

# SGM QUARTERLY

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## News from the Network



**The Network at General Assembly 2010, June 23-27, Minneapolis, MN**  
***Enhancing, Revitalizing, Restarting Your Small Group Ministry***  
Presenting strategies used by congregations to sustain and enhance vibrant ministries, and to rejuvenate and restart programs that have decreased in vitality. Holding a vision, the minister's role, and assuring success will be highlighted. Speakers are Rev. Peg Morgan and Steve Becker, Westside UU Congregation, Seattle, WA; and Rev. Peter Friedrichs and Joyce McKee, UU Church of Delaware County, Media, PA. Moderated by Rev. Helen Zidowecki. Time and date TBA.

**Small Group Ministry Institute 2010, August 31-September 3**  
**Camp deBenneville Pines, Angelus Oaks, CA**  
*Jointly sponsored by the UU SGM Network and the Pacific Southwest District*  
Designed for SGM program leaders and religious educators, an opportunity to learn and practice small group ministry in a mountain forest setting overlooking Jenks Lake. Send a team and take home a vision and plan for small group ministry in your congregation. Download a flyer and registration form at [www.smallgroupministry.net](http://www.smallgroupministry.net).

**Update Your Program's Information**  
Has your Small Group Ministry program's coordinator or contact person changed? If so, please send us your new contact information so we can redirect the *SGM Quarterly*. Send changes to [treasurer@smallgroupministry.net](mailto:treasurer@smallgroupministry.net).

**Is it Time to Renew?**  
If this reminder appears on your address label, your Network membership will soon expire. Don't miss an issue of the *SGM Quarterly*. Renew today! Download a renewal form from our website or renew online with **PayPal** secure transactions.

**Share the Electronic Quarterly**  
If you currently receive paper copies of the *SGM Quarterly*, but would prefer the electronic version to forward to group leaders and your minister or staff liaison, tell us at [quarterlyeditor@smallgroupministry.net](mailto:quarterlyeditor@smallgroupministry.net).

**Network Member Congregations on the Web**  
Network with other congregations in your district, share best practices in small group ministry, and consider hosting a joint facilitator training or enrichment workshop. To view a complete list, visit our website and click on *Who We Are: Our Members*.

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

# CONNECTIONS..... CONNECTIONS..... CONNECTIONS.....

with Steve Becker, President, Small Group Ministry Network

## A Tribute to Alan G. Mendoza, 1947-2009

Westside Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Seattle, WA

### Who We Are:

The UU Small Group Ministry Network 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 and related shared ministry models in UU congregations through developing new resources, networking, and training opportunities.

### Board and Staff

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The SGM Quarterly is published four times a year and supported by donations and memberships. Archives are available on the SGM website.

“Be careful how you use that word!” warned Alan, a topic writer and Facilitator in our congregation, after reading a new session plan. “Not everybody is on a ‘spiritual’ journey- some of us are on a personal quest for greater understanding, but there’s nothing spiritual or religious about it.” Alan, a devout atheist and keen observer of the human condition, admonished, “Don’t use the word ‘God’ either!”. He was an ardent advocate for social justice, sharpened by a wicked sense of humor. Alan traveled his own road, seeking truths that were most meaningful for him, ever sensitive to how people interpret what we say; that sometimes a word or phrase spoken in innocence may be offensive to another. As Unitarian Universalists seeking to promote the dignity of every person, Alan reminds us that all people, especially those who do not share our own beliefs, deserve not only acknowledgement but respect just because they are human beings. He died recently following a long battle with non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma. Alan was an inspiration to everyone who seeks personal growth and spiritual questing through small group ministry.

Alan, wherever you are, thank you for your dedication to our cause. May your own chalice glow forever.

*Steve Becker*

To listen is to continually give up all expectation and to give our attention, completely and freshly, to what is before us, not really knowing what we will hear or what that will mean. In the practice of our days, to listen is to lean in, softly, with a willingness to be changed by what we hear.

*Mark Nepo, poet and philosopher*

From our members.....

