

SGM JOURNAL

Vol 12 No 1

Fall 2015

A publication of the UU Small Group Ministry Network

Archives available on www.smallgroupministry.net



The UU Small Group Ministry Network Logo

The SGM Network logo, designed by graphic artist Erin Malick Thompson, symbolizes the essence of Small Group Ministry. The sequence of talk bubbles forming a circle suggest the aspect of covenant groups in which each person speaks one at a time while the others listen.

The overlapping bubbles create a "figure-ground" effect in which the center space sometimes recedes and sometimes comes to the foreground, symbolizing the secure space created by members of the group.

The Significance of SGM: A Reminder

By David Tucker, Eno River Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Durham, NC

One of the wonderful things about attending the annual General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association is the opportunity to volunteer for something really cool and meaningful, and that you care about deeply. In Portland, Oregon, in June 2015, I had the opportunity to help staff the UU Small Group Ministry Network (SGMN) booth for several hours, along with Rev. Helen Zidowecki, who was really fun to work with, and tremendously knowledgeable.

I already knew quite a bit about Small Group Ministry (SGM), having been a covenant group leader during three separate stretches of time, and SGM is a subject I'm quite passionate about. In small spiritual practice groups such as a Covenant Group or Chalice Circle, we have the chance to get to know each other at a deeper level, practice deep listening, ask questions of real gravity about our lives, and build strong bonds of community and love together.

That said, I didn't realize how much I would learn, and what a great time I would have at the SGMN booth! Helen taught me more about the SGM Network, its considerable resources to support small group ministry work in our congregations, and the great volunteers who are behind all of this.

People who walked up to the booth shared enthusiastic stories with me about the many SGM programs going on at UU congregations around the country, some of which we weren't even aware of! Interested folks who have never been in a Covenant Group asked me questions, gave it some thought, signed up for more information, and generally moved me with their desire to connect in a meaningful way with their fellow Unitarian Universalists.

All in all, volunteering at the SGM Network booth was a reminder to me of something I've long believed. Our shared ministry as UU's is indeed about salvation, but not from damnation -- it's about saving people from loneliness, despair, isolation, meaninglessness, and hopelessness. As Rev. John Murray famously said long ago, "Give them not Hell, but hope and courage." Small group ministry is very much the work of finding hope, courage, and connection -- together.

Who We Are:

The UU Small Group Ministry Network, a UUA Related Organization, is a non-profit, tax-exempt charitable organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. We provide support to small group ministry programs in UU congregations through training opportunities, networking, and the development of new resources.

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The SGM Journal

(ISSN 1945-2683)

is published seasonally by the UU Small Group Ministry Network and is supported by memberships, donations and resource sales.

Archives are available on the SGM Network website.

UU SGM Network Publications

New Session Plan Section: Celebrations – Click on Celebrations in the Session Plans section of the website. The first grid gives background information, sorted by the time of year. The second grid is the Directory of session plans available. <http://www.smallgroupministry.net/public/sessions/index.html>

Covenant Group News - A free, quarterly e-newsletter bringing you SGM news, resources, and event announcements from congregations, districts, and regions. Current issues are posted online. Subscribe now to receive every issue via email. <http://www.smallgroupministry.net/dada/mail.cgi/list/cgnews>

Connect with SGM on Facebook - Join our more than 170 Facebook members. Share ideas and enrich the small group ministry community. <http://www.facebook.com/groups/158837360893790/>

Order Books & Manuals Online Or By Mail

Pricing & ordering information: <http://www.smallgroupministry.net/forsale.html> Online Store: <http://www.smallgroupministry.net/sgmstore>

Social Justice Work Through Small Group Ministry - Thirty-four sessions for preparation, action, and reflection on topics of multiculturalism, radical hospitality, immigration, racism, marriage equality, and earth justice.

Small Group Ministry With All Ages - Implementation strategies, leader training, session development, and session plans for children through elders.

Facilitator Training and Development Manual - A guide for training and support plus a handbook on CD to customize for group leaders and facilitators.

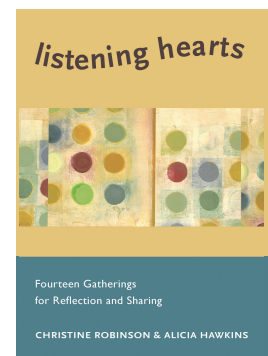
Spiritual Journeys: 101 Session Plans for Small Group Ministry

Programs - Sessions on Spiritual Journeying, Personal Beliefs and Values, Spiritual Challenges, Just for Fun, Being Human, Holidays, and Special Use subjects for life events.

