

**SMALL GROUP MINISTRY  
HANDBOOK**

Wesley Methodist Church

**2010**





# **WESLEY SMALL GROUP MINISTRY HANDBOOK**

First Edition, 2010.

*"I just came from a small group gathering where real life was being shared, lived, prayed and planned, and where both emotions and intellect were challenged. It is a typical Christian small group. The reason we gather is to experience life together, expecting Jesus Christ to be present and participate. We gathered in the home of a group member. We met for two hours. One couple was traveling on vacation and not able to be present. We prayed for her safety and rest. One spouse was not there. She was studying for exams, we prayed for her health, endurance and clarity of mind. One man just found out he may lose his job of twenty years. We prayed for him to experience God's purpose and vocation. Another couple revealed that they were having some of the best years of their lives. We thanked God for the grace of their lives together. A woman described her frustration because her new business was so slow in getting started. We prayed for her to have patience and perseverance. As we told our stories, shared our pain, assessed our common humanity, dreamed, hoped, held hands and gave each other hugs of greeting and goodbyes, we thanked God for the freedom and opportunity to gather as friends in face-to-face relationships, to speak the truth, to demonstrate love and to share faith in Christ. **Nothing spectacular happened But heaven was clearer God was closer And Jesus was more real Thank you Lord, for a small group of real people who love me"***

- Gareth Weldon Icenogle - Biblical Foundations for Small Group Ministry: An Integrational Approach

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## WAYS TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook has been designed to be used in the following ways:

### ✝ Equipping Small Group Leaders

- Pastors, Pastoral Team Members, Pastoral Care Zone Leaders and designated leaders can use this handbook to equip and encourage Small Group (SG) Leaders to lead their SGs. SG Leaders can also use this handbook to equip potential leaders and/or assistant leaders (we recommend that new leaders have their own copies and these can be requested from the Wesley Small Group Office).

### ✝ Ongoing Resource Guide

- This handbook can be used for specific training or briefing, Pastoral Care Zone meetings and Ministry-wide meetings. In addition, this handbook can be used as an ongoing resource and reference guide for all Wesley Small Group Ministry (WSGM) members.

### ✝ Personal Study

- This handbook can be used for personal study or for research work on SGs. One would read it like a book and take time to apply its principles to life and ministry.

It is important to note that the handbook is a reference guide and not a book of discipline 'cast in stone'. Discernment, flexibility and prudence are needed to ensure that this handbook serves the WSGM and not vice versa. It is also important that one does not expect a handbook like this to contain 'fast and simple' solutions which are frequently expected in today's fast paced society. Just as Christian discipleship is a learning process, so you are encouraged to receive the 'teaching' portions of this handbook as part of your journey of growth in Christian leadership.

# **INTRODUCTION**

## **Why the Need for Small Groups In a Church**

Jesus Christ can be said to have created the first SG model for us to emulate. He chose to have a SG of twelve disciples whom He would spend much time with so that the disciples would be able to learn His ways and be obedient to His call for discipleship. On many occasions, Jesus would give instructions to the disciples when they were away from the crowd (for example the Sermon on the Mount). Jesus would also explain to the disciples the meaning of the parables after the crowd had left. (Mark 4).

As the church grows larger, it would be impossible for the pastors or full time staff of the church to meet the needs of every member. Therefore, SG leaders are appointed and empowered to assist in the pastoral care of the members through teaching and caring for members. Thus, the church has the responsibility to prayerfully select and train SG leaders (SGLs) who are themselves disciples of Christ.

A church is not just about the collection of members. More importantly, it is also about the transformation of its members to be more like our Lord Jesus Christ. Just as Jesus formed His SG of disciples to transform them into Christ-likeness; so SGs are needed in the church for this discipleship process. It is not sufficient for members of the church to just worship God on Sundays.

There is a need for commitment to the learning of the ways of Christ in a SG setting where much more time can be devoted to a community of caring for one another, sharing and dwelling in the Word of God with one another. From Acts 5:42, we also read that the early church teachers and elders went from house to house visiting SGs in their homes as they taught and made disciples.

As put forth by Jeffrey Arnold in his book “Big Book on Small Groups”, the question for us is not whether we have SGs in the church; but whether the SGs in the church are disciple-making in nature.



## Mission Statement & Strategy

In 2009, Wesley Small Group Ministry (WSGM) moved into another phase of its ministry life and developed a new mission – ‘Growing Groups that Bear Lasting Fruit’ (see Figure 1). The biblical basis for this mission is John 15:16 where Jesus tells us, His disciples, that He chose and appointed us to bear fruit that will last.

To enable WSGM to fulfill its mission, it has adopted a strategy that focuses on creating the 3 ‘environments’ of ‘gathering’, ‘nurturing’ and ‘flowering’ (see Figure 2) where people are constantly gathered into small groups to be nurtured and disciplined, and then helped to flower by serving.



Figure 1: Wesley Small Group New Mission

## Our Strategy:



Figure 2: 3 ‘Environments’ Strategy

## Characteristics of the 3 Environments

The table below gives some of the characteristics that describe each of the 3 Environments.

GATHERING	NURTURING	FLOWERING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The event or program is open to anyone who is not a member of a SG.</li> <li>• Seeker-friendly. Small groups adjust their schedule to accommodate a guest.</li> <li>• Guests can find out more about SG life.</li> <li>• Guests are invited to be a part of SG life.</li> <li>• Cringe factor is low.</li> <li>• Members are not cliquish and guests experience Christian hospitality.</li> <li>• Efficient follow-up helps people feel important and accepted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members encourage one another to grow in Christ and spiritual friendships are developed.</li> <li>• Members feel supported through words of encouragement, acts of love and faithful prayers.</li> <li>• Members are growing in character and competence as the ministry provides pastoral care, spiritual formation and skills development.</li> <li>• Collaboration with other ministries to facilitate growth and nurturing of members' spiritual walk.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members talk about and plan to share blessings with people outside the faith or outside the group.</li> <li>• We spur one another on towards love and good works.</li> <li>• Sharing, thanksgiving and praying about how God has been real.</li> <li>• Collaboration with other ministries facilitate flowering as members learn about opportunities to serve.</li> </ul>

Table 1: Characteristics of the 3 Environments

## Characteristics of Small Groups in Each of the Environments

Table 2 describes how a SG is like in each of the Environments (do note that a SG may find itself in more than 1 environment at a particular time period).

GATHERING	NURTURING	FLOWERING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncomfortable.</li> <li>• Getting to know one another.</li> <li>• SGL(s) recently appointed, adjusting to their roles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groups formed and leaders appointed.</li> <li>• Members, now more comfortable, are encouraged to love God and to love one another in practical ways.</li> <li>• Core curriculum for members' growth adopted. Members starting to take up active roles and responsibilities in the group.</li> <li>• Structure taking shape (roster, plans, accountability/covenant, etc)</li> <li>• Leaders know their roles, next leaders identified, trained and mentored</li> <li>• "Empty Chair" being practiced.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group established and membership increasing.</li> <li>• Multiplication being discussed and transition of leaders planned.</li> <li>• Members put into practice "loving others as Christ loved us" e.g. being involved in outreach and social concerns.</li> <li>• Members are taking leadership positions in SGM.</li> <li>• Leaders being sent from one group to lead a newly formed group.</li> <li>• Members are serving in SGM and/or other ministries in church.</li> <li>• Groups may multiply, others may close.</li> </ul>

Table 2: Characteristics of the Small Group in the Environments

# CHAPTER 1: WESLEY SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

## 1.1 Organisation

The Wesley Small Group Ministry (WSGM) is led by the Small Group (SG) Executive Committee which comprises a Chairperson, Pastors, Pastoral Team Members (PTMs), the Treasurer, Pastoral Care Zone Leaders (PCZLs) and Assistant Pastoral Care Zone Leaders (APCZLs), and Convenors of sub-committees. The SG Committee may act through its SG Committee which consists of the Chairperson, Pastors, PTMs and up to two Convenors and up to two Pastoral Care Zone Leaders. The figure below gives an overview of the organizational structure of WSGM.

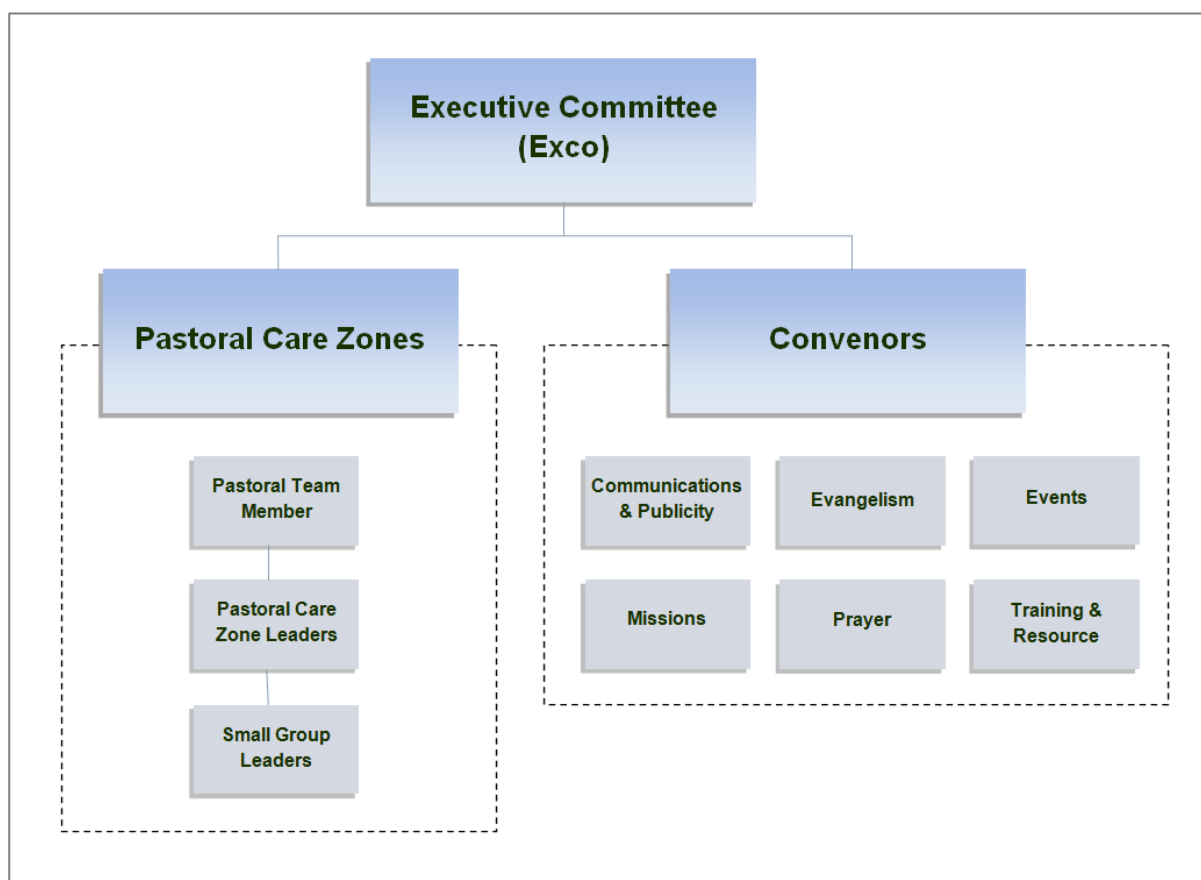


Figure 3: Organizational Structure of Wesley Small Group Ministry

## 1.2 Overview of Roles & Responsibilities

### 1.2.1 Chairperson

The Exco is headed by the Chairperson who is elected by the Local Conference and is a member of the Local Church Executive Council (LCEC) for a term of one year, renewable. The detailed roles and responsibilities of the Chairperson are set out in Appendix A.