### **Small Group Ministry Marketing 101**

*Ann Davis, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship  
at Easton, Maryland*

The marketing plan for Small Group Ministry is a collaboration of the Minister and the SGM Coordinator, and is overseen by the Chairs of the Adult Enrichment Committee. The following description is the marketing plan used at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship at Easton (UUFE).

Though flyers have been placed on the chairs in the sanctuary for several weeks and it has been highlighted in the events section of the Order of Service, Small Group Ministry Sunday is the first major product introduction. SGM Sunday is a day in October when the Reverend Gabriel Parks delivers what she likes to call an “info sermon” about Small Group Ministry in general, and about Covenant Groups in particular. She covers the history of SGM within Unitarian Universalism. She explains how the shared search for intimacy and ultimacy is a powerful spiritual gift that is available to all who participate. Reverend Parks acknowledges the role of covenant groups as an important aspect of the ministry “of” and “to” the entire congregation.

The “hard sell” comes when members of current groups speak about their experiences in their covenant groups. There is nothing as effective as the testimony of a SGM consumer, a satisfied customer. Having a SGM participant make a statement such as, “I finally know what it’s like to be truly listened to and heard,” impresses potential consumers. When a group member says, “My covenant group members are my dearest friends, like no others I have had in my whole life,” others are drawn to seek the same relationships. The testimony has as much impact as the minister’s message, because these folks aren’t “paid” to be enthusiastic about SGM. Following the service, the SGM Coordinator approaches folks during coffee hour to elicit sign-ups for the SGM Session Sampler scheduled for the following Sunday.

This will be their opportunity to try the product, i.e., take it for a test drive.

The next Sunday is SGM Sampler Sunday. Following the church service and coffee hour, a soup and salad lunch is served to those who have signed up to try out a SGM session. During lunch, conversation is stimulated about how a covenant group works. Questions are answered about the elements, selection of topics, how groups are formed, the variety of ways the topics can be selected, logistics, and any other questions the group may have. The meaning of the word covenant is explored. A set of “Ground Rules” or “expectations” of how the group will “be” together is set.

An abbreviated one hour session then follows. This is the “test drive”. The only adjustment to a typical session is that each person has less time to speak. Generally, this means that each person speaks for several minutes, giving their initial reaction to the topic and discussion questions. If it is a group of ten, there isn’t much time left for reactions to what was said by others. However, it seems to be adequate to deliver an impression of a full session. Test marketing is usually very successful.

When the session is ended, each person who thinks they would like to join a group/buy the product completes a registration form. Beyond name and contact information, the form includes a table of days of the week and times of day. Each person indicates when they are available for two hour sessions twice per month. Based on the availability of the folks who are registering and the facilitators, groups are formed.

The Coordinator informs the facilitators of the names and contact information of their groups. The facilitator contacts his/her group members to set the time and place of the first session. This is the strategy that is used to “sell” small group ministry at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship at Easton.

***Small Groups, Deep Connections.***

# Facilitator's Toolbox

## Directed Check-In: Connecting Through Personal Sharing

*Susan Hollister, Eno River UU Fellowship, Durham, NC  
Christine Trigeiro, Chalice UU Congregation, Escondido, CA*

Has this ever happened to you? Half of your Covenant Group members have checked in and the next speaker tells about eating at a new restaurant with good friends. The person next to her checks-in, saying he's eaten at that restaurant, and describes his meal. A member across the circle, who has already checked-in, asks where the restaurant is and suggests the whole group go there together. Yikes, check-in has been hijacked! What's a facilitator to do?

Check-in is the first opportunity in the session for members to start connecting with one another. While others listen deeply, each person shares from the heart and mind what meaningful thoughts, feelings, or insights have occurred since the last meeting. It is part of the process of developing trust and intimacy in covenant groups that grows and expands over time. Each person uses "I" statements to describe what they have been thinking about lately, the situations they have "left behind" to be there with the group, the joys they've had or anticipate, or the concerns or heavy feelings they are carrying. The above scenario expresses some pleasure, but not much that would be meaningful for the group to know about that person's feelings or thoughts. It was a restaurant review, but could just as easily have been a travelogue. How can we as facilitators explain deeper sharing to new groups or guide a group back to personal check-ins?