Small Group Ministry for Youth - Twenty-five sessions for middle and high school youth.

New from UUA Bookstore – *Listening Hearts*, by Christine Robinson and Alicia Hawkins. “The third and newest volume in the Deep Connections series contains fourteen new gatherings on topics ranging from mental wellness and miracles to leaps of faith and bucket lists.”

<http://www.uuabookstore.org/Listening-Hearts-P17718.aspx>



A Covenant Group Success Story

By Bonnie Shelton and Jen Sutton, Unitarian
Universalist Fellowship of Vero Beach, Florida

With over half the congregation enrolled in covenant groups, the UU Fellowship of Vero Beach believes its program promoting small group ministries is a resounding success. In just four years, the program has grown from 80 participants in 9 groups to 140 individuals in 14 groups. This has happened in a congregation that currently numbers just 245.

The program began in 2011, after two time-limited groups had met with success and a wave of interest seemed to be growing. Members Pete Kersey and Jen Sutton took the initiative to expand the concept and promote participation among the whole congregation. With the endorsement of the Rev. Scott Alexander and the help of a few like-minded members, they designed a comprehensive program using guidance from the UU Small Group Ministry Network website and the book, *The Complete Guide to Small Group Ministry* by Robert Hill. The first group of facilitators was trained in November of 2011 and the first sessions were offered in January of 2012.

Program co-founder Jen Sutton believes the initial success of the program may have been encouraged by the fact that the Fellowship had recently undergone both a transition in ministerial leadership and a change in facilities, and members voiced a need for increased connections. That same yearning has proved to be consistent over time. As membership increased and the Fellowship grew from a pastoral to a program congregation, the benefits of belonging to a small group became even more apparent and membership grew as a result. The program is now an integral part of our ministry.

The Vero Beach Fellowship was coined a “tidal” congregation by Interim Minister the Rev. Maureen Killoran. Some members reside in the Vero Beach area year-round. Other “snowbirds” leave for northern climes during the summer months. The covenant group program accommodates that reality by offering both year-round (10) and seasonal (4) groups, so that all members can be accommodated.

The democratic process is evident in the development of each year’s discussion topics. Ideas initially are solicited from members of current groups. Next, the 20 facilitators discuss all contributed ideas and come up with a list of about 15-20 possible topics, on which group members are then asked to provide feedback. Finally, facilitators

vote for the top 12 topics. The co-chairs of the Covenant Group Program, Jen Sutton and Bonnie Shelton, then develop discussion outlines for the coming calendar year, doing primary research and reviewing session plans from the SGM Network website.

Sample topics for 2015 include Beliefs, Recapturing Childhood, Living with Intention, Dreams, Legacy, Laughter, Scarcity/Abundance, Money, Silence/Solitude, Deep Listening, Negativity, and Chance/Probability. In 2014 the topics were Anger, Compassion, Evolution, Forgiveness, Goodness without God, Guilt, Happiness/Joy, Humanistic Religious Naturalism, Prejudice, Self-Care, Spirituality, and Visiting a Dying Friend. Program co-chair Bonnie Shelton remarked, “We believe we have substantive, diverse topics that promote reflection and energized discussions, and hope to post some of our discussion guides on the SGM Network website in the future.”

Overwhelming positive feedback has been received from members on the interesting and significant discussions engendered by the discussion outlines. All covenant groups discuss the same topic each month. However, as is typical of UUs, the discussions may vary widely, reflecting the particular interests and experiences of each group member.

New facilitators receive at least a four-hour training session based on outlines and protocols suggested by the SGM Network’s *Facilitator Training and Development Manual*, and are provided with participant guidelines and an extensive written reference guide. Further, facilitators meet on a regular basis to discuss issues related to the program and to provide assistance and support to one another.

Program co-founder Jen Sutton remarked, “No matter how interesting the discussion, the central purpose of our covenant group program is to foster intimacy, open communication, and service. Though our program has no formal requirement for service, groups have spontaneously reached out to provide support for members in need (assistance with rides and memorial services), for the congregation (property clean-up, potlucks) and for the community (participation in a soup kitchen). Skills such as active listening and not rushing to judgment are beginning to move out of small groups into the general congregation.”