### ***1.2.2 Pastor of Wesley Small Group Ministry***

A Pastor is assigned to the SGM by the Pastor-In-Charge (PIC) of Wesley Methodist Church (WMC). The detailed roles and responsibilities of PTMs are set out in Appendix A.

### ***1.2.3 Pastoral Team Member***

The PTM is an employed full-time staff of the church. PTMs have a dual responsibility in WSGM, being responsible for some pastoral care zones and some sub-committees. The detailed roles and responsibilities of PTMs are set out in Appendix A.

### ***1.2.4 Convenors of Sub-Committees***

The Convenor of each sub-committee is appointed by the Exco. Potential candidates will have to be identified, recommended and approved. The detailed roles and responsibilities of the Convenors are set out in Appendix A.

### ***1.2.5 Treasurer***

The Treasurer is appointed by the Exco for a term of three years. The detailed roles and responsibilities of the Treasurer are set out in section 'Treasurer' of Appendix A.

### ***1.2.6 Pastoral Care Zone Leaders/Assistant Pastoral Care Zone Leaders***

The Pastoral Care Zone Leaders (PCZLs) and Assistant Pastoral Care Zone Leaders (APCZLs) are appointed by the Exco. Potential candidates will have to be identified, recommended and approved by the Exco before they are appointed as PCZL or APCZLs. The organization of the Pastoral Care (PC) Zones and detailed roles/responsibilities of the PCZL and APCZLs are set out in Chapter 5: Pastoral Care Zones.

### ***1.2.7 Small Group Leaders/Assistant Small Group Leaders***

SG Leaders (SGLs) and Assistant SGLs (ASGLs) work closely with the PCZLs to manage the SG under their care. SGLs and ASGLs are nominated by their respective SG (SG) members. The detailed roles and responsibilities of the SGL and ASGL are set out in Chapter 4: Small Group Leadership.

### ***1.2.8 Program Coordinator***

The Program Coordinator (PC) is an employed full-time staff of the church to assist the Pastors, PTMs and SGM volunteers to provide facilitation and coordination of all SG activities. The detailed roles and responsibilities of the PC for WSGM are set out in section 'Program Coordinator' of Appendix A.

### ***1.2.9 Ministry Coordinator***

The Ministry Coordinator (MC) is an employed full-time staff of the church to assist the Pastors, PTMs and SGM volunteers to provide administrative support for the WSGM. The detailed roles and responsibilities of the MC for WSGM are set out in section 'Ministry Coordinator' of Appendix A.

## **1.3 Overview of Activities and Programs in Wesley Small Group Ministry**

### **1.3.1 Meetings**

#### 1.3.1.1 Executive Committee (Exco) Meeting

The Exco is chaired by the Chairperson of WSGM and meets two to three times a quarter to manage the day to day responsibilities of the ministry. It is also responsible for the Mission, strategies and detailed plans of the SGM.

#### 1.3.1.2 Pastoral Care Zone Leaders' Meeting

The PTMs and PCZLs will meet, plan, organize, discuss and decide on matters pertaining to the PC Zones. The meetings are held once every two or three months and a PTM of WSGM chairs the meetings.

#### 1.3.1.3 Small Group Leaders' Connect

SGLs meet together on a quarterly basis to learn, pray and encourage spiritual friendships amongst leaders in their zones. The meeting is led by PCZLs, PTMs and Pastor.

#### 1.3.1.4 Pastoral Care Zone Meeting

The PC Zone Leaders will organize regular meetings to share, nurture and update the SGLs he/she is responsible for. Information on the conduct of such meetings is set out in Chapter 4.

### **1.3.2 Events**

#### 1.3.2.1 Annual Ministry Event

The Exco organizes an annual SG ministry event in the fourth quarter of each year. This can be a thanksgiving event for all leaders and/or members to fellowship and celebrate God's faithfulness for the past year. The event can also be used as a platform to introduce the PCZLs to new SG members and announce major initiatives.

#### 1.3.2.2 Planning Conference

The WSGM Planning Conference is held annually and attended by all members of the SG Committee. It is our practice to invite potential leaders from PC Zones and sub-committees to participate, in order to participate in the planning process. The Conference is designed by the Exco to review the year's initiatives and chart

directions for the following year.

#### 1.3.2.3 Pastoral Care Zone Congregational Meeting

The PC Zone Congregational Meeting is organized by individual zones. It is facilitated by the respective PCZL for each PC Zone and targets all members of SGs in that zone. It is a time of fun, worship and “getting to know you”.

#### 1.3.2.4 Small Group Weekend

The SG Weekend is an annual event to highlight the WSGM to the church at large with the intention of creating awareness and recruiting. The SG Weekend is celebrated once a year in the church calendar, usually in the third quarter.

### **1.3.3 Others**

#### 1.3.3.1 Wesley Small Group Ministry Notice Board

The WSGM Notice Board is set up in the church to announce and keep members of the WSGM posted on events, activities and happenings in the ministry. The notice board is maintained by the PC under the direction of the Convenor for Communications and Publicity Sub-committee and PTMs.

#### 1.3.3.2 Wesley Small Group Ministry Website

The purpose of the WSGM website is to provide news and information on events and happenings within the WSGM. At the same time, the website is used as a teaching resource to provide ideas for SGLs and articles of interests to the ministry at large. This is managed by the Communications Sub-Committee and PTMs and maintained by the PC.

#### 1.3.3.3 Emails

WSGM sends regular emails to all leaders to provide updates on news, upcoming events or other ministry initiatives that may need their response or involvement.

#### 1.3.3.4 Small Group Leaders' Training

The WSGM will provide training for new SGLs as well as continuing training for existing SGLs. Such training for SGLs is managed by the Training and Resources Sub-Committee and PTM.

#### 1.3.3.5 Wesley Small Group Ministry Handbook

The WSGM Handbook is a resource to inform and equip WSGM leaders on the organization and work of the ministry. All members of the SG Committee and all SGLs have access to this handbook.

## CHAPTER 2: THE SMALL GROUP LIFE-CYCLE

Every Small Group (SG) passes through a life-cycle where it goes through formation, growth and closure.

### 2.1 Starting a Small Group

Most SGs are formed after the end of a run of a Baptism Membership Class (BMC) or an Alpha Course. When there are participants interested to form a SG, the organizers or BMC and Alpha work with the Pastoral Team Member (PTM) on starting the group. The newly formed SG will then be assigned to a PC Zone and the leaders will be supported by their Pastoral Care Zone Leader (PCZL) as they begin their journey as a group.

Groups can also be formed through other means; for Wesley Methodist Church (WMC) members who are planning to start a SG through these other means, they are encouraged to contact the Wesley Small Group Ministry (WSGM) office to find out more about the process and guidelines (which includes forms that needs to be filled which are found in Appendix B).

### 2.2 Phases of Small Group Life-Cycle

The table below gives an overview of the phases that a SG goes through from its formation to its multiplication/closure.

Phase	Step	Activity	Detailed tasks
Gathering	01	Formation of SG (1) through BMC, Alpha, or similar courses, or, (2) on an Ad Hoc basis	Course organizers or Ad Hoc group representatives to inform WSGM on group's/cohort's desire to form SGs. PTM or designated PCZL will meet and share with nominated Small Group Leaders (SGLs) or representatives on follow up actions. This procedure will also apply to groups that would like to meet for an initial three to six months but are unsure if they will eventually form a SG.  Once a SG is formed, the group will need to register officially with WSGM by email to its Ministry Coordinator.
	02	Nomination and appointment of SGLs/	Once the SG nominates its SGL and Assistant SGL (ASGL) (each SG is



		ASGLs	recommended to have at least one SGL and one ASGL), the PTM and PCZL may meet the new leader(s) for a brief interview. WSGM will email the SGL and ASGL to fill in a Volunteer's Recruitment Form.
	03	Assignment of SGs to a PC Zone	The newly formed SG will be assigned to a PC Zone. The PCZL of the Zone will shepherd the new SGL and ASGL to start and grow the SG.
	04	Accountability of leaders	SGL is expected to attend PC Zone meetings and SGL Connect for the sake of accountability, community and growth as a disciple of Christ.  SGL will be guided by the PCZL to shepherd his or her group of members.
	05	Starting up on the SG meetings	The newly-formed SG members will sign up for the next SGM Facilitation Course (full Saturday) and send representatives to the SGM Leadership 101 (another full Saturday).  Meanwhile, SGL and ASGL will make arrangement for the first SG social/meeting. New SGs from BMC will use the starter kit. Other newly formed SGs may choose another more suitable curriculum if they have already done the starter kit in previous SGs. WSGM suggest that meetings shall include guided times of worship, prayer, bible study and fellowship.
Nurturing	06	Maintaining healthy and growing SG life.	As members of the SG meet more and more, they are most likely to get more involved in the life of one another. Most importantly, the SGL and ASGL must facilitate the growth of each member (as a disciple of Christ) within the community.  After 6-12 months, the SG might begin

			inviting friends to its meetings.
Flowering	07	Multiplication/Closure	<p>More members might join the SG and there will come a time when the SGL and ASGL will have to pray and discern if it is time for multiplication.</p> <p>Members are serving in the SGM or other ministries in church.</p> <p>At times, there might be a need to close the SG due to reasons such as frequent travel commitments due to work, merger of SGs and even due to declining health of the SG.</p>

Table 3: Phases of Small Group Life-Cycle

## 2.3 Closing a Small Group

When a SG is considering and praying about closing because of the above mentioned reasons (see last column, last row of Table 3), they are encouraged to do the following:

- Consult their PCZL about the situation and seek their prayer and guidance.
- Work with their PCZL and, when required, the PTM when the group has made a decision to close. They will walk with the SGL through this phase of the group's life and assist in group closure.
- Consider also the needs of the remaining members and if they would like to join another group (and if they are, it is important that they are assigned to new SGs), etc.