One way is to spell out expectations in your program's guidelines or in the session plan itself, as the Unitarian Society of New Haven, CT did at their program's launch. For example: *"This is a chance to speak from your heart and your life, without interruption or response. Give one another your thoughtful silence and undivided attention. What you share may come from the current state of your physical or spiritual health, joys or concerns about loved ones or concerns or excitement about what is happening in your life. The focus of the sharing is on how those activities or situations affect your feelings and thoughts."* The session plans at the Main Line Unitarian Church in Devon, PA, alternate among a few provocative phrases: *"What is most on your mind today?" "What significant experience have you had since we were last together?" "Share one high and one low from your life right now."*

Another way is to include a statement in your group covenant and to review it now and then, reminding the group of the purpose of check-in. For example, "Check-in is meant to be a brief, 1-2 minute sharing of something that is of significance to you and would be *meaningful* for the group to know about you."

A third, and highly effective, method is for the facilitator to model an impersonal versus a personal check-in. Prepare your example ahead of time. Give the less personal version first, then an example of "deeper" sharing of that same topic. as in, *"We went to our daughter's house for Christmas this year and had a great time. It was too cold to be outside, so we mostly watched movies and drank hot chocolate."* Your second example is vastly different: *"We celebrated Christmas this year at our daughter's house, along with her boyfriend, our son and his wife. It was one of our most memorable and heart-warming holidays ever. I loved watching the young people assume new roles in re-creating family traditions and making sure everyone was having a good time. It gave me a glimpse into the future, seeing how life transitions forward, carried by each new generation."*

A deep sharing example of less positive feelings could be, *"I feel so angry about needing another surgery; that my body is letting me down,"* Instead of a simple recitation of physical ailments, this example demonstrates how the speaker could connect more with others in the group. A variation of this exercise would be to have group members take turns giving factual versus deep check-ins. The group may then need only an occasional reminder such as, "Check-in has more to do with thoughts and feelings than with things and events."

A fourth approach is to ask group members to think about their check-in ahead of time. What might they want to share that would allow the group to know more about them? Some advance thought can help deepen the check-in experience. It may also decrease "passing" by group members. Passing during check-in is always acceptable and, at times, may be an opportunity to just relax without needing to share one's feelings or situation. But it is difficult for deep connections to be made if a member passes often. Finally, let your group know it's okay to gently bring each other back when check-in veers toward events and away from thoughts and feelings.

At your next Facilitators' Meeting, you may want to describe the exercise you tried and its effect on your group. As always, you are also encouraged to share your experiences with the *SGM Quarterly* or *Covenant Group News*.

## MINISTER'S PAGE

### Small Group Ministry – The Launch & Four Years Later

*Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull with Dr. Jack Martin and Annie Spang, Circle Ministry Coordination Team, First Parish Unitarian Universalist, Cohasset, MA*

Circle Ministry (CM) describes the SGM that is alive and well at First Parish Unitarian Universalist in Cohasset, MA. Now in its fourth year, we have six groups with 53 participants. In the same way that we count our own age from birth on, we're not counting the "pregnancy year." It was five years ago that the seeds of this ministry were planted through our Shared Ministry Committee (SMC).

Shared Ministry has been the mantra of my ministry since I came here just over five years ago; it follows that our SMC addresses the effectiveness of all the congregation's ministries— professional leadership, religious education, music, social justice, and pastoral care. We're all in it together, and this is our "quality control" body. When I introduced the construct of small group ministry, the initial response was enthusiasm tempered with a desire to know more and to shape something that would work "here." While our Unitarian Universalist congregations have much in common, each takes a certain pride in qualities that set it apart from other UU congregations—a strength and a liability in our extended UU family!