Jen and Bonnie agree that covenant groups are the best tools we have found for maintaining a small community feel in our medium-sized congregation. We are grateful to those who came before and have shown us the way.

Learning by Training New Small Group Leaders at the Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge

By Suzanne Besse, Branches Co-coordinator

Twelve new small group ministry leaders recently completed New Leader Training at the Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge, LA (UCBR). I learned a lot, and I was the trainer, supporting the old adage that the best way to learn is by teaching or leading training. I learned from the participants who, along with the new leaders, included 3 experienced ones. Two wanted a refresher, and one wanted to attend with her new co-leader, something to think about as we plan training.

At UCBR, we call our small group ministry program Branches, and have done so since its beginning in 1999 because our Roots program is how most members come to join a Branches group. Roots is a six-hour introduction to Unitarianism and our congregation, and is led by our ministers. You can learn more about our program in an article in the Fall 2014 *SGM Journal*.

Diana Dorroh, a SGM Network Board member and former newsletter editor, is a member of UCBR. She trained me in 1999, and has continued to train and support leaders until recently. She also co-authored the Network's *Facilitator Training and Development Manual* in 2008, which is what we continue to use, although we call it the Branches Leader's Guide. We continuously update it and recently began emailing it to all leaders. So now it's more accessible and the attachments--including job tools such as the covenant boilerplate, service project ideas, and sessions designed for welcoming new members--can easily be shared with members. One new Leader said she's going to send the Guide to her entire group, because all of them share facilitation duties.

Diana is my mentor and friend. During our careers in state government, we both trained trainers, so we know folks with on-the-job experience can be effective trainers. Experienced Branches leaders can be ideal trainers, because they know what leaders need to know, as well as what resources and support they need.

At UCBR the goal is for all Branches leaders to complete training before leading a group. What works best is Just-in-Time training, which means as close to the time leaders take on their roles as possible. Adult learners are most highly motivated to learn what has immediate relevance, knowledge and skills that can be used right away. Retention is also higher.

Trainers know folks don't have to like the training for it to be effective. Data shows no correlation between enjoyment of a training experience and how well folks perform after training. So in evaluating the training, we wanted to know:

- *What topics, tools, or activities were most helpful? Least helpful?*
- *What ideas or tools did you take away that will affect how you lead your group(s)?*
- *How would you make the training more helpful?*

The New Branches Leader Training described here is the initial training and designed to last 1.5 hours. It's an orientation and intended to be the first and not the last training and development opportunity. Many of the responses to the evaluation questions and feedback during the training sessions are included in the play-by-play below.

Welcome and Opening Reading by the minister: The minister's presence is big, we learned. He was unable to attend one of the sessions, and although we explained the unavoidable absence and used the opening he'd chosen, it wasn't OK. More than one new leader noted the absence in the evaluations.

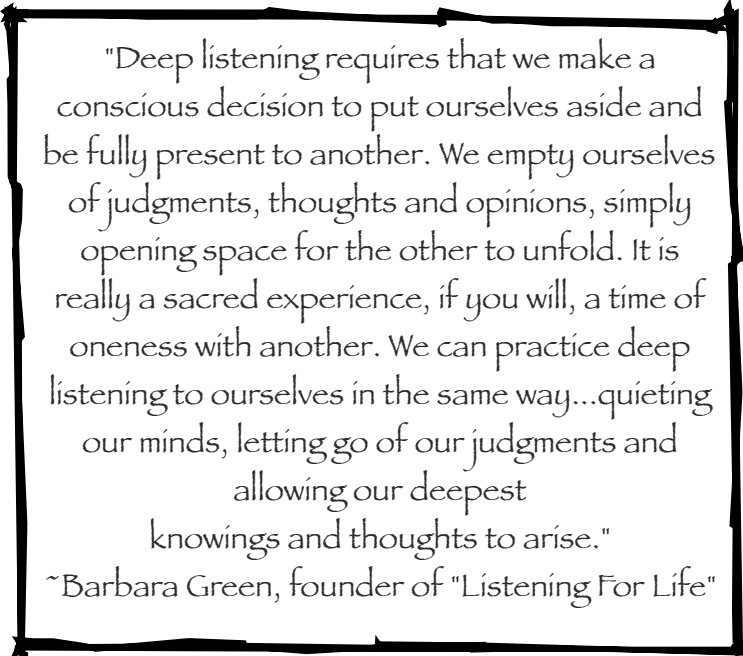
Visit the UU SGM Network website: www.smallgroupministry.net. The web address is prominently displayed on the cover of the hard-copy Branches Leader's Guide given to participants at the training. I brought my laptop and projected the website; however, if leaders brought their own, they could actually sign up for the Covenant Group e-Newsletter, the SGM Discussion Group, or join the SGM Network right then. Most were familiar with the session plans, but had not looked at other features, so with them telling me where to click, we explored the site.