## CHAPTER 3: ASPECTS OF SMALL GROUP LIFE

This chapter covers the core aspects of what goes on continually during the life of a Small Group (SG), and provides suggestions on how to carry them out effectively.

### 3.1 Worship<sup>1</sup>

God alone is worthy of our worship. In worship we begin to learn who God is and what God does. A deeper relationship with God brings a sense of closeness and security that carries over into other areas of our life and as we are changed inwardly, we become testimonies of His grace in our lives. When we forget to worship God, we lose connection with who He is and what is important in our lives. Eventually, our focus becomes me-centered as opposed to God-centered.

The purpose of worship is to declare through praise, thanksgiving and our very lives, the worth-ship of God, as we lift our hearts in love and reverence to God. In worship, we can exercise praise, give thanks and finally we offer our lives to God.

#### 3.1.1 *Worship in the Small Group*<sup>2</sup>

Worship in the SG is not meant to be thought of as a separate or distinct kind of activity; instead it should be understood as underlying all that is done in the SG. With the latter, the SG group can then cultivate a constant awareness of the presence of God and a subsequent awe for His greatness and love; this will certainly enhance the SG times of study, prayer and fellowship.

However, while worship should not be thought of as a separate activity, yet a distinct time should be set aside during SG meetings where worship is emphasized. This is so that we may better learn what worship is, and how to worship better.

##### 3.1.1.1 Praise

Christian praise focuses on who God is and what God does in and among His creation. When we praise God, we attempt to think about His nature and actions and to respond in faith and adoration. Some of the ways where we can experience praise in our SGs are to:

- Incorporate praise songs.
- Use Scripture/psalms and hymns for singing and meditation (Colossians 3:16 speaks about singing 'psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God').
- Ask group members to share a favorite Scripture that tells something about who God is and what God does.
- Offer a prayer time in which your prayers simply affirm God in praise.

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<sup>1</sup> This section is adapted from J. Archer, 'The Big Book On Small Groups' (IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004) and D. Earley, 'Eight Habits Of Effective SG Leaders' (Texas: Cell Group Resources, 2001).

<sup>2</sup> This section is adapted from J. Archer, 'The Big Book On Small Groups' (IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004).

### 3.1.1.2 Thanksgiving

The focus for thanksgiving is on what God does on our behalf. Thanksgiving places God in the center of all things. In giving thanks, we realize that God, who is at work in the world, is also present in every area of life. Eventually, we reach the point where both praise and thanksgiving pour forth from grateful hearts. Some suggestions that a SGL can follow to facilitate thanksgiving during worship are:

- Allowing SG members to explore who God is to express thanks for His perfect character.
- Offering a time of thanksgiving, perhaps in the context of a sharing time, in which people offer thanks for what God is doing in their lives.
- Asking members to share a time in their lives when they suffered, and yet experienced God's presence and love in deeper ways. One of the great realities of the Christian life is that God can turn our hurts and defeats into victories.

### 3.1.1.3 Offering Our Lives

When we offer ourselves to God, we are performing a spiritual act of worship. (Romans 12:1). Worship is a deeply rooted response. For us to worship, we must actively engage our heads, our hearts and our very lives in knowing and serving God. For the fact remains that the greatest offering we can bring to God is ourselves.

### 3.1.1.4 Suggestions to Aid Worship

A couple of suggestions that a SGL can consider to help his/her SG worship better are:

- Allowing a moment of silence before prayer time to encourage people to “get in tune” with God.
- Using Christian recordings done professionally as an aid, if no musicians are available

## **3.2 Bible Study**

### ***3.2.1 How to Study the Bible***

Before one can facilitate good Bible studies, he/she needs to be a good student of the Bible. To help one become such a student, one can follow the process of ‘Observation → Interpretation → Application’, to which the following sub-sections describe.

#### 3.2.1.1 Observation

In observation, we look at a biblical text closely to find out what it says. The following gives a guide on ways that lead to good observation:

- Use several translations for a fresh look at each passage. This will help identify key words and develop insights into text.
- Ask questions like: “Who is writing/speaking and to whom?”, “What is their relationship?”, “What is being discussed?”, “What is happening?”, “Where does it take place?”, “When does it take place?”, “Why does the speaker say what he does?”, “Are there any cause/effect relationships?”, “What are the commands and promises of God?”, “What is said about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and God’s people?”
- List specific points of truth from your observation of the text. Ask questions in relation to meaning. Proceed verse by verse, “What does this mean?”, “Why is it important to understand this?”, “How does this relate to the original audience?”
- Taking note of sentence and grammatical structure – for example how do connecting words like ‘although’, ‘however’, ‘because’ and others impact the meaning of the biblical text.
- Do a study on terms that appear to be prominent in the biblical text like those that are repeated, those that contrast with one another, etc.

#### 3.2.1.2 Interpretation

After observation comes the need for interpretation. In interpretation, we seek to understand the meaning of the biblical text as the author had intended to convey. The following gives a guide for ways to interpret:

- Understand the context of the biblical text like: “How does this biblical text fit into the larger passage of Scripture it is located in?”, “At the time of its writing, what was going on both at and around the place where its author was at, as well as, that of the author’s audience?”, “What other significant things to take note of in terms of the author’s and audiences geographical areas and their cultural norms.
- Identify the genre, meaning if the biblical text is written as a poetry, narrative (or story), prophecy, etc.
- Use bible helps like commentaries, bible dictionaries, atlases, etc.
- Theme: Write down in a sentence the main idea or point the author is trying to get across. You may want to write down two or three main principles you discovered that develop the theme.

#### 3.2.1.3 Application

In application, we are primarily concerned with the question, “How will I allow Scripture to transform my life?” And the best place to look into letting Scripture transform our lives is found in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 which tells us that Scripture is to be used for:

- ‘Teaching’ meaning, “How will this truth change my life, my church, my family, my work?”
- ‘Reproof’ meaning, “Where do I fall short? Why do I fall short? How can we evaluate ourselves as a group?”
- ‘Correction’ meaning, “What will I do about it? What will I correct? How will others help me do this?”
- ‘Training in righteousness’ meaning, “What practices, relationships, and experiences will I pursue so that I might train myself to be like Christ.”

### **3.2.2 Characteristics of Good Group Bible Study**

The handling of the Word of God brings great responsibility, and no sincere leader wants to lead people astray. Some of this fear is legitimate, coming from a desire to be faithful to the biblical text. But some of the fear and inadequacy need not be present, as God can use our attempts to do good work.

Here are six disciplines that contribute to good study:

- The nature of the study has been agreed on by the group. Members expect the study to meet needs in their lives.
- The study has been broken down into legitimate units of study; and each SG member knows what is expected in weekly preparations. You will do better to start with small assignments and work up as people feel fulfilled in their study.
- The study has a definite application in the life of each group member. Not all studies will be as beneficial to a group at a particular point in time. The goal of discipleship must always be kept at the forefront of group study.
- Spend the greatest amount of time discussing application of biblical principles. Conduct your study time on a passage of reasonable difficulty and length, and take time to meditate and pray about how to live the truth.
- The group studies Scripture in its historical context. Another characteristic of good group study is that the study utilizes exegesis (discovering the author's original intent) before attempting hermeneutics (understanding the passage in today's world). We sometimes feel tempted to make up for our Bible comprehension weakness by jumping to quick conclusions. But the Scripture is not trivial reading, and we are wise when we read it carefully.
- The Bible Study Leader understands his or her role in the study process. The process of discipleship does not call for Scripture “know-it-alls” but for people who can stimulate learning and application. Small group leaders need not come prepared with extensive notes, or cute illustrations. Instead, the leader should come prepared to facilitate the learning process.

If these six are present, and the group keeps the goal of discipleship in focus, then group study can be positive and fulfilling. For further guidelines of how to lead a good

Bible Study in your SG, you can refer to Bill Donahue's 'Leading Life Changing Small Groups'.

### **3.3 Prayer**

When a SG commits to praying for one another, the relationship between the group and God, and between each member of the group will deepen. This results in the group's spiritual growth, especially when God answers such prayers for one another in amazing ways. Furthermore, through prayer, the group lets the Holy Spirit to work within it so that the time spent together by members is fulfilling and refreshing.

Lastly, for you as the SGL/ASGL, commitment to prayer means there is a lesser chance of burnout as you put problems in His hands and trust members to His care.

#### **3.3.1 Keys to Prayer in Small Group**

To build up a strong prayer life within the SG, here are some pointers that the SGL should take note of:

- Lead group prayers to, ultimately, be God-centered. Focus on the Trinitarian God who is ever present when his people gather to pray.
- Model It. The SGL is to be a person of prayer himself/herself. The SGL ought to pray regular for group members and to ask God to give you His direction in leading the group. When a SGL do pray out loud in the group, it is best to keep his/her prayers honest, authentic, and from the heart. A simple guide that can be used for group prayer is to keep it Short, Simple and Spirit-led.
- Guide the prayers. Give general guidelines, but let the Holy Spirit lead. Avoid lengthy discussions on prayer. Include prayer each time you meet. Use a variety of praying methods.
- Keep prayers 'safe'. Don't call on someone to pray unless he/she has given permission beforehand. Don't expect everyone to pray every time and respect the intimacy level. As the group grows in deepening relationships, a sense of safety will foster more genuine prayer.
- Limit the size of your group for group prayers. Six to eight is sufficient if all have a strong sense of call to pray. If the group is too big, split the group up.
- Gather prayer points from the group for praise and special needs. List these on a chart, on slips of paper for each member and have them written down in the group prayer journal.
- Teach people how to pray. Include a 'Lord, teach us to pray' segment. Endeavour to learn something new about prayer each time you meet. You will not need to spend long. Study a Scripture passage, an extract from an appropriate book or a hymn dealing with prayer.
- Encourage short prayers. One sentence or even one word prayers will be helpful for SG members who less confident in public prayers and as a

discipline in thought to the experienced. Prayer 'hogging' should not be encouraged; everyone else must have the opportunity to pray.