We met early on with Peter Bowden, Small Group Ministry Consultant. Seasoned as Peter is in the multiple forms of SGM, he counseled us well and underscored the importance of the launching process. We took careful notes and engaged in thoughtful discussion. Next came one-on-one interviews between each committee member (minister included) and the ministerial or lay leaders of a select number of other UU congregations with well functioning and long-term small group ministry. Our source for finding these individuals was the Small Group Ministry Network and our minister's knowledge of where SGM had worked well. We devised a common interview format and did the requisite homework.

This "primary research" marked a turning point. After hearing for ourselves what worked, what others would do differently, what difference it made in congregational life, and more, we reconvened with heightened enthusiasm for making this work "here."

Considerable discussion produced the plan for First Parish UU. The key elements on which we all agreed shaped the foundation for Circle Ministry:

- a three-person coordination team that included our minister
- a meeting with the Parish Committee with a sample session and a hoped for vote of confidence from Parish Committee (achieved)

- a Circle Ministry Handbook and Brochure that set forth our vision
- facilitators *invited* and *trained* by our team
- a kick-off Sunday with a sermon from our minister and Peter Bowden, followed by a sample session led by Peter during coffee hour, followed by sign-ups
- a model that used evocative questions around a common theme for said session (vs. affinity groups that use a common theme over time)
- a frequency structure of two sessions per month for each group
- monthly facilitator meetings with our minister
- monthly meetings of CM Coordination team
- behavioral covenants, common to all groups
- a commitment to service projects as part of the behavioral covenants, with one project directed toward the congregation and the other toward the larger community
- a year-end potluck with conversation led by our coordination team around what folks liked, what desired changes we might incorporate, and an opportunity to sign on to a new group, stay in a group or opt out.

Our Circle Ministry Handbook sets forth the vision, the history, and the current structure of SGM here. At its core, it is a covenantal ministry. It only works if we honor the covenant that we make at the outset, a covenant with one another within each group, a covenant among our facilitators, and a covenant with the larger congregation and the community realized through service ventures.

As our Handbook states: We believe that Circle Ministry offers us a path to better realize our mission as a UU congregation and a religious community. This bears out in the comments of participants:

*"Before CM, I've never been in a group without an authority figure." "CM has reconnected me to the church and helped me to be excited about coming to Sunday services." "It's the focus of the CM format that makes the process work. It's very simple, and that's the beauty of it."*

Change happens. Adaptation bodes well for vitality, so we continue to tend to the elements of launching that suggest revisiting or revitalizing. We're also convinced that the nature of the launching was critical for the health of this ministry that continues to thrive.

To learn more, contact Jan at [JCarlssonb@aol.com](mailto:JCarlssonb@aol.com).

## Covenant Corner

### Human Spiritual Growth

*Helen Popenoe, Facilitator and most recent SGM Convener, River Road UU Congregation, Bethesda, MD*

In a River Road covenant group session, our hope is for a sharing time that is like enjoying a gentle rain that travels between our word drops. What happens is an electric space where meaning flashes between people. Then imagination billows in a steamy cloud swirling in foggy pictures for the eye of one's mind to see. Henry Nelson Wieman calls this mystery "divine creativity". He calls this group discussion "creative interchange." Thandeka relates this to perceiving one's own divinity. She says this "embodiment of experiences gives us deeper understanding of ourselves as religious beings." Roy Phillips put it in terms of deepening and living the life of the spirit. This creative expression comes out of our relating to others with wholeness and integrity. Judith Downing says this is "the human capacity for relationship or connection that goes beyond the senses and is experienced not as an act of will, but as a gift or as grace." These quotes come from Unitarian Universalist ministers.

We draw out meanings with our questions (Wieman's "searching dialogue"). We draw out meanings with appreciation, of all sorts, and find common threads amongst ourselves through spontaneous "comparison and cooperative analysis." Wieman also says, and I agree, this drawing out of meanings is a natural human quest. It requires letting yourself go, releasing your pure inner, feeling self and emotionally relating to the personal stories of the circle. We UU's don't get our answers from discovered values revealed by another human authority. When in a covenant group session, we do it with our own sensitivity and responsiveness, based on our own reality checks of first-hand experiences.