The Branches Model: The first stop in the Branches Leader's Guide was the Branches Model, emphasizing that it's been tested and clearly works, although it does take work, but work that pays off. And if you're not following the model, it's not Branches. One leader said staying true to the model and learning ways to do so was what he found most helpful.

Takeaways: We created a flip chart list of skills and knowledge new leaders wanted to take away and used it to guide the training. Responses included: When to contact a minister or a coordinator for help; Examples of service projects; Choosing sessions; Integrating new members into an established group; Roles and responsibilities of Branches leaders; and Strategies for check-ins.

Likes and Wishes: In keeping with the Branches model, here are some of the likes and wishes expressed at the training sessions: Emphasis on and tips for staying true to the model were helpful; Would like to meet and share with other groups and leaders more often; Will use many of the attachments in the Guide; Needed more time to practice skills, such as modeling check-ins and creating session plans; Use visuals or videos to enhance training; Would like more in-services/training sessions; Want more ideas for service projects; Would like training on creating sessions; Need our own Branches website or other way to share sessions and resources.

I hope what I've learned from our sessions will also be helpful to you, as we all strive to design and deliver the training, development, and support our Small Group Ministry leaders want and deserve.



"Deep listening requires that we make a conscious decision to put ourselves aside and be fully present to another. We empty ourselves of judgments, thoughts and opinions, simply opening space for the other to unfold. It is really a sacred experience, if you will, a time of oneness with another. We can practice deep listening to ourselves in the same way...quieting our minds, letting go of our judgments and allowing our deepest knowings and thoughts to arise."
~Barbara Green, founder of "Listening For Life"

Chalice Circle Samplers

*By Marilyn Eanet, Small Group Ministry Steering Team
First Unitarian Church of Providence, Rhode Island*

At First Unitarian Church in Providence, RI, our Small Group Ministry program offers Chalice Circle Samplers to help members of the community, especially newcomers and newer members, become aware of the program and of the value of participating in a Chalice Circle.

After morning service on a couple of Sundays each semester, we invite folks to bring their coffee and snack to the auditorium and learn more about Chalice Circles. As soon as 5 or 6 people enter the room, an experienced facilitator takes them to a circle of chairs and presents the session below. Although various topics for the sharing can be used, simply asking people to share what first brought them to First Unitarian seems to work best. Following the session, there is a time for questions, and registration materials are available. We have found that the attendees enjoy the experience and that many sign up on the spot.

Chalice Circle Sampler

By Ruth Arellana, SGM Steering Team

Opening Words:

Whenever we meet and make friends, we tell our stories.
We tell our stories to remember who we are and what's important to us.
In telling our stories, we speak of families, friends, joys, sorrows, fears, deaths, loves.
With stories, we open up our lives to one another.
Our stories are important steppingstones on our religious journeys.
We tell our stories and touch our depths..
By our attentive listening, we make it possible for people to say things they have never said before.
Listening connects speaker and listener.
Both the speaker and the listener deepen the importance of the story.

-Barbara Hamilton-Holway, UU

What is Small Group Ministry?

Small Group Ministry is an opportunity for us to seek connections as part of an intimate, accepting community in which we are lifted out of the everyday to reflect on and deepen our spiritual and ethical journey.

What is Small Group Ministry not?

It is not a prayer group. It is not a therapy group. It is not a discussion group, per se.

What is a Small Group Ministry group? It is a group in which to grow spiritually and in relationship to others. It is an opportunity to share personal stories and feelings in a safe, supportive environment.

Covenant: Each group develops a covenant or set of "ground rules" for how they want to be together.