- Do not coerce people into praying verbally. Allow people to pray in silence, each saying "Amen" when they have finished. It is especially important to inform about this option if there is newcomer into the group. The whole group should also be introduced to the value of times of silence for meditation, waiting, time to think, reflecting and responding to God personally.
- Introduce variety to how the SG prays during meetings. Teach and use new prayer methods to keep the vibrancy of group prayer going.
- Keep a balance in prayer. Do not over-emphasize intercession to the neglect of adoration (reading or singing a psalm could help), confession (usually in silence) or thanksgiving (spend much time here).
- End prayers positively. Such positive-ness serves to uplift SG members and to encourage hope in the God who is able to move 'mountains' through prayers even when faith is as small as the mustard seed!
- Understand that God's purposes go far beyond the group. Pray for others/your enemies. Include time to pray for the church, the nation and others in need.
- Seek to develop a vital group. Spend time getting to know each other and encourage honest, open sharing. Pray and work at becoming a fellowship of love where people feel accepted and significant. Put 'legs' under your prayers. Make yourselves available to be part of the answer to prayers. True intercessory prayer should lead to corporate and personal action in meeting the spiritual and practical needs of others. Organize some informal groups just to make contact with others, possibly those being prayed for, to develop friendships. Building relationships with non-Christians is an important aspect of pre-evangelism.
- Praise God for answers to prayer, whether or not you think those answers are what you expect them to be; it will encourage those who are praying that God is hearing.

### ***3.3.2 Small Group Prayer Model***

A model for prayer that is based on the 'The Lord's Prayer' and which the SGs can use is one that includes the elements of 'Adoration', 'Confession', 'Thanksgiving', 'Petition', 'Intercession' and 'Dedication' (see Figure 5).



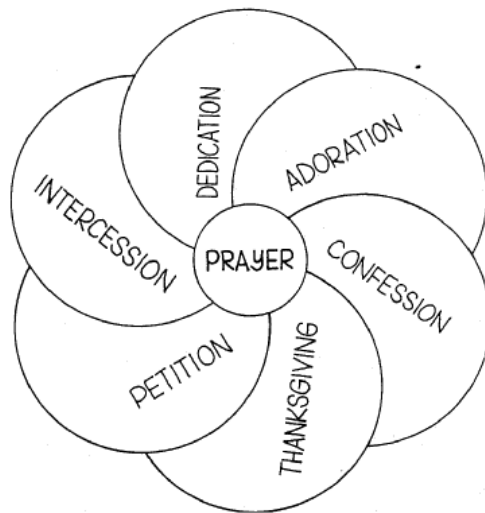


Figure 5: Small Group Prayer Model

- In 'Adoration', we think of the greatest of God – how incredible that he should bother to hear us at all! Dwell in the person of God, his love and his holiness.
- 'Confession' in group prayer is best undertaken in silence. Do not hurry this. Allow a time to recall past failures. Encourage the group to be specific. 'Think of a relationship with another that you may not have taken the initiative to heal,' or 'Think of words you may have spoken which have not been suitable for the occasion,' or 'What action spoilt your witness last week/yesterday?'

Assure them of forgiveness as they have asked for forgiveness in the name of Jesus; quote a promise such as John 1:9. Encourage the group to accept by faith, apart from feelings, what God offers to them by his grace. In silence, or audibly, let them then praise him in general terms. The general confession (Psalm 51), particularly in a modern translation, is a useful form of group confession. To paraphrase 1 John 1:9 individually can help confirm the reality of God's love and forgiveness.

- 'Thanksgiving' is the natural step to follow an experience of the certainty of forgiveness, through God's grace in Jesus. Again help people to be specific. For example: 'Reflect on persons, situations, experiences you can be genuinely grateful for at home this week,' or 'Can you recall a time when you have been specially loved or had the opportunity to show love since we last met?' or 'Can you remember the gratitude you felt as you lay down to rest after a hard day's work?' Health, friends, books, fun, work, life's challenges are all topics for thanksgiving.
- 'Petition' is about praying for our needs; again we should be specific. It is helpful to have each member write out a prayer of petition as a response to a meaningful Bible study segment. These can then be prayed silently or audibly around the group in turn. Each can be followed by members putting their hand on the persons next to them and praying, 'Lord, grant ...'s prayer.' Some find it helpful to keep a confidential spiritual diary, in which they record prayer responses to significant learning experiences.

- Intercession, or praying for others, is selfless prayer. We become ‘bridge-builders’ between people in their need and God, the source of undeserved favour. A concerned person listens for expressed needs rather than inventing their own assessment of another’s needs. Again prayers need to be specific. Avoid allowing the gathering of information about others for prayer to degenerate into gossip.

Sometimes we don’t know how to pray for our friends and family (or even those who have hurt us), yet we know we should. Paul gave us a pattern of prayer in Colossians 1:9 – 14 to follow when we pray for others. Read this passage and try using it as a pattern the next time you pray; watch how God answers.

Some prayer pointers that SGs can always incorporate into their intercessions are that those they are praying for:

- Will understand God’s will.
  - Gain spiritual wisdom.
  - Live a life pleasing and honoring to God.
  - Do kind things for others.
  - Know God better and better.
  - Are filled with God’s strength.
  - Endure in patience.
  - Stay full of Christ’s joy.
  - Always be thankful.
  - Recall God’s forgiveness of their sins
- Dedication is an aspect which follows naturally after intercession. This is the ‘Lord here am I, send me’ response to human need or ‘with eyes wide open to your mercy I present myself to you, Lord, as the least I can do. Use me as you will’. Sincere dedication can be an awesome thing (Acts 4:29 – 31).

## 3.4 Outreach

### 3.4.1 *The Vision for Small Group Outreach*<sup>3</sup>

When each group is involved in outreach and leads people to Christ, exponential growth occurs. What does this mean for our church or fellowship? A group of people, meeting together weekly, can start by praying for a non-Christian friend, knowing that they will want this friend to eventually join their SG and come into faith and, ultimately, the church.

As we pray and depend on the Holy Spirit, SG members will be moved by God to put love into action. The potential believer will be invited to the group and surrounded by

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<sup>3</sup> This section is adapted from J. Archer, ‘The Big Book On Small Groups’ (IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004).

love, will respond with faith. In this way, the SG can be used to touch one life for Christ. Can you envision and trust God to see one new person coming to faith because of each existing group, each year?

### **3.4.2 Evangelism**

Evangelism is the conscious attempt, through word and deed, to share the good news of Jesus Christ with others, so that they can become disciples of Christ. The following sub-sections expand the definition on evangelism.

#### **3.4.2.1 Our Personal and Corporate Witness**

If you want to lead someone to Christ, you first have to know what you are talking about. If Jesus Christ has not made a difference in your life, indeed if you are not striving to grow in Christ, then witnessing becomes a very difficult proposition.

There are a number of motives that may lead you to witness (including guilt and obligation) but none is as compelling as a deep love for God. The best witness flows from His love for you and from your life to those around you.

There are two indicators of the work of Christ in your life:

- First, you have been touched by God's love and begun to develop a life of intimacy with him. This will be demonstrated in both your thoughts and your actions. Examine the example in Luke 7:36-50.

Witnessing to the world about the grace we receive is very relevant to group members who are beginning to sink their roots deeper into God's love in a loving community that studies, prays and worships.

Lively, Spirit-filled groups put people in touch with their Creator, and therefore they allow their people to be more effective witnesses simply because they are growing in Christ. Your love for God will, sooner or later, cause you to view human relationships in a new light.

- The second evidence of a changed life is that you are growing in your ability to love others.

Colossians 3:1-4 commands us to set our hearts and minds on things above: Compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience and love. Compassion and love, among other traits, are important in witnessing. People respond to love more readily than to ideas and concepts. Small groups encourage people to love God. They also teach people how to love one another. They are preparing people to be effective witnesses for Christ!

### **3.4.3 The Process**

Very few people come to faith by picking up a Bible and reading it. Indeed, most people respond to Jesus Christ because they see the Christian life lived out (subjective message); they have become aware of the truths necessary to become a Christian (objective message); and they have been loved by a Christian (the

process). In most cases, multiple persons are involved in the salvation of just one person. (John 4:38) Perhaps friends and family members have been praying.

God is the power behind the salvation of an individual. Jesus said in John 6:44, “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.” When we pray for the salvation of a person, we pray believing that God is not only involved working through us, He is also involved directly in the life of the person we are praying for. The Holy Spirit convicts people of their sin and need for God, and He slowly draws people to Himself.

God also works in and through the life of a witness. He leads us to specific relationships, puts a burden for particular people upon our hearts and gives us the right words when we speak. God wants to use us to bring the salvation message to others. Our response to God's role in the process of evangelism is simple – obedience.

We know He is powerful enough to change lives, and loving enough to know what people need. What He uses are vessels that can bring His life-changing Word to those in need. For a willing SG, evangelism always begins with prayer and proceeds as we obey the Lord's prompting. The witness serves as a complement to God's part in evangelism.

Paul describes the evangelistic relationship that he had with the Thessalonians in 1 Thessalonians 1:4-6 and 1 Thessalonians 2:6-9. In witnessing, we emphasize the following three biblical attitudes:

- Humility. The focus in evangelism should be the potential convert, not the witness. We often worry too much about how we appear and what we will say. Instead, we must seek the heart of God and learn to identify with others by putting them first, thus taking the spotlight off us.
- Love. God will often call forth from the witness sacrifice and risk (elements of love). Responding to God's call can make us feel uncomfortable, out of our comfort zone.
- Confidence. A witness can be confident in the power of God and the effectiveness of love. Even when mistakes are made on our part, we believe that God can work through barriers, and we look forward to the joy that will be his or hers when a person responds in faith. We are to plant seeds, which represent the objective and subjective message of the gospel and have been nurtured in humility and love. Then we can wait patiently for God to prepare the right hearts at the right time.

#### ***3.4.4 Principles of Small Group Evangelism***

Remember that the goal of SG ministry and of evangelism is to make disciples. It is also our prayer that every member of a SG will be equipped to share his personal testimony. We encourage you to share this vision and to find out how your group can be trained.

When people come into a group, they enter into a context of growth and challenge. Your job is not just to “win” people. It is to nurture them into ministry. This is why SGs with their emphasis on disciple-making, are ideal places for people to come to faith in Christ.

The leader can have a grand vision for evangelism, yet until the SG is ready they will not respond. Pray for your group's heart, even as, you pray for yours. You may discover that creating an outreach mentality may take months before the group is ready to respond. Keep sharing your vision for evangelism but don't push your agenda onto the group.

