

Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another... (Hebrews 10:25)

# CONNECTIONS

## Small Groups @ NSCBC

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### CONNECTIONS

This newsletter, published 3-4 times a year, is designed specifically for small group leaders at North Shore Community Baptist Church. We hope these editions will be informative and supportive to you in your ministry as small group leaders. We welcome your feedback, ideas and suggestions about how we can better serve, support, and equip you. Feel free to share your thoughts with us!

"I have been blessed throughout my life by mentors who came alongside me and encouraged me in my growth in faith. Leading a small group of 7th grade girls allows me to continue the same ministry others have had in my life. I treasure my time with the girls and have been renewed in my own faith by seeing them simply and truly seeking after God. I pray that they might one day capture the same vision for small group mentoring and ministry.  
- Kim Ironside  
Small Group Leader

THE YOUNG WOMEN

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## Top 10 Tips for Bible Study Leaders

- compiled by *Betsy Crowe*

One of the primary reasons why we meet in small groups is to gather together around God's Word. Sometimes the prospect of leading a Bible Study can seem daunting and overwhelming. It need not be so! You don't need to be a Bible scholar or seminary graduate in order to faithfully lead a group in a study of the Bible. Below are some guidelines that you might find useful as you prepare to spend time together in God's Word.

- 1. Treat Scripture as the living Word of the living God.** When we open Scripture, we must be prepared to hear and respond to what the Holy Spirit teaches us.
- 2. Study the passage yourself first.** Resist the temptation to use commentaries or other resources as a first, rather than a last, resort. The more deeply you study and apply the scripture to your own life, the more your group will be able to do the same.
- 3. Do your homework.** Study the genre, historical context, theological concepts, parallel passages and especially Old Testament background (if studying the New Testament) for your text. However, only give your group as much background information as they need to understand the text in its original setting. You don't want to overwhelm them with details, but that knowledge will prove helpful in answering questions as they arise. A list of suggested resources can be found at the end of this article.
- 4. Ask questions the text answers.** This helps people learn to observe and think about the facts presented in the text itself (who, what, when, where, how, key words, repetitions, verbs, cause and effect relationships, contrasts or similarities, etc.). This also prevents participants from jumping in with their own opinions about what the text means.
- 5. Ask questions that make people think about the text.** Avoid "yes" or "no" questions, opinion or speculation questions, tangential or complicated questions. Aim for questions that are clear, sequential and oriented toward the main point of the passage.
- 6. Gently lead the group discussion.** This is not easy. It is important to encourage all to participate without allowing any one person to dominate. You want to respectfully appreciate all responses without endorsing all as equally pertinent or true. You want to help people unlock the meaning of the text without being overly technical or academic. You want to focus on the question being asked without cutting off other good discussion. You want to be faithful to your time constraints without limiting depth. As leaders, we must seek the Lord's wisdom in handling these delicate tensions.
- 7. Let Scripture interpret Scripture.** A good concordance will help clarify words and concepts by directing you to where and how the same word or concept is used elsewhere in Scripture. Begin by exploring other texts by the same author, then widen your scope to other uses of the word or concept.

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# Spring Carnival!

*An important part of group life is serving and ministering to others together. There are many ways that your group can minister both at NSCBC and beyond. From time to time, we will let you know about different opportunities for service, ministry and outreach.*

On June 14, the Community Care Ministry Area will host the **2nd Annual Spring Carnival!** This event was a great success last year and we are excited for it's return! The carnival is free and will be a great opportunity to invite your neighbors, coworkers and friends who may not attend NSCBC. As you can imagine, an event of this size requires a lot of help - and this is the perfect opportunity for your small group to serve together!

If you are interested in exploring ways that your group can serve at the *Spring Carnival*, please contact Donna Aldrich at (978) 524-8106.



*(Continued from page 1, Bible Study)*

8. **Aim for the main point.** Much can be learned from any passage of Scripture, but usually there is one main point in the text you are studying. Since we are limited in our capacity for retaining information, we need to help people identify the "one thing" they can take away from the study of a particular text.
9. **End with personal application.** We must always be sure to answer the "so what?" question because God has given us His Word in order to make us like is Son, not to satisfy our intellectual curiosity. We study God's Word *not* for the sake of study itself, but that we might be transformed through it. We must be doers of the Word, not hearers only.
10. **Pray.** Pray before you even open the Bible, asking the Lord to humble you before His Word and to speak to you through the power of His Spirit. Pray throughout your study of the Word, asking the Lord to enlighten the eyes of your heart so that you might know Him better. Pray as you conclude your gathering, that you may be faithful in responding to the revelation of His character through His Word.

## Suggested Resources for Leading a Bible Study:

**[Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels](#) (Intervarsity Press)**

**[Dictionary of Paul and His Letters](#) (Intervarsity Press)**

**[Dictionary of the Old Testament Historical Books](#) (Intervarsity Press)**

These three dictionaries provide a compilation of helpful articles, cross-references, extensive bibliographies, Scripture indexes and other reference materials. The dictionaries provide in-depth material in an accessible and summary format.

**[How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth](#) (D. Stuart and G. Fee)**

A readable, clear and helpful guide to understanding how to study the Bible, including resource recommendations. A must-read for all lovers of Scripture!

**[Commentary and Reference Survey](#) (John Glynn)**

An excellent resource guide for navigating the sea of commentaries and online resources for your study.

**[Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary](#) (Vine, Unger, White)**

A resource which enables those with some, limited or no background in either Greek or Hebrew to study the meaning of biblical words in their original languages.

**[www.zhubert.com](#) (The Resurgence Greek Project)**

An online resource allowing you to gain understanding of the Bible in it's original language even if you don't have a background in Hebrew or Greek.