Format: (Describe typical format)

Check-in: In 1-2 sentences, please tell us something about yourself that you would like others to know. It may have to do with why you are here at First Unitarian and what you hope to gain from the experience. It may be about your personal well-being: physical, emotional, and/or spiritual. It may be about the glory of a beautiful fall day or about homecoming Sunday! It may be about your general interests. Just something to help us know you a bit.

Closing: What are your feelings about this experience? How are you feeling now?

For a copy of this session, write to Marilyn Eanet, meanet@cox.net.

A New Paradigm for Social Justice Work

By Karen Clemmensen, High Plains Church Unitarian Universalist, Colorado Springs, CO

High Plains News, May 2013 - Reprinted with permission

On March 30 several members of High Plains Church UU (HPCUU) and All Souls UU Church of Colorado Springs (ASUUC) were privileged to attend a workshop facilitated by Kiersten Homblette, Beloved Community Coordinator for the Boulder Denver Cluster of Unitarian Universalist Congregations. We learned about a shift in how UU congregations approach social action/justice work that promises to enrich and revitalize our lives and the lives of those we hope to serve. This template for social justice work in our congregations is modeled after small group ministry programs that have invigorated and grown churches all over the world.

Small group ministry social justice work would not supplant Ultimacy & Intimacy Groups but serves as another avenue for personal growth and for building Beloved Community. A small group justice ministry meets regularly; a Boulder group focused on immigration issues meets bimonthly, once in the evening and once during the day in order to fit the varying schedules of those who may be interested.

A typical meeting begins with one member offering a reading related to the issue around which the group organized. Another presents a story of a personal incident related to the issue and which impacted that person's personal growth in some way. Then the other members are given time to react to that story, offering how that story or a similar personal event impacted their own spirituality. Another member leads the group in a spiritual practice that has been helpful to him/her. This "check-in" period lasts about one hour. The second hour is given over to planning social action/justice events or activities related to the group's issue.

A paradigm shift that Ms. Homblette described to us involves our attitudes towards those in our

communities whom we wish to serve. To my mind, it is a shift from our usual top down focus to one from the bottom up. Rather than those of us outside the effects of some problem/issue we see in the world deciding how we want to help or just throwing money at a problem, building Beloved Community involves walking with those affected by the issue. The group can still do advocacy work, demonstration participation, and working with organizations outside the church, etc., but that work is informed by those with whom they companion. The Boulder group "companions" with three immigrant families. They work with, not for, these families and report that this shift in focus has grown the spirit of each UU involved.

I think this approach to social action/justice work may just be one vehicle that can revitalize this component of HPCUU's service to our membership and to our wider community. HPCUU members have many suggestions for social justice focus: service to our military community; service to the aged; service to the homeless; service to foster families and those who work with children; and environmental issues. Because programs for our children have been a vital part of High Plains ministries, I can envision a group of families with children where the children and their adults find an issue of interest to both and function in a social justice group similar to that described by Ms. Homblette. All Souls UUC has a small group focused on alternatives to violence, and workshop participants expressed a desire to work with High Plains Church members in small group ministry social justice work. I suspect the Mountain Desert District and Ms. Homblette would be willing to work with any HPC and/or HPCUU & ASUUC group.

History and Evolution Of Small Group Ministry

By Rev. Helen Zidowecki, President, UU SGM Network

Hopes and Dreams

Small Group Ministry has offered much to UU's in the first 15 years.

What do you hope it will offer in the next 10 years?

Please send your hopes and dreams for your SGM/Covenant Groups
to journalteam@smallgroupministry.net

When did Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry “start”? Although Rev. John Morgan suggests that it was part of the Pietist reform in 1675, started by a Lutheran minister and spinning off reforms in other denominations, let us establish the current Small Group Ministry/ Covenant Groups, based largely on the work of evangelist Carl George, as “starting” with the emergence of *Covenant Group News* in late 1998 by Rev. Bob Hill. The second part of the “start” occurred with the organization of the UU Small Group Ministry Network at General Assembly 2004. This began the organized tracking of Small Group Ministry/Covenant Group events and resources. Several evolutions are evident since the “start”.

Making Small Group Ministry Unitarian Universalist The First Evolution started with concern about the lack of numeric congregational growth. Rev. Bob Hill, Executive Director of the Southwest District, and Rev. Glenn Turner, of the Northeast District (namely Maine), started looking at this growth issue. What draws people to a congregation, and what keeps them connected? Both Bob and Glenn were aware of a statement made about 1980 by James Luther Adams, a prominent Unitarian Universalist minister, that people come looking for *Intimacy* and *Ultimacy*.