A healthy group is necessary for SG evangelism. You don't want to bring people into a group that backbites, fights or has other unhealthy elements. No group is perfect, but groups should be functional and healthy.

Evangelism needs to be intentional. Have planning meetings in which you brainstorm answers to “who, what, where, when, how and why.”

A growing, evangelistic SG ministry will soon begin to burst at the seams. When groups grow past twelve members, they tend to become less intimate and more confusing. The group leader should be prepared for this and nurture leaders who are prepared to lead new groups.

### ***3.4.5 Incorporating Evangelism in Small Groups***

#### **3.4.5.1 Prayer**

Pray that the group becomes an evangelizing group. When member's hearts are ready to move forward, the group can start praying for people to come to faith. Consider praying for people group members have frequent contact with.

#### **3.4.5.2 The ‘Empty Chair’**

Put an empty chair into the circle of each meeting and either at the opening or closing prayer pray for the person who is to inhabit the chair. The group could do a study together on either SG evangelism or evangelism in general. You could memorize Scripture verses or work your way through an evangelism “technique”. You can also explore ideas on how you plan to share the good news of Jesus Christ with people who need to find hope

## **3.5 Multiplication and Flowering in the Small Group**

### ***3.5.1 Reasons for Multiplication<sup>4</sup>***

Since Creation, it has been God's desire for people to have fellowship with Him for all eternity. From Genesis to Revelation, we see God's heart in reaching people and including them in this new community:

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<sup>4</sup> This section is adapted from J. Archer, ‘The Big Book On Small Groups’ (IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004).and B. Donahue, ‘Leading Life Changing Small Groups’ Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002).

- The promise of a Messiah (Gen. 3:15)
- The promise to Noah (Gen. 9:8-17)
- The promise to Abraham to make him a great nation (Gen. 12:1-5)
- God's promise to David of an eternal kingdom and a place for God's people to dwell (2 Sam. 7:1-17)
- The invitation for all to come and be part of God's community. (Isa. 55:1-3)
- The promise of a Messiah who would become known throughout the earth (Micah 5:2-5)
- The invitation for all to come and receive Christ (Matt.11:28-30)
- The command to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:18-20)
- The promise that all who believe will become part of a new community (John 3:16)
- The power of the Holy Spirit will enable all to witness for Christ (Acts 1:8)
- The world will not hear the Gospel unless we take it to them (Rom.10:14-15)

God has been inviting people to His 'open chair' for centuries. This is evident in the life of Jesus who used the concept of the open chair to develop relationships with Nicodemus, the woman at the well, the woman caught in adultery and the twelve disciples – and His invitation continues today. Part of discipleship is opening the chair to those who are not involved in biblical community. This includes seekers, fringe Christians, and committed believers who are seeking fellowship.

What would have happened if the early church hoarded God's blessings, keeping it from others? Acts 2:24-27. Thanks be to God, His disciples did not choose that path. Instead, Acts 2 relates God working in the lives of people and many being saved. Believers met together in homes and others were saved. The church was scattered through persecution and the communities went forth into the world to make other disciples.

### ***3.5.2 Multiplication Methods<sup>5</sup>***

We are in an active ministry of reconciliation. 2 Corinthians 5:18-20. In our relationship with God, we receive His act of reconciliation and in humility and with thankful hearts, we discover more about God through worship, prayer and study in the new community. In our relationships with brothers and sisters in Christ, we are, and continue to be, reconciled to one another as we experience and offer love, forgiveness, grace, trust etc. Finally, we intentionally offer others the message of reconciliation and introduce them to Jesus Christ. When groups live out the ministry of reconciliation, groups will naturally multiply.

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<sup>5</sup> This section is adapted from J. Archer, 'The Big Book On Small Groups' (IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004) and D. Earley, 'Eight Habits Of Effective SG Leaders' (Texas: Cell Group Resources, 2001).

Multiplication involves both the heart and the hands. We pray for the Holy Spirit to prepare members' hearts to grow in compassion, to obey Christ's command to make disciples and to give members the strength, ability and opportunity to persevere in outreach.

Groups multiply in several ways: spiritual, (mentoring and discipling), social, (social concern and outreach), physical (growing in numbers, receiving new seekers), missional (evangelism and missions). The following sub-sections describe some of the methods that use these ways to multiply groups.

### 3.5.2.1 The 'Empty Chair'

The 'Empty Chair' is a model of multiplication whereby during SG meetings, an empty seat or chair is always placed to remind SG members of the need to 'fill the empty chair' by inviting newcomers. The following gives details on how to 'fill the empty chair'

- Step 1: Before inviting new members –
  - Involve everyone in the process. Everyone in your group should consider how to invite someone to the group.
  - Teach and discuss the empty chair with your group.
  - Regularly pray for God to fill the open chair.
  - Develop a list of potential members from friends, factory (job), fishing ponds (fun places to meet new people) and fellowship (church).
- Step 2: How to invite new members –
  - Allow them to meet other members of the group before they ever attend a meeting.
  - Explain the vision of the group to the potential member.
  - Ask them to pray about joining the group.
  - Develop relationships prior to the meeting.
  - Allow them to attend a few meetings before they make a final commitment.
- Step 3: After new members attend the group –
  - Affirm the newcomer and the one who brought him or her.
  - Have everyone briefly retell their own stories.
  - Celebrate what is happening in your group.
  - Reaffirm the covenant.
  - Don't add people too quickly. Allow the group to assimilate new members and to grow together for a season before inviting additional people.

### 3.5.2.2 Inviting Seekers to Small Groups

In WSGM, seekers can be non-believers or people looking to join a SG. In this subsection, we refer to seekers as individuals who have yet to accept Jesus Christ (although, what is mentioned here is still relevant for visitors who are believers).

It is important to note that some groups may not be prepared to receive seekers (this is especially true for groups with many members who are not yet believers) – at particular life stages of these groups, either the nature of the material being studied or the personalities of members of the group prohibits them from effectively welcoming seekers.

When a group is ready to open up to seekers, the SG may want to work with his/her PCZL to help prepare the SG for this. Some of this preparation could include the following:

- Focus on the needs of the seeker, not personal agendas.
- Taking note of some of the unique practices of the SG that visitors may not be use to e.g. children running around freely, group meetings ending later than 10:30pm etc.
- If there are discussions on a Bible passage, use a version that is seeker friendly.
- Stay away from religious lingo or religious clichés such as “Hallelujah”, “Amen, brother.” Such terminology is biblical but unfamiliar and might scare them away because they will feel like they don't fit in the group.
- Focus on relevancy. Don't get too caught up in theological arguments or distinctions. Stick with the basic truths of Scripture.
- Allow seekers to make comments that might appear strong or opinionated. Don't argue with them. Thank them for their input and help the group respect a seeker's questions or point of view. Listen more than you talk!
- Keep prayers simple. Use normal, conversational language when speaking to God. Help a seeker see that prayer is simply talking with God and not some religious jargon.
- Don't shy away from hard issues or places where even some believers have doubts. Be honest. Be truthful.

The following details what will be done when there are seekers who wish to join a SG:

- A screening, matching and connecting process will be carried where all seekers should be referred to the MC for WSGM who will act as Point Person. He/she will then –
  - Contact the seeker for profile information which will include: age, marital status, contacts, address, preferred location, preferred day of meeting, Occupation (optional), involvement in other ministries (optional), and the reasons a seeker wants to join a SG.



- Make an initial assessment if seeker is suited to join a SG or is 'questionable'. If the latter, refer this seeker to the PTM, Chairperson or Pastor: if the former, proceed with the remaining steps to match seeker to SGL
- In consultation with the PTM, match the seeker to a SG based on the demographic profile provided by PCZL.
- Seek approval from the relevant PCZL, giving profile details of seeker and group to be channeled to.
- Upon given approval by the relevant PCZL, connect the seeker to the SGL with email notification to the PCZL that the connection has been made. Alternatively, if PCZL prefers to make the connection, then PCZL will connect seeker with SGL, with email notification given to the MC.
- SGL will now connect with the seeker, with email notification given to the MC and PCZL. The SGL, with the assistance of the PCZL, will also monitor progress of the seeker and in two weeks' time, give feedback to the MC (keeping the PCZL updated) about the status of the seeker's visitation.
- Finally, there will be a follow-up process where –
  - In the event that the SGL, in attempting to connect to seeker, do not get a response from the latter seeker after 2 weeks, SGL will revert to the MC, with notification given to PCZL. MC will then make three or more attempts to contact the seeker for another month; if this still fails to get any response from the seeker, then no more contact will be made with the seeker.
  - In the event that the seeker does not return to his/her assigned SG a month after his/her the 1<sup>st</sup> visit, the MC will contact the seeker to check on the suitability of SG. If the assigned SG is not suitable, the MC will look for another suitable SG.
  - In the event that the seeker fails to visit SG after invitations by SGL, the MC will contact the seeker to check reasons for not attending SG. If the seeker fails to respond after two months, then no more contact will be made with the seeker.

### 3.5.2.3 Raising Apprentice Leaders

New leaders raised from existing groups can be sent to take on new groups, or take over the existing leader's role as he or she moves to take another group. New leaders can also take charge of the second group when his group multiplies into two. Here, we highlight some information apprentice leaders may need as they are being prepared for their roles:

- Help them understand the job description of a leader. Remember, they are developing leaders so assure them they are not expected to fulfill the expectations to the same degree as a leader.

- Give them a clear picture of the time frame for development. Developing leaders require 12-18 months before leading a SG of their own.
- Explain that adequate training and resources are available for their growth and encouragement at the group, Zone and SGM level.
- Make sure they understand clearly the vision and values of the ministry. They should attend required training programs.
- In their development as an apprentice leader, they will need to pay attention to certain guidelines in character, skills and responsibilities that are expected of an apprentice leader.

#### 3.5.2.4 Giving Birth

Giving Birth is the term used for the process of group multiplication. Just as physical birth involves pain and separation, so does giving birth a group. But it also involves celebration, joy and appreciation for the new life that has been given and for what has been gained.