To sum up, this approach expects spiritual growth to come from a person's accumulation of meanings, enrichment of experience by that person recalling the context and feelings of particular original experiences and, during creative interchange, opening to expansion of one's appreciative awareness.

In creative interchange, we engage our whole selves with expressing mind-and-heart-pictures that expose our vulnerabilities and aspirations while gaining insights from the same sort of visionary imaginings of others. Together we find commonality along with respecting our differences. This value-questing "framed by tradition and lived in creative action in the world," as Rev. Judith Downing says, comes out of our liberation of having no creed or dogma. We are participating in the evolution of humankind.

Now, let's go back to getting soaked with the group's word drops. At River Road, this rests on creatively interacting with others as they relate to their natural and cultural environments ("transmitted to us by our contemporaries and by the age we live in" as Rev. Kuhwald puts it.) When we share those experiences in meaningful terms, it can point toward actively belonging to the UU movement. As religious beings, we see ways to turn what we understand to be the ideal into what's real.

We facilitators are change agents promoting sustainable growth for each covenant group participant. Leading from one's spirit or intuition in creative interchange, we foster belonging to the greater UU enterprise. This means being attuned to seizing opportunities for encouraging growth in individuals as they participate in the group sessions. I see this support of growth and identifying with the UU movement as cooperating with the harmonious creative power that resides in natural life.

As the sessions go on, this religious conversation can become an "art, in the sense of a skillful outer expression of an inner vision." (Wieman). This expression "always involves a degree of incompleteness and mystery." (Wieman). This co-creativity comes out of a matrix that liberates in the deliberately arranged format order of the session plan. Structure is in place for freedom to thrive.

Together, the group is generating a healing community and an accumulation of meanings in the progression through the sessions and the time they take in the year. Out of this comes religious growth through maturing levels of one's own consciousness and visceral learning. We are gaining understanding and new levels of truth from learning of the goal-seeking activities and assessments of life from the others in the group. We see what fits in our own lives. It's a process of transforming the culture that surrounds oneself to fit one's needs for finding one's own truth. Each in the group is practicing living with integrity and authenticity. Liberation happens for the participants, giving them ongoing expansion of value and a habit of creative interdependence that can extend outside the group.

This religious inquiry is intimate value-sharing that can reach the level of releasing intuitive insights. It requires the passionate and disciplined quest for a working understanding of life—one that can be applied to the everydayness of one's life. There's no pat outcome to predict from engaging in creative interchange, but to me, the kind of deep understanding that can come relates to the participant's ultimate value perspective. Perhaps, it comes by identifying an abiding resource or resources or spiritual energy upon which one can repeatedly rely for strength in facing life's problems and deeply savoring life's joys. Both Wieman and Thandeka would see this as getting in touch with the divine-human relationship.

## Jumpstart Your Small Group Ministry Program, *Part 2*

In the Fall 2009 issue of the *SGM Quarterly*, we looked at signs of a dwindling SGM program and focused on facilitators and meeting structure as ways to breathe new life into a program. Now we'll explore two additional areas: Visibility and Program Logistics.

### Visibility in the Church

"Your program needs to be visible to everyone who takes part in the life of your congregation if it is to be understood as a real and vital part of the life of the church," states Rev. Russ Savage, Assistant Minister at the UU Church of Annapolis, MD [See his article in the Fall 2009 issue]. Some ways to make this happen:

- Speak in worship services in a pulpit editorial at least once a year. Fern Aron of Shawnee Mission UU Church in Overland Park, KS, recommends asking respected congregants to talk about their experience in small group ministry. Choose a diverse group of speakers.
- Look at exposure in the newsletter. What about the website? Look at bulletin boards, new member materials, brochures, and annual reports. What possibilities can you find for getting the word out to others?
- Coordinate topics with the minister. Group members will feel like the "in group" when they hear a sermon that relates to their covenant group topic.
- Find ways to interact with other areas of the church. For example, do a one-time covenant group for RE teachers, a youth group, young moms (complete with babysitting services), or for an aspect of a social action program. Be creative to find ways to let all areas of the church become acquainted with SGM.
- Rev. Lucy Ijams of the UU Church in Meriden, CT, suggests having a Spiritual Sharing Circle Experience after the worship service for a half hour to acquaint others with the SGM process. She also suggests advertising the session topics in the newsletter to let folks better understand what these groups are all about.