Add to the desire for growth and the focus on the relational, the work of Carl George (an evangelical Christian leader) focused on the Meta-Church, or the church in transition. The Meta-Church movement focused on groups of 10 people within congregations or congregations made up of small groups, hence the title of Bob Hill's book, *The Complete Guide to Small Group Ministry: Saving the World, Ten at a Time*. While several Unitarian Universalist congregations were using small groups in various ways, it was the focus on growth and relationships grounded in Intimacy and Ultimacy, and the use of small groups, that created Covenant Groups (Bob Hill's term) and the Small Group Ministry (Glenn Turner's term) movement.

This First Evolution transformed the theories and methodologies developed by others into a model that was accessible for Unitarian Universalists with our own literature, our own terminology. The intimacy is part of the use of small groups within various faith traditions; the uniqueness of Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry may be the ultimacy or the search for meaning that is grounded in our varied life and spiritual journeys, rather than creeds.

From the Small Group to the Congregation The *Second Evolution* moves from the person and the single group to the broader congregation. Participants in small group ministry learn a different way of being with each other, through listening, sharing, and being present. *Small group ministry, done well in the respective groups, changes how people interact beyond the group itself.* How you minister to each other--and yourselves--matters.

Increased listening to others and sharing our own thought from the heart as our own, without needing to defend, argue or persuade, brought a gentleness in communication at general congregational meetings. I witnessed this in the congregation that I attend. We had learned to listen in small groups, and our larger meetings, even considering hard issues, were transformed.

What we do in the Small Group Ministry/Covenant Group sessions matters.

How we implement Small Group Ministry as part of overall congregational life matters.

And as more people become involved with Small Group Ministry, there is an impact on Unitarian Universalism overall.

All because Small Group Ministry expands beyond the individual group!

Small Group Ministry for Everyone The *Third Evolution* is expectation and entitlement. People are increasingly coming to our congregations looking for Small Group Ministry. People go to websites looking for Small Group or Covenant Group Ministry. Or they find the description that invites connections. Visibility! Expectations!

Michael Durall, who works with churches in various denominations, notes that in some congregations there is the expectation that new members will participate in a specific number of sessions, with an invitation to join ongoing groups. UU congregations vary in expectation of participation, but resources are increasingly available for all ages:

younger children and youth, young adults, adults, and at the other end of the continuum, for later life and elders. Also the possibility of having groups of mixed ages - youth and adults together, family groups, and groups for parents.

Let's make Small Group Ministry a *viable option* for everyone connected with our congregations as members or friends!

Trends: Broader and Deeper I see two trends emerging that enhance the very essence of Small Group Ministry/Covenant Groups. The first is Bringing Small Group Ministry Out Into the World, as advocated by Rev. Dr. M'ellen Kennedy, and a focus for the Network. We have come full circle from Small Group Ministry as an evangelical agent to a UU vehicle to enhance congregational growth and depth, and are now offering it as UU outreach beyond congregational walls. Please see the brochure on the SGM Network website. *We are broadening the work of congregations and the impact of UUism.*

The second trend is a grouping or series of session plans on a topic. There are times when a single session plan on a topic is so rich that there is a decision to extend the plan to a second session. However, the time between the sessions is a deterrent to smooth transition into the second session. A series of sessions provides beginnings and endings to various aspects of a topic for an ongoing group. Short series, separate from a small group, may also be an entry for people to experience small group ministry, leading to more involvement long-term. This is a way of deepening the involvement with a topic. Maybe this is related to including Small Group Ministry as part of a trend toward Theme-Based Ministry. *As we take more time with topics, we are able to engage more deeply –the ultimacy.*

References:

Network publications:

Ten Years of Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry.