A healthy group with an outreach mentality will eventually grow and become too large for optimal SG functioning. When that occurs, the group is perhaps ready to multiply or birth a new group. To facilitate a good birthing process, here are some key points for SGs as they prepare to give birth:

- Communicate the intention to birth from the first day a group meets. Clearly and positively articulate that the purpose of this group is to reach others and multiply. Talk about “launching”, “raising”, “birthing”, “multiplying” and not “splitting” or “dividing”.
- Identify the leader and apprentice leaders as soon as possible and explain how multiplication works.
- Work with your PCZL to develop a plan to train leaders and apprentice leaders.
- Identify potential birthing timing and methods. Encourage flexible birthing based on leadership realities within individual groups.
- Identify transition and termination issues. Birthing new groups can be traumatic. Groups going through such transition need care, coaching and guidance. Help them spend time listening and caring within the group. Encourage them to celebrate the past and embrace the future. Develop with them some termination activities, perhaps including a one-time celebration or a series of several gatherings.
- Begin meeting as sub groups for the entire meeting time.

When the day of birth arrives, the SG can incorporate the following ways to celebrate the joys and experience the sadness of the birth of a new group:

- Have a time of celebration for the birth.
- Hold a time of prayer as you commission and bless the new group.

- Recognize and affirm the new leadership in each group.
- Allow members to express their feelings of celebration and sadness.
- Plan a time when the two groups will come together again to unite (probably in four to six weeks) and share the victories and blessings of the previous group.
- Spend time praying about the future of both groups and what God might do to help each grow spiritually and numerically.
- Have each member write a letter to the rest of the group expressing their feelings of thankfulness and respect.
- Take pictures or videos of the group as you prepare to give birth.
- Set a schedule for a few planned social events together in the future so that the group unites two to three times a year.

As mentioned earlier, giving birth to new groups can be traumatic; here are some ways to reduce such a trauma:

- Talk about the goal of giving birth from the beginning and optimistically. If the birth is sprung on the group, they will resist.
- Set up the apprentice leader to succeed by giving him or her leadership opportunities.
- Honor “core units” of two or three who cannot be split up.
- Allow for “gestation” by letting the “baby” develop an identity within the “mother” (meet in separate rooms in the same house for a period of time).
- Have a “birth party” when the actual birth occurs.
- Allow for “nursing”; periodically getting the two groups together after the birth.
- Encourage grief work.
- Prepare to strategically add new members to your group.
- Celebrate “grandchildren” (groups which grew out of the groups your group gave birth to).
- Meet with individual group members after a group has been born in order to process the birth on a one-to-one basis.

Finally, it is important to have proper follow-up after giving birth to ensure both groups function optimally; the following gives a guide on what needs to be done for such a follow-up:

- Once a group is birthed out of the existing group, both groups should spend a meeting or two processing what has taken place. This will help groups officially separate and yet express feelings and sadness about the birthing process. Also, you should begin to pray about new members for the groups.

- Remember, the group is now a new group, because it is not the same as it was before.
- Leaders must give particular attention to group members during this time, as they may be experiencing feelings of sadness, frustration or loss.
- In a SG, multiplication takes various forms as we have presented. What is the vision of your group and does it include the intention to raise new leaders and multiply the blessings your group has received to others?

## **3.6 Pastoral Care**

A shepherd's role includes giving care and we can see from Ezekiel 34:1-16 that God desires shepherds to feed the flock, lead them to rest, seek the lost, bring back the scattered, bind up the broken and strengthen the sick. The responsibilities of a shepherd are not to be taken lightly. However, if a SGL has too many people to care for, he/she will eventually burn out. Therefore, how much care does one provide and how often?

### **3.6.1 Primary Care**

Primary care is the normal, regular attention and support that a SGL is expected to provide for group members. Some people may belong to more than one group like being a member of a SG and at the same time, a member of the choir. In such cases, it is still good to extend care to the individual and not assume he is cared for. Care includes prayer support, phone calls, encouragement, visiting the sick.

### **3.6.2 Mutual Care**

Mutual care is what group members give to one another. SGLs are unable to provide all the care for all the members of the group on all occasions. One of the goals of the group is then to provide mutual, interactive care and support for one another. These actions will help us to fulfill the commandment in Galatians 6:2, "Carry each other's burdens and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."

Groups may show care and concern to their members:

- Maintaining contact during the week through prayer partners, email, phone calls, text messages, etc.
- Praying for each member regularly, especially during intense times of hurt and pain.
- Listening (when appropriate) and offering sensitive advice in relation to the stresses and past hurts that may be shared.
- Celebrating special days, such as birthdays, anniversaries and group milestones.
- Sharing resources and providing help during crisis.

### **3.6.3 Ministry Care**

PCZLs are your first source of care from the ministry level. If they are unavailable, contact the PTMs. Fellow SGLs from your zone can also be in your care network. Together you can work out a “care strategy” for the particular need that you are seeking to meet.

#### 3.6.3.1 Basic Helping Principles

- Encourage and develop responsibility. People are responsible for their own actions. Some people do not want to make any decisions or are not ready to take any action. You can support and guide them along the way. Your relationship with them must lead them to independence not dependence.
- Preserve confidentiality.
- Don't promise unconditional secrecy.
- Probe for the deeper problem.
- Don't try to do too much especially if you know there are areas beyond your experience or abilities. You can do a lot as a helper, but some problems must be handled by professional counsellors. If you feel you are not equipped to help a person, you should say so and consult your leaders.
- Encourage boundaries.
- Don't express judgments.
- Avoid textbook answers.

#### 3.6.3.2 Crisis Care

- In situations of impending life-threatening situations, severe emergencies, an attempted suicide or threatened suicide, present threats of violence by a person to himself or others, contact the relevant authorities like the police or call for an ambulance.
- If you have other situations that may require further help and guidance to address, contact your PCZL and PTM and/or Pastor for help in discerning the urgency of the situation and help needed. Situations that may require professional help include serious marriage problems, mental disorders or other severe dysfunctions. In non-emergency cases, before you contact church leaders directly, check with the member if he is willing to be helped and willing give his contact number to the leaders. In such cases, it is important that you do not violate a person's confidentiality.
- We might think someone is in need of counseling but does not mean they will be willing to participate in counseling. Work with your ministry leaders to determine how to help.

### 3.6.3.3 When Death Occurs

When death occurs to a SG member, SGLs can assist the bereaved member with the following initial procedures:

- When a death occurs at home –
  - Remain calm.
  - Have the deceased's Identity Card (IC) ready.
  - Call the deceased's family doctor to certify the cause of death. The doctor should have attended to the deceased within two weeks prior to the death. The doctor will issue the Cause of Death Certificate.
  - Report to the nearest Police Station/Neighbourhood Police Post with the Cause of Death Certificate to obtain a Death Certificate and a permit to bury/cremate. Information about the type and place of funeral as well as the IC of the deceased will be required for this.
  - If no family doctor is available, inform the nearest Police Station or Neighbourhood Police Post. The police will send an inspector for further investigation. The Coroner's office will issue the Death Certificate and permit for burial/cremation after the body of the deceased is sent to the mortuary.
  - Call a casket company.
  - During office hours, call Wesley Methodist Church (WMC) at 6336 1433. After office hours, please call the pastors directly (refer to church bulletin, Wesley Weekly).
- When death occurs at a private hospital –
  - The doctor/inspector will issue the Cause of Death Certificate. Report to the nearest Police Station/Neighbourhood Police Post with the Cause of Death Certificate and the deceased's IC to obtain a Death Certificate and a permit to bury/cremate.
  - Call a casket company.
  - Call WMC.
- When death occurs at a government hospital –
  - During office hours, the registrar at the hospital will issue the Death Certificate together with the permit to bury/cremate.
  - After office hours, a release permit will be issued. With the IC of the deceased, this document can be exchanged for the official Death Certificate at the nearest Police Station/Post/Hospital Registrar/ Registry of Births and Deaths.
  - Call a casket company.
  - Call WMC.

After the initial procedures are followed through, the SGL can do the following:

- Contact a casket company –
  - The casket company will arrange for the collection of the body of the deceased for embalming at their premises. A family member needs to be present to identify the body of the deceased at the mortuary.
  - Go with or advise one or more of the family members to proceed to the office of the casket company to choose the casket and make other necessary arrangements.
  - Advise different members of the family to attend to different tasks. This would help to save time and energy.
- Help in deciding on burial or cremation –

Help the family decide upon either a burial or a cremation, giving due consideration to the wishes of the deceased.

  - For burial, the only burial ground is at Choa Chu Kang Cemetery. There are 2 types of burial plots - in the Christian Cemetery and in the lawn cemetery. The casket company will arrange for the Burial Permit and acquisition of a burial plot on behalf of the family. Payment for the burial plot must be made by the family at the Choa Chu Kang Cemetery office before a burial.
  - For cremation, only Mandai Crematorium is available. The casket company will make bookings for the cremation, with confirmation of the booking being made by a family member (note that the requirements for confirmation include producing the Death Certificate of the deceased at the crematorium office before the cremation is carried out, and making the necessary payment).
- Help in choosing a casket –
  - The cost of a casket can vary from a few hundred dollars to several thousands of dollars. Hence, the cost is dependent on the material, type and design of the casket.
  - The material of a casket depends on whether the deceased is to be buried or cremated. For burial, durable hard wood or metal caskets are preferable; for cremation, wooden caskets are a must.
- Help in deciding on placement of cortege –

The cortege could be placed at the following:

  - In the home of the deceased.
  - In a casket parlour.
  - In a church parlour.

- In a void deck (application for this can be made at the nearest HDB Area Office/Branch Office; the original Death Certificate and the IC of the applicant are necessary for this).
- The casket company will be able to assist in arranging for the canvas shelter/HDB deck enclosure, tables, chairs, lighting, refreshments, etc.
- Making known other necessary arrangements –
  - Advertisement in newspapers. This needs to be done as soon as possible (the IC of the person placing the notice of death and the original Death Certificate are necessary for this).
  - Wake Services. Arrangements for photo enlargements, banners (which includes names of family members, Bible verses, etc), buses, caterers, tentage, refreshments, mobile toilets and clothings. (the casket company concerned should be able to assist in these details).
  - Urns for the ashes. A suitable urn can be selected at the casket company's office or at All Saints Memorial Chapel.

### **3.6.4 Conflict Management<sup>6</sup>**

As relationships deepen, conflict is inevitable. The Bible differentiates between quarreling and constructive conflict. Quarreling is negative because it refers to vain arguments or disagreements for the purpose of promoting self-worth or causing divisions. James 4:1-3, 2 Timothy 2:24. However, there is much admonition in Scripture for leaders to use constructive criticism and exhortation in order to bring about spiritual growth. 2 Timothy 3:16.

