

SMALL GROUPS



January 12, 2012

Dear Small Group Leader,

As we begin a new year, we have some news to share with you about where we're headed this winter and how you can integrate your group. If you were facilitating a group this past fall, we hope that you have talked about whether or not you will continue facilitating a group and who would like to continue in that group. The reality is that many will probably stay together with you if you continue to lead. However, having an intentional ending and restarting allows for graceful transitions for people both out of and into groups. This is especially helpful to new people entering our church. So, at the end of each small group season, we're asking you to do a couple things:

- Review with your group how the last season went and what can be learned.
- Decide whether or not you will continue to facilitate a group.
- Decide what kind of group you would like to facilitate.
- Discern with your group if there is anyone in the group that should become a group facilitator on their own or an apprentice to you or another facilitator. A small group apprentice guide is available from the church.
- If you are facilitating a group, find out who would like to continue with you from your existing group.
- Communicate all these changes to us through the groups email: groups@southharbor.org.

Lastly, there are a number of ways to lead a group and different things to focus on. Here are some ideas:

- Become a **missional small group**, focusing on either supporting one another in your missional efforts through prayer, encouragement, and creativity, or by participating together in missional activities. For help on becoming a missional group, see Pastor Tom.
- Use **The Story curriculum** to go along with the all-church challenge to read through the story over the next 8 months. You can use the questions in the back of the book or purchase the additional curriculum through the church office at a discounted rate. See www.southharbor.org/thestory for more information.
- Check with Pastor Tom for **other resources** that might be of interest to your group.

On the next page, you'll find the **Quick Plan Guide** - This is a guide to the next 3 months of facilitating a small group to help you figure out a flow, dates, etc. You don't have to follow this, but it can be helpful.

We hope this will be helpful to you as we move into the winter and you prepare to lead your group.

Please mark your calendar for **Sunday, January 22 at 11:30am**. We will be gathering as a community of small group facilitators for a Small Group Strategy session. At this gathering, you will get help with your group, hear from other leaders like you, overview materials for the winter series, and strategize for success in your group.

Thanks for your willingness to serve Christ as a small group leader, and we'll see you soon!

~Amy Gadison-Herring, Dani Organek, & Pastor Tom Elenbaas

HAVE QUESTIONS?

NEED RESOURCES?

DON'T HESITATE TO ASK. WE
WANT TO HELP.

GROUPS@SOUTHHARBOR.ORG

HOW DO YOU PLAN TO BE SOCIAL THIS WINTER WITH YOUR GROUP?

- ATTEND THE SUPERBOWL PARTY AT SOUTH HARBOR TOGETHER
- MAKE A BUNCH OF HOT CHOCOLATE AND COOKIES AND VISIT A LOCAL SLEDDING HILL TO BRING JOY AND WARMTH.
- HOST A GAME-NIGHT
- THROW A DESSERT PARTY
- BE CREATIVE!

*WE'VE FOUND THAT GROUPS
WHO HAVE FUN TOGETHER
SOCIALY EVERY 4 TO 6 WEEKS
ENHANCE RELATIONSHIPS AND
THE STRENGTH OF THE GROUP.
MAKE PLANS NOW!!*

SMALL GROUP STRATEGY SESSION

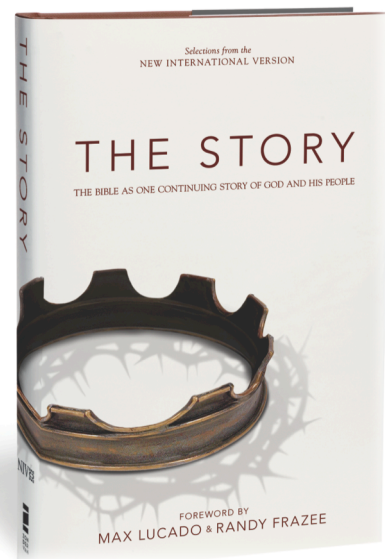
*SUNDAY, JANUARY 22
11:30AM, ROOM 9*

SMALL GROUPS QUICK PLAN GUIDE

This Quick Plan Guide is provided to help you plan your group calendar. We hope this will help you to think purposefully about your time together as a group and is provided as a suggested “plug ‘n play” calendar for your group life.

We are suggesting that groups center around *The Story*. We suggest that you each read the *Story* along the suggested schedule provided at church and on the website. Encourage members of your group to do the following:

- Highlight or underline significant passages (confusing, interesting, enlightening, surprising, etc.)
 - Write out questions – document the questions you have while you read.
 - Journal through the questions in the back of the book.
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Quick Start Idea #1: using just the book and a journal

- Open with prayer
 - Talk around the room about how everyone is doing. Catch up and break the ice. Use an ice-breaker to get people talking.
 - Talk through the questions at the back of the book in the chapters you've read since meeting last.
 - Share personal questions and insights from the passage.
 - Close with a time of prayer for and with one another.
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Quick Start Idea #2: using the Adult Curriculum (DVD and participant's guide)

- Open with prayer
 - Start with some ice-breakers or conversation
 - Watch the DVD in the Adult Curriculum
 - Talk through the DVD and follow the questions in the participant's guide.
 - Close with a time of prayer for and with one another.
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Because the book is 31 chapters long, your group can meet weekly from now until August and have good content to work through each week. Or, you can meet every other or every third week and cover larger bodies of material. Or, you could meet every other or every third week and talk about just the chapter from that week. Be creative! We don't suggest monthly meetings because they are too infrequent to develop significant community.

Kids Idea!!

If people in your group have children or students, take turns as adults meeting with the kids to discuss their readings. Or better yet, include them in your conversations and have a “family bible study”! Or, alternate weeks... include the kids one week and have them meet separately another week.