**[www.biblegateway.com](#) (Bible Gateway)**

A basic online resource for studying Scripture which includes topical, keyword and passage searches in a variety of translations, as well as commentaries, dictionaries and several other resources.

# Want to Join Our Team?

The Lord has really been at work in the area of small groups at NSCBC over the past couple years. This is a growing area and we are excited to see more and more folks connected in group life! In order to provide adequate support to the growing number of small group leaders, the Small Group Leadership Team is looking to bring some new folks onboard. There are two different roles available: Small Groups Director and Small Groups Coach. Position descriptions for each of these roles are listed below and can also be found on our webpage on the church website ([www.nscbc.org](http://www.nscbc.org)). Just click on the "small groups" link and then look under "leader resources".

We are inviting YOU (our seasoned small group leaders!) to consider filling one of these roles. As a Small Groups Coach, you would have the opportunity to shepherd up to four small groups leaders, meeting with them regularly for fellowship and accountability. As a Small Groups Director, you would serve alongside current members of the Leadership Team in overseeing coaches and the administration of the ministry at large. Let us know if you are interested in joining our team in one of these new roles. We are particularly hoping that the Lord will raise up individuals willing to serve as Coaches - a very important role in this growing ministry. We'd love to have you onboard!

## Small Groups Coach

The Small Groups Coach is responsible for shepherding and leading small group leaders by encouraging and equipping them to pursue the three vital relationships and align themselves with the leader covenant.

### Qualifications:

- Clear commitment to Jesus Christ and growth in relationship with Him
- Active involvement in the NSCBC community
- Eagerness to invest in the lives of others
- Leadership abilities and a teachable spirit
- Alignment with the purpose statement and covenants of the Small Group Ministry
- Prior small group leadership experience

### Expectations:

#### Strategic

- Meet with a Small Groups Director three times a year.
- Contact Director monthly to report on progress of small groups.
- Participate in small group leader training events.

#### Shepherd Leaders

- Huddle with leaders two times a year.
- Meet one-on-one with each leader at least three times a year.
- Equip and develop each leader based on the values outlined in the leader covenant.
- Monitor the health, effectiveness and duration of groups.
- Assist group leaders in the process of identifying and developing qualified apprentices.
- Be available to minister to and serve each leader as specific needs arise.

#### Administration

- Ensure that all group information is current and accurate.
- Track group progress through it's covenant life cycle (12 to 24 months) with particular attention to the early and later stages of group life.

## Small Groups Director

The Small Groups Director is responsible for providing vision, direction and support to the Small Group Ministry. He/she is also responsible for shepherding and leading the Small Groups Coaches.

### Qualifications:

- Clear commitment to Jesus Christ and growth in relationship with Him
- Active involvement in the NSCBC community
- Eagerness to invest in the lives of others
- Leadership abilities and a teachable spirit
- Alignment with the purpose statement and covenants of the Small Group Ministry
- Prior small group leadership experience

### Expectations:

#### Strategic

- Meet bi-weekly with the Small Group Leadership Team.
- Meet with the Elders three to four times a year.
- Develop and implement a strategic annual plan for the Small Group Ministry.
- Meet one-on-one with coaches at least three times a year.
- Maintain environments for connecting people to small groups.

#### Leadership Development

- Develop and implement small group leaders training sessions for spring and fall.
- Develop other tools to train, equip and support leaders.
- Recruit new leaders.

#### Administration

- Maintain a group information database.
- Maintain small group website and other modes of communication.
- Determine and manage budget.

**Small Groups**  
 ~ North Shore Community Baptist Church ~

**Community**

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...and let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.  
 (Hebrews 10:24)

[www.nscbc.org](http://www.nscbc.org)

***The Small Group Ministry,  
 through God's provision of power and wisdom in the Holy Spirit,  
 exists to create opportunities  
 for discipleship, community, and outreach  
 as biblical ways of magnifying the name of Jesus Christ.***

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Healthy small groups are consistently pursuing growth in the following three vital relationships:

***Discipleship***

Maturing followers are continually pursuing an intimate relationship with God through Christ.

***Community***

Maturing believers are growing in community with other believers through spending time together, encouraging one another, and supporting one another.

***Outreach***

Maturing believers are reaching out to embrace people with grace and truth so that they also might have an intimate relationship with God through Christ.

## By Way of Reminder

- reflections by Kirby Francis

**"Therefore, I shall always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present with you. And I consider it right, as long as I am in this earthly dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder" (2 Peter 1:12-13)**

I have a Chevy Cavalier whose battery I completely drain at least four times a year. No, I don't do it intentionally. No, I don't do it when it's convenient. See, my Chevy Cavalier is lacking a critically important piece of equipment without which I am not sure I should even leave home: a "dummy alarm". You know, that annoying buzzer/bell / reassuring computer voice that says, "Umm, were you planning on turning the lights off?"

See, I know that if I don't turn the lights off on my car, bad things will happen. The frantic turning of the ignition switch on my way to somewhere important will resound with the heavy "....." sound. The lights won't come on in the cabin. In fact, nothing will happen. I know this all too well - but I need the dummy alarm to remind me to switch the silly lights off, or I'm sunk.

A lot of this thing we call "Christian Life" is like a dummy alarm. We don't need to be taught things for the first time, but boy, do we ever need a reminder. Every week, we sit around together, and pray for people whose tragedies remind us why the Lord wants our lips and lives pure. We share Scriptures we know very well, but still need to have underlined during THIS week's struggles. Small groups is the ultimate "dummy alarm" for the soul. Sometimes, it means the difference between a dead, fleshly reaction, and a life-filled spiritual one.

*(Kirby Francis is the Chair of the Elders at NSCBC and a strong supporter of small group life.)*