#### 3.6.4.1 Key Biblical Principles for Conflict Management

- Speak truth in love (Ephesians 4:15,25)
- Seek to edify and be gracious (Ephesians 4:29-32)
- Express real emotions but do not sin (Ephesians 4:26-27)
- Settle private disputes privately (Matthew 18:15-17)
- Do not keep a record of wrongs (1 Corinthians 13:5)
- Think before you speak (Proverbs 15:23,28)
- Do not return insult for insult (1 Peter 3:8-9)
- Check your motives for conflict (James 4:1-2, Proverbs 13:10)
- Pursue peace and edification in relationships (Romans 14:19)
- Avoid needless quarrels (Proverbs 20:3, 2 Timothy 2:24)
- Remembering group members' interests as well as your own (Philippians 2:4)

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<sup>6</sup> This section is adapted from B. Donahue, 'Leading Life Changing Small Groups'.



### 3.6.4.2 Strategies for Managing Conflict

Possibly influenced by our culture, our tendency towards managing conflict is to choose avoidance, emphasizing on giving others 'face', especially if they are more senior in age or experience etc. As a result, we may remain hurt, misunderstood and upset. However, collaboration and compromise are the more likely approaches to use in managing most conflicts. The following provides some strategies for managing conflicts and when they are best used:

- Avoidance –
  - Avoidance is an effective strategy to use with conflict when the issue is trivial, the situation will take care of itself, saving face (yours or someone else's) is important, and time is limited.
  - Avoidance is not an effective strategy to use with conflict when the problem is important, the problem will not resolve itself, credibility would be lost by avoidance, there is a larger, underlying issue that is important to address.
- Accommodation –
  - Accommodation is an effective strategy to use when the relationship is more important than the task, the issue is trivial, small concessions will reap further gains (i.e. choose your battles).
  - Accommodation is not an effective strategy when your actions could be interpreted as condescending, its use would set an unwise precedent.
- Compromise –
  - Compromise is an effective strategy to use when there is no simple solution, both parties have strong interest in very different facets of the problem, there is not enough time for a truly collaborative solution, the situation is not critical and an adequate solution is good enough for both parties.
  - Compromise is not an effective strategy to when a dangerous precedent would be set by failure to hold one's ground, an optimal solution is possible, it is important to avoid concessions of any kind.
- Collaboration –
  - Collaboration is an effective strategy to use when the task and the relationship are both very important, the time, information and willingness to collaborate are present, the outcome is exceedingly important, sufficient trust exists between the parties.
  - Collaboration is not an effective strategy to use when time, trust and resources are not available, the issue is not worthy of the investment of time, energy and resources.

### 3.6.4.3 Care-fronting – the Creative Way through Conflict<sup>7</sup>

2 common misunderstandings about caring and confronting are:

- ‘Caring’ is a good word when confronting is absent. When someone cares deeply about another, they cannot confront, because hurting that person is the very last thing they want to do.
- ‘Confronting’ is a bad word when compared to caring. To confront powerfully, care must be laid aside. When someone is angry, they should confront.

Instead of these misunderstandings, we ought to view ‘care’ and ‘confront’ as a tandem that provides the balance of love and power which leads to effective human relationships. Such a tandem or ‘care-fronting’ offers genuine care that leads one another to growth, for to care is to welcome, invite, and support growth in one another, while to confront effectively is to offer the maximum of useful information with the minimum of threat.

‘Care-fronting’ unites love and power and unifies concern for relationship with concern for goals. This way, one can have something to stand for (goals) as well as someone to stand with (relationship) without sacrificing one for the other or collapsing one into another. Thus, one can ‘love powerfully and be powerfully loving’. Thus, ‘caring’ and ‘confronting’ when used in the context of ‘care-fronting’ are not contradictory, but complementary.

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<sup>7</sup> This section is adapted from David Augsburger, ‘Caring Enough to Confront’ (CA: Regal Books, 1981).

## **CHAPTER 4: SMALL GROUP LEADERSHIP**

### **4.1 Role**

The primary role of a Small Group Leader (SGL)/Assistant Small Group Leader (ASGL) is to shepherd the members of his/her Small Group (SG). He/she is to provide care and to disciple the members of the SG to be committed disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **4.2 Requirements**

Some of the important requirements that are to be considered when appointing a person to become a SGL are that he/she:

- Shows evidence of a maturing witness for Jesus Christ, the love for God's Word and of living in practical obedience to His commands.
- Must not be a recent convert (1Timothy 3:6).
- Has a good reputation both in his family and outside (1Timothy 3:4-7).
- Is a member of Wesley Methodist Church (WMC).
- Shows evidence of having a passion and call to be a shepherd.
- Shows evidence of having a teachable spirit.
- Shows evidence of good interpersonal and relational skills and loves people.

### **4.3 Responsibilities**

The responsibilities of the SGL include:

- Being accountable to the Pastoral Care Zone Leader (PCZL) in the shepherding of the SG. All SGLs may consult with their PCZL for guidance in any SG related matters.
- Attending all SGLConnect and PC Zone meetings.
- Planning and conduct the meeting, seeing to it that each meeting includes all the following four elements:
- Nurture: Being fed by God to grow into the likeness of Christ through Bible study, Christian literature, tapes and sharing.
- Worship: Praising and magnifying God by focusing on His nature, actions and words; prayer, singing, praises, readings and creative expressions.
- Community: Fellowship centers around shared Christian experiences; sharing needs (spiritual and physical), having fun, developing spiritual gifts, encouraging prayer partnerships and interceding.

- Outreach: Reaching out in Christ's love to people in need; helping the group focus on the need for a mission from the start; facilitating training of SG members in evangelism; helping the group define its mission and planning a strategy for accomplishing it.
- Meeting with members on an individual basis whenever possible to encourage their spiritual growth and their involvement in church.
- Appointing and discipling at least one member to be the ASGL.
- Praying, regularly, for the group members.
- Encouraging SG members to be involved in service to the church.
- Submitting reports as needed and informs the PCZL specific needs/ problems of SG members.

## **4.4 Equipping Small Group Leaders**

Wesley Small Group Ministry (WSGM) provides opportunities for group leaders to be equipped and these platforms include:

- One-year Guidance Program for New Leaders
- Facilitation Skills Course
- Leadership 101 – Leading The Small Group
- SGLConnect
- SG Leaders' PC Zone meetings
- SG Ministry Equipping Course (SGMEqC)

It is strongly recommended that all leaders of existing small groups and potential leaders attend the Small Group Leadership 101, the Facilitation Skills Course and the PC Zone meetings. They are also encouraged to attend other courses for their personal growth and the growth of their group. More information on the various courses is available from the WSGM office and website. The Overview of Leadership Development gives a broad picture of how leaders are continually developed in the SGM.

### ***4.4.1 Overview of Leadership Development***

#### 4.4.1.1 Leadership 101

Leadership 101 is a basic leadership course for all SGLs. The goals and target group of Leadership 101 are as follows:

- Goals –
  - To equip new group leaders with basic SG leading skills.
  - To equip leaders and members with basic facilitation skills.
  - To begin the 1 year guidance process of new SGs.

- To begin the assimilation of new group leaders into their zone meetings
- Target group –
  - Leaders and members of new SGs.
  - Leaders of existing groups who would like a refresher on skills.
- Modules Covered –
  - Facilitation Skills.
  - Leading the SG.

#### 4.4.1.2 Leadership 201

Leadership 201 focuses on providing support to SGLs through SGLConnect and PC Zone meetings. The goals and target group of Leadership 201 are as follows:

- Goals –
  - To provide an environment for cultivating spiritual friendships beginning with SGLs.
  - To strengthen identity of WSGM and for all leaders to come together for mutual encouragement and support.
  - PCZLs to leverage on teamwork and support one another.
  - Dissemination of WSGM information.
- Target group –
  - Leaders and assistant leaders of existing SGs.

#### 4.4.1.3 Leadership 301

Leadership 301 focuses on mentoring to raise up new leaders within WSGM. The goals and target group of Leadership 301 are as follows:

- Goals –
  - To mentor potential and existing SG leaders to take leadership responsibilities in the SGs, PC Zone or WSGM Committee.
  - To support and help groups to move towards achieving multiplication by raising new SGLs.
- Target group –
  - Individuals recommended by SGM Committee.

## **4.5 Appointing New Leaders**

We encourage SGLs to identify their potential leaders early in the Nurturing stages of their group life. This can be done in consultation with their PCZL. Upon confirmation, the SGL will be able to mentor the potential leader or leaders through WSGM's

leadership development program. New leaders have to attend the Facilitation course and the Leadership 101 course conducted regularly by WSGM.

Current SGLs have to inform the PCZL and SGM office if they are in the process of appointing new leaders. The Pastoral Team Member and PCZL may then meet the potential leader(s) for a brief interview.

## **CHAPTER 5: PASTORAL CARE ZONES**

Small Groups (SGs) in Wesley Methodist Church (WMC) are placed in a Pastoral Care (PC) Zones and assigned a Pastoral Care Zone Leader (PCZL). Zone leaders meet leaders from their zone for worship, prayer, sharing and equipping. The PC Zone provides the platform for leaders to find support in their roles and responsibilities.

Some zones may have an Assistant PCZL (APCZL) who assists the PCZLs in zone responsibilities. APCZLs are mentored by PCZLs or Pastoral Team Members (PTMs) in preparation for zone leadership. When the Executive Committee (Exco) and PCZL confirm that the APCZL is ready for zone leadership, the current zone may multiply into two. Alternatively, the PCZL or APCZL moves on to take PC leadership in another zone.

### **5.1 Pastoral Care Zone Leader**

#### **5.1.1 Roles**

The primary role of the PCZL is to shepherd the Small Group Leaders (SGLs) under his/her charge. He/she is to encourage the formation and growth of SGs in his/her Zone.

#### **5.1.2 Considerations for the nomination of a Pastoral Care Zone Leader**

- Show evidence of a maturing witness for Jesus Christ, the love for God's Word and of living in practical obedience to His commands.
- Must not be a recent convert. (1Timothy 3:6)
- Has a good reputation both in his family and outside (1Timothy 3:4-7).
- Be committed to the Mission and Vision of the church and Wesley Small Group Ministry (WSGM).
- Be a member of WMC.
- Has been a SGL for at least one year.
- Has good interpersonal and relational skill.
- See Appendix B for nomination form.

#### **5.1.3 Responsibilities of a Pastoral Care Zone Leader**

- To nurture and provide pastoral care for the SGLs under his or her charge by
  - 
  - Keeping in regular contact with the leaders in your Zone.
  - Praying regularly for each leader by name.