Small Group Ministry With All Ages

Excerpts from *CGN*, October 2011, November 2011, February 2012. *Journal Spring 2015*

"Small Group Ministry: Rooted in Universalism", Rev. John Morgan, *Covenant Group News (CGN)* February 29, 2000

"Small Group Ministry: A Requirement for Church Membership, Michael Dural *Small Group Ministry Quarterly*, Fall 2010

A more in depth version of this article may be found on the online resource directory of the SGM Network Website, www.smallgroupministry.net

"The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention.... A loving silence often has far more power to heal and to connect than the most well-intentioned words. "

— Rachel Naomi Remen

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY SURVEY 2015

From the UU SGM Network Board of Directors

The UU SGM Network Survey in June 2015 was designed to provide feedback that:

1. Shows how the SGM Network and its resources are being used and by whom.
2. Indicates the most-needed SGM resources.
3. Helps determine how the Network can best support those involved in Small Group Ministry.

Survey responses completed on the website and at the Network's General Assembly Booth represent a national geographic spread, all from different states.

1. Half of those respondents are congregational or individual members.
2. All have Small Group Ministry in their congregations, about half for 2-9 years, and half for 10 or more years.
3. Eight had been to a SGM booth at GA, and five had attended SGM workshops at previous GAs or elsewhere.
4. Website resources, in order of use, are SGM session plans, Implementing SGM, and online resources and events. In terms of Network publications, the *SGM Journal* and publications for sale were tied, followed by *Covenant Group News*.

GA Booth discussions revealed what people would like from the Network and include:

1. Specific topics:
 - Use and control of money, including endowment
 - Racism, Black Lives Matter
 - Resiliency, Hidden Talents
2. SGM for Young Adults
3. Support/program ideas for small lay-led groups
4. Training material on religious diversity for facilitators, specifically for "coming out"
5. Curricula for short term groups (4-8 sessions) and programs that allow for drop-ins and transforming the culture
6. Getting programs started or restarted

The survey and booth discussions were at a point in time. Please continue to contact the Network with your comments, questions, and ideas at office@smallgroupministry.net We'd like to hear from you.

Congregational Survey

The SGM Network is frequently asked by the UUA and its members how many congregations have Small Group Ministry/Covenant Groups. The Network has documented connection with 348 congregations at workshops and events in the last ten years, and has received articles and session plans from 170 congregations. We have included congregations that participate on Facebook and who visited the Network GA Booth 2015.

Small Group Ministry is a powerful and traceable movement within UUism. Direct contact with congregations plus a website review would give us a more complete picture of the impact of Small Group Ministry within UU circles over time. The geographic spread is as follows:

- 44 states and District of Columbia
- 4 Canadian Provinces, Mexico, Australia and England

The congregational distribution of SGM/Covenant Groups as of October 27, 2015 is as follows:

AK	2	MA	31	PA	9
AL	1	MD	12	RI	4
AR	1	ME	9	SC	5
AZ	8	MI	6	TN	4
CA	29	MN	6	TX	20
CO	10	MO	3	VA	9
CT	5	NB	1	VT	2
DC	1	NC	12	WA	15
DE	4	ND	1	WI	7
FL	16	NH	5		
GA	5	NJ	2	AUST.	1
HI	1	NM	3	CA/AB	2
IA	3	NV	2	CA/BC	4
IL	11	NY	21	CA/MB	1
IN	7	OH	10	CA/ON	2
KS	5	OK	2	ENG	1
LA	3	OR	9	MEX	1

We will be reviewing websites of congregations that are not on our listing for information about Small Group Ministry/Covenant Groups. Please contact the Network to ensure that you are included in our compilation. Write to office@smallgroupministry.net Thank you.

"The art of listening is neither careless drifting on the one hand nor fearful clinging on the other. It consists in being sensitive to each moment, in regarding it as utterly new and unique, in having the mind open and wholly receptive." ~Alan Watts

Become a Member of the SGM Network

As a member of the SGM Network you:

Get the current issue of the *Journal* before it's on the website, provide financial support for the SGM movement, receive discounts on publications and Network-sponsored events, and have a voice and a vote at our annual meeting at GA.

Name		_____
Address		_____
Congregation		_____
District	Program Coordinator	_____
Phone	E-mail	_____
I would like to receive the newsletter electronically;		YES NO
Congregational Membership (\$100 year)		_____
Individual Membership (\$40 year)		_____
Additional Tax-deductible Donation		_____
Total Enclosed: \$		_____

Our Mission:
"To help create healthy congregations and a vital Unitarian Universalist movement by promoting and supporting Small Group Ministry."

Send completed form and check made out to **UU SGM Network** to 4303 Swarthmore Road, Durham, NC 27707.

Download the form or join online at www.smallgroupministry.net

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