### Program Logistics

Changes in this area are limitless. If your groups are ongoing, try some time-limited groups of 6-8 months. Fern Aron tells us that "groups are OK with dissolving their groups in May to go on to others in September of the next year." If your groups start once a year, try two start-up dates. Often mid-January is a good start-up time.

Solicit opinions and ideas from group members. At the end of a series have a celebratory potluck where groups can participate in plans for the next year. You'll have lots of ideas to try out.

There is a lot of administrative work involved in a successful SGM program: room reservations, participant sign-ups, newsletter articles, facilitator trainings, session plans, and endless details. Creating a steering committee may be helpful to prevent burn-out of the SGM coordinator, and will elicit new ideas to keep the program fresh.

Have a brainstorming session. Albuquerque wanted to find a way to involve more new members and came up with three-session mini-covenant groups to introduce the concept of SGM to new members. This has expanded to include "old-timers" who never quite knew what SGM was about and wanted to try it before signing up for a six month group.

Here's a good question to brainstorm with selected group members, clergy and leadership in the SGM program: Are small groups just another program or does small group ministry fulfill the very essence of what the church is about? Being clear on your congregation's ministry objectives is crucial to your program's long term success.

The only "sacred cow" in the eyes of many in the area of SGM is that of creating a safe place where participants can tell their stories to open, appreciative listening hearts. Any other area of SGM can be explored to further enrich and enliven the experience for those in our churches. It can be a lot of work to overhaul a lethargic program. It can also walk hand in hand with the vision of the church. Try some tinkering with *your* Small Group Ministry program.

*Alicia Hawkins is past Covenant Group Program Director at the First Unitarian Church of Albuquerque, NM, and co-author of the book, HEART TO HEART: Fourteen Gatherings for Reflection and Sharing, 2009, Skinner House Books.*

## SGM RESOURCES AND EVENTS

### **VOLUNTEER AT THE NETWORK BOOTH!**

#### **General Assembly, June 23-27 -- Minneapolis, MN**

Attention Network Members! Here's your opportunity to meet GA participants from every UUA district and talk about a topic dear to all our hearts—Small Group Ministry and Covenant Groups! A special request goes out to our friends at First Universalist Church of Minneapolis and First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis.

**Join us at the booth!** Sign up at [office@smallgroupministry.net](mailto:office@smallgroupministry.net)

#### **Small Group Ministry Discussion Group – Join the UUA List Serve**

The SGM Discussion Group is the list serve from the Unitarian Universalist Association website, listed there as [Covenant\\_Group\\_Ministry](#). The list provides an opportunity to share experiences, questions, comments, and problems with other individuals and congregations engaged in small group and covenant group ministry.

Subscribe to the mailing list on the Network's website, [www.smallgroupministry.net](http://www.smallgroupministry.net)

**Covenant Group News**, a free e-newsletter sent monthly to 1300 subscribers, features articles by ministers, facilitators, group members, and coordinators. Share your insights and experiences with fellow small group ministry/covenant group participants across the denomination. Submit articles and questions to the *CGNews* editor at [diana\\_dorroh@hotmail.com](mailto:diana_dorroh@hotmail.com). Read back issues and subscribe on our website.

#### **NETWORK ONLINE** [www.smallgroupministry.net](http://www.smallgroupministry.net)

The source for session plans, networking opportunities, Small Group Ministry resources, news of events and workshops, membership renewal forms, and back issues of *Covenant Group News* and the *SGM Quarterly*. The Fall 2009 *Quarterly* is now posted on the site.

## UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

### **Facilitator Training Workshop**

**March 12, 7:00PM - 9:00PM**

**and March 13, 8:30AM - 3:30PM,**

**Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge, LA**

This workshop will provide in-depth training and enrichment to current leaders and an introduction to Covenant Group leadership for potential leaders. Registration is \$10. Speakers are Rev. Steve Crump, Senior Minister; Diana Dorroh, Program Director, and the SGM Leadership Team; Ray and Kristie Boudreaux, Bob Dorroh, and Rhye Gray. Area churches, especially those within driving distance, are invited to send their leaders to this workshop. Some home hospitality will be available. See the website calendar for more information: [www.unitarianchurchbr.com](http://www.unitarianchurchbr.com) or contact Diana Dorroh, [diana\\_dorroh@hotmail.com](mailto:diana_dorroh@hotmail.com)

*In addition to being printed exclusively on white paper, which makes it easier to copy and is a cost-savings for the Network, the newsletter is now printed on eco-friendly, recycled paper.*



# UU SGM Network Publications

Order forms available from <http://www.smallgroupministry.net>

## COMING THIS SUMMER!

### ***Spiritual Journeys: 101 Session Plans for Small Group Ministry Programs***

by Steve Becker, UU SGM Network Board President

Looking for fresh, inspiring topics for your small group ministry program? This exciting new book offers a wide range of original, ready-to-use sessions covering Getting Started in a group, the UU Seven Principles, Spiritual Journeying, Attitude Adjustment, Clarifying Values, Personal Beliefs, Spiritual Challenges, Holidays, Just for Fun, Being Human, and Special Use subjects for member welcoming, departures, deaths, and national tragedies that affect our lives. Each plan contains complete Topic Introductions, Questions, and Closing Statements.

Themes are drawn from art, literature, UU liturgy, UU hymnals, current events, and religious scriptures.

*Available June 2010.*

### ***Implementing Small Group Ministry:***

***For Starting, Restarting and Enhancing a Program*** October 2009

How do congregations decide on group duration and meeting frequency? Does it take a team to manage a program? These questions and more are addressed in this evolving document, a series of considerations for Small Group Ministry program development, ongoing administration, groups, facilitators, session plans, and visibility, with a new section on uses of small group ministry. The chart incorporates current information from congregations, the Summer Small Group Ministry Institutes, and Covenant Group News. Mix and match features to build a SGM program that meets your ministry objectives.

*Network Members: \$6 plus \$5 shipping    Non-members: \$10 plus \$5 shipping*

### ***Ten Years of Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry*** June 2009

In celebration of the Network's fifth anniversary, this collection traces the Small Group Ministry movement through classic articles from 1998 to the present. The book focuses on the introduction of the small group ministry concept, the rise of enthusiasm, the facilitator's role, the nature of groups, and the element of service. A special history section features the visionaries who made UU Small Group Ministry a reality.

*Network Members : \$20 plus \$5 shipping    Non-members: \$30 plus \$5 shipping*

### ***Facilitator Training and Development Manual*** December 2008

Facilitator training and ongoing support are the keys to a successful small group ministry program. The training manual guides you through the process from recruitment and initial training through Facilitators Meetings and coaching. Part One is a plan for developing and implementing an in-house training program. Part Two, the *Facilitator's Guide*, is an interactive training module on CD to customize for your program, use in your training sessions and distribute to all group leaders.

*Network Members: \$15 plus \$5 shipping    Non-members: \$25 plus \$5 shipping*

### ***Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry*** June 2008

A collection of 50+ articles from 5 years of the *SGM Quarterly*, *Covenant Group News*, and website publications. Articles are arranged by topic, from basic elements of SGM, through the minister's role in shared ministry, sustaining your program, and the application of SGM principles in multiple aspects of congregational life.

*Network Members: \$15 plus \$5 shipping    Non-members: \$25 plus \$5 shipping*

### ***Small Group Ministry for Youth***

This dynamic format for middle and high school youth includes a session and discussion for facilitators and session plans for the Five Steps to Building Community and the Six Components of a Balanced Youth Program. Twenty-five session plans in all!

*Network Members: \$15 plus \$5 shipping    Non-members: \$25 plus \$5 shipping*

**It's true, membership has it's privileges!**

As a member of the SGM Network you:

Get the current issue of the newsletter *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

Individual Membership (\$40 year) \_\_\_\_\_

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