conference Room

Focus: All men are welcome to share in this rewarding experience discussing faith issues and building community. Coffee, donuts & juice are provided.

16. Parents of Children with Special Needs (PCSN)

[Leader: Karen Scalzi, 925-820-7495, kscalzi@comcast.com]

Meet: 2nd Sunday of each month, 2:00-3:30 PM

Focus: Supporting the parents of children with special needs, mostly those diagnosed with mental illness.

17. Sacred Path Labyrinth Group

[Leaders: Suzanne Shea, 925-954-1889, suzanne.shea@sbcglobal.net;
Devon Drake]

Meet: Various dates

Focus: Explore the ritual and value that walking meditation offer.

18. Women of the Night

[Leader: Marilyn Milam, 925-837-3576, m_k_milam@earthlink.net]

Meet: The 1st & 3rd Mondays, 7:00-9:00 PM, Fireside Room.

Focus: Women of any age who prefer to meet in the evenings are welcome to participate in this study group, focused on community, faith development, and service

ACTIVITY GROUPS

1. Afternoon Book Group

[Leader: Marilyn Scott, 925-935-6564, merebruin.scott@gmail.com]

Meet: The 3rd Monday, 1:00 PM, Wesley 202

Focus: Anyone is welcome to join.

2. Dinner for Eight (or Seven)

[Leaders: Barb McWilliams, 925-837-0971, osi310@aol.com;

Winnie Stribling, 925-838-2601, winnie_stribling@msn.com]

Meet: Various dates/times four times per year (September, November, January, and March)

Focus: Radical hospitality over food, fun, faith and fellowship.

3. The Games We Play

[Leader: Merilyn Milam, 925-837-3576, m_k_milam@earthlink.net]

Meet: The 4th Mondays 7:00 – 9:00 P.M., Fireside Room.

Focus: Each month we begin with a check-in and a devotion. Then, the games begin! Everyone is welcome!

4. Men's Breakfast Group

[Leader: Dean McWilliams, 925-837-0971, osi310@aol.com;

LynArscott, 925-820-2095, lynarscott@comcast.net]

Meet: The 3rd Saturday of the month, 8:00 – 10:00 AM, Wesley Center,
Cost: \$10

Focus: All men are invited to a full breakfast and a monthly program.

5. Men's Softball

[Leader: Pastor Ron Dunn, 925-837-5243, rdunn@srvumc.org]

Class "D" softball. Two teams usually enter the summer league. Fall and winter leagues are available if there is sufficient interest to field a team.

6. Nature's Adventurers

[Leaders: Bill Van Bezey, 925-838-4104, vanboneye@comcast.net;

Bart Jacobi, 925-837-7998, lebart@prodigy.net]

Meet: The 2nd and 4th Saturdays, March through November, 9:30 AM to mid-afternoon, meet at church parking lot. Do two or three overnight hikes per hiking season.

Focus: A hiking group for all ages

7. Prime-Time Players

[Leader: Nancy Benvenuto, 925-784-1955, nancy@nancybenvenuto.com]

Prime Time Council (Formerly the Senior Council)

Meet: 4th Thursday of the month

Focus: Facilitates the following activities:

- Prime Time Potluck & Presentation

Meet: 1st Tuesday of the month, 12 - 2:00 PM, Wesley Center

Focus: Monthly potluck (homemade or store-bought) luncheons with program

- Prime Time Lunch with Friends

Meet: 3rd Tuesday of the month, 12:00 - 2:00 PM, Wesley Center

Focus: A delicious home-cooked meal is provided for seniors, A \$5 donation is requested to cover the cost of the meal.

8. Tai Chi

[Leader: Jonathan Robinson, 925-209-1127, jpratherr@earthlink.net]

Meet: Thursday evenings at 7:15 PM, Fireside Room.

Focus: Give an introduction to Tai Chi's essential movements.

9. Wesley Writers

[Leaders: Brad Stribling, 925-838-2601, brad_stribling@msn.com;

Terry Sherman, 925-735-0475, dtsh@sbcglobal.net]

Meet: The 2nd Tuesday and 4th Monday, 7pm, in the Library

Focus: To provide community, spirituality, encouragement and support for participants wishing to express themselves in writing.

MISSION/SERVICE GROUPS

1. ChristCare Vistors

[Leader: Suzanne Stephens, 925-820-8249, suzzst@aol.com]

Meet: Visit weekly, usually Mondays in the morning

Focus: The group members visit those who are unable to be as closely associated or involved with our congregation as they once were due to illness, age, or other reasons. Group members are assigned “clients” with whom we visit on a regular basis.

2. MLK Peace and Justice Committee

[Leader: Laura Sanchez, 925-946-1620, laura3627@gmail.com]

Meet: The 4th Wednesday of each month, 1:00 PM, Library

Focus: Promoting social justice issues and the concept of our world as a community of interdependent nations who are respected by, as well as respectful of, one another, and who hold in common the need to exist harmoniously.

3. United Methodist Women

[Leader: Bonnie Roberts, 925-846-2035, badbrindie@att.net]

Meet: Meets four times a year. Rummage sale and Christmas tea are the two primary meetings.

Focus: A mission-based organization for women of all ages.

4. Trinity Center “Food for Thought” Program Team

[Leader: Dick Lam, 925-930-0707, RichardCLam@aol.com]

Meet: Friday mornings around 8:00 AM to prepare & deliver a meal for the homeless at Trinity Center in Walnut Creek at church and discuss on Biblical topics.

Focus: Nurturing the homeless in body and spirit.

A Quick History of Methodist Small Groups

- ◇ Movement began with a few college men started the first small group in Methodism -- the Holy Club,
 - + The concept of personal holiness and social holiness caught fire.
 - + The holiness of life was attained through small groups that were called class meetings

- ◇ Class meetings were small groups of people gathering in homes for prayer, study and accountability for the Christian life.

- ◇ Methodism spread from England to the United States, the movement of small groups and spreading scriptural holiness emerged into congregations and eventually a denomination.

- ◇ The movement started as a renewal community made up of small groups and became a denomination with a clear mission:
 - + Help people live the Christian life through grace and spread scriptural holiness.

- ◇ The movement employed the same core ministries
 - + Training laity to lead small groups,
 - + Engaging in ministries with the poor (social holiness)
 - + Sending out exhorters -- teachers and preachers to share the Gospel

SMALL GROUP ADVISORY BOARD

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