- Calling, emailing or sending text messages to leaders regularly to encourage them with a word, a testimony or a verse.
- Where necessary or appropriate, arrange to meet leaders individually or in small groups of 2 or 3 for a meal to catch up and listen to them share about their personal lives.
- To conduct Zone meetings with the SGLs in their zone.
- To provide support/advice to the SGL in terms of planning, organizing and administering healthy group life.
- To formulate plans and strategies to steer the SGs under his or her zone for growth (i.e. working in consultation with SG Committee, Chairperson, Pastor/PTM)
- To make visitations (including hospital visitations and bereavements) to SG meetings and members under his/her charge, as and when the need arises.
- To coordinate SG New Seeker Tracking and Follow-up System.
- To submit a Quarterly Zone Report.
- To attend all PCZL meetings, SGL Connect and WSGM major events.
- To be responsible and accountable to the Chairperson/Pastor/PTM/Small Group Committee.
- Be the channel of communication and mission dissemination between SG Committee and your SGLs.
- Mutual care of fellow PCZLs and SG Committee through prayer, encouragement and support.
- Be part of the Equipping and Mentoring Process.

## **5.2 Administrative Duties for Pastoral Care Zone Leaders**

Within each PC Zone, PCZLs are encouraged to appoint a PC Zone Secretary as liaison person between PC Zones and SGM office. This is to alleviate the burden of administration on the PCZL who can use his/her time more effectively in shepherding and mentoring.

The sub-sections below detail some of the administrative matters that a PCZL and/or the PC Zone Secretary are to look into.

### ***5.2.1 Booking of a Meeting Room in Wesley Methodist Church***

All meeting rooms in WMC that the PC Zone intends to use must be booked through WSGM office. PCZLs and Secretaries can contact WSGM during office-hours via phone at 68379215 and 68378617, and via email at genel@wesleymc.org or benny@wesleymc.org.



### **5.2.2 Formation and Registration of a New Small Group**

After the end of a run of a Baptism Membership or Alpha Course, new groups may be formed. The following specifies the procedure of what needs to be done when a new group is formed and assigned to a PC Zone:

- The Baptism Membership or Alpha Course coordinator will provide a list of possible groups that may be formed into SGs. PTMs and PCZLs may meet the potential leaders for an interview.
- The Ministry Coordinator (MC) for WSGM will work with PTMs to contact potential or new group leaders directly or through the PCZL to ascertain whether group formation is confirmed.
- If it is confirmed that a new SG will be formed, the MC will email registration forms to the group leaders of this new SG.
- If the leaders of new SGs have not submitted all necessary registration forms within 3 months of formation, PCZLs or PC Zone Secretary may be able enlisted to remind the group leaders to expedite submission of these forms.

### **5.2.3 Reporting of Changes in Small Groups**

When changes occur to SGs including change of leaders, meeting day, meeting venue and leaders' contacts, the PCZL or the PC Zone Secretary of the SGs is to report these changes to WSGM office (call 68379215 or 68378617 during office hours or email genel@wesleymc.org or benny@wesleymc.org).

A good way to keep abreast of changes in the SG is to use PC Zone monthly meeting where the PCZL or PC Zone secretary can do a check with his/her SG leaders to update all the necessary information; the updated information can be passed to the MC and reported in the PCZL Quarterly Report. At the same time, it is also strongly recommended that the PCZL or PC Zone secretary remind SG leaders, regularly, to report directly to WSGM office of any changes that occur in the SG and not wait for the monthly zone meetings.

### **5.2.4 Monthly Pastoral Care Zone Meeting Attendance Taking**

Attendance for all monthly PC Zone meeting are to be taken by the PCZL or PC Zone secretary and submitted to the WSGM office.

### **5.2.5 Financial Guidelines**

The financial claims allowed to each PC Zone for:

- Monthly PC Zone Meeting is \$5 per person per meeting.
- PC Zone Congregational Meeting is \$25 per group per meeting, regardless of the number of persons per group.

All claims are to be submitted to WSGM office with supporting invoices/receipts (as far as possible) within 2 weeks from the date when the expenses are incurred.

### **5.3 Equipping the Pastoral Care Zone Leaders**

PCZLs attend a PCZL meeting on a regular basis with the PTM. During these meetings, administrative matters are discussed and PCZLs receive support from the team for their roles. PCZLs are continually equipped to lead their zones through studying and discussing materials related to leadership and SGs. PCZLs are also encouraged to attend courses conducted by the church and WSGM's SGMEqC.

### **5.4 Multiplication within Pastoral Care Zones**

SGLs are encouraged to include in their group life, plans for leadership development and raising potential leaders. In the same way, PCZLs are encouraged to work with their PTMs to identify and mentor APCZLs and future PCZLs.

Multiplication within the PC Zone can also take the form of exercising the "empty chair" concept (like the SGs) to encourage a positive environment that is constantly on the look-out for new leaders and/or apprentice leaders from SGs in their zone, to join the zone meeting.

## **CHAPTER 6: RESOURCES FROM WESLEY SMALL GROUP MINISTRY OFFICE**

Resources are available to Small Groups Leaders (SGLs) from the Wesley Small Group Ministry (WSGM) and include materials that the WSGM office loans out and those that can be purchased through it.

### **6.1 Loans**

For resources that are designated to be loaned out, Small Groups Leaders (SGLs) can contact the WSGM's office (call 68379215 or 68378617 during office hours or email genel@wesleymc.org or benny@wesleymc.org) to borrow them. These resources are described in detail at the WSGM website, <http://smallgroup.wesleymc.org/> (under the 'Resources → References' web page), with some of them listed in table 4.

<b>Title</b>	<b>Synopsis</b>
Leading Life-Changing Small Groups (Bill Donahue)	Like nothing else, small groups have the power to change lives. They're the ideal route to discipleship – a place where the rubber of biblical truth meets the road of human relationships.  This manual has been designed for small group leaders by small group leaders. It is a reference guide for your ministry, providing the information and resources you need to lead an effective and dynamic small group – the kind in which life change is the norm, not the exception.
Making Small Groups Work (Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr John Townsend)	'Making Small Groups Work' shows small group leaders how to lead the kinds of groups that realize their full, life-changing potential.  Whether the group is a Bible study, support group, or a group designed for a specific area of life, you'll learn skills and biblical processes that can help your people grow together. Discover how you can help a group of any kind move beyond a small group to a growth group.
Authentic Spiritual Mentoring (Larry Kreider)	There is a desperate need for spiritually mature men and women to mentor younger believers to be fully equipped and faithful servants of Christ.  If you don't feel ready for the assignment, you are not alone. But God is calling all believers – including you

	<p>– to grow in spiritual maturity by investing in the growth of others.</p> <p>Seasoned disciple and Christian leadership trainer Larry Kreider offers proven biblical keys that will open the door to thriving mentoring relationships. You will learn the Jesus Model of mentoring – initiate, build and release – and how to apply it to the spiritual family God is preparing for you.</p>
<p>Intercessory Prayer (Dutch Sheets)</p>	<p>If God is all-powerful, why does He need us to pray? If we pray and nothing happens, does this mean that God isn't listening?</p> <p>If you've ever felt that your prayers don't count, Intercessory Prayer will show you just how vital your prayers are.</p> <p>Pastor and teacher, Dutch Sheets, explains the nuts and bolts of prayer with wisdom, gentleness and humor. This book will inspire you, give you the courage to pray for the "impossible" and help you find the persistence to see your prayers to completion. Discover your role as a prayer warrior – it can mean the difference between heaven and hell for someone you know!</p>
<p>Boundaries (Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr John Townsend)</p>	<p>Are you in control of your life? Do people take advantage of you? Do you have trouble saying no?</p> <p>Have you ever wondered: • Can I set limits &amp; still be a loving person? • How do I answer someone who wants my time, love, energy or money? • Why do I feel guilty when I consider setting boundaries?</p> <p>This book gives you biblically-based answers to these and other tough questions, and shows you how to set healthy boundaries with your parents, spouses, children, friends, co-workers and even yourself.</p>

Table 4: List of Loaned Resources

## 6.2 Small Group Bible Study

For SGs looking for Bible study materials, there are a number that WSGM recommends and which can be purchased from WSGM's office at discounted prices. These resources are described in detail at the WSGM website, <http://smallgroup.wesleymc.org/> (under the 'Resources → Bible Study' web page), with some of them listed in table 5.

Title	Synopsis
<p>The Bait of Satan (John Bevere)</p>	<p>The Bait of Satan exposes one of the most deceptive snares Satan uses to get believers out of the will of God – offense. Most people who are ensnared by the bait of Satan don't even realize it.</p> <p>Don't be fooled! You will encounter offense, and it's up to you how it will affect your relationship with God. Your response will determine your future. If offense is handled correctly, you will become stronger rather than bitter.</p> <p>In the best-selling book, John Bevere shows you how to stay free from offense and escape the victim mentality. With more than 400,000 copies in print, this book includes testimonials of transformed people who have read the original book and a devotional supplement, featuring discussion questions, scriptures and prayers.</p> <p>This Bible Study is accompanied by a 4 DVD Set. Each DVD contains 3 lessons.</p>
<p>A Life Worth Living (Nicky Gumbel)</p>	<p>A Life Worth Living is a 9-week course based on the book of Philippians.</p> <p>In the future scientist will be able to prolong life, but will it be worth living? Without purpose or joy, extended life seems a hollow victory. So how do we in fact live life to the full?</p> <p>In each talk, Nicky Gumbel explains how it is possible to live the Christian life positively, practically and joyfully and the course is aimed specifically at those who are starting out in the Christian life.</p>
<p>If You Want to Walk on Water, You've Got to Get Out of the Boat (John Ortberg)</p>	<p>Peter may have been the first one out of the boat, but Jesus' invitation to walk on water is for us all. This study helps your SG answer Christ's call to greater faith, power-filled deeds, and a new way of knowing him. Through 6 sessions that include video clips and group discussions, participants will discover how to discern God's call, transcend fear, risk faith, manage failure, and trust God.</p>
<p>The Life You've Always Wanted (John Ortberg)</p>	<p>If those in your SG are tired of the status quo – if you suspect there's more to Christianity than what you've experienced – John Ortberg invites you to join him on</p>

	a road to transformation and spiritual vigor that anyone can take. Through six sessions that include video clips and group discussions, this study guides you down the ancient path of the spiritual disciplines.
God is Closer Than you Think (John Ortberg)	This study will help your group experience the intimacy you long for with God – and that He longs to have with you.
Christianity Explored (Rico Tice, Barry Cooper and Sam Shammas)	Christianity Explored is a ten-week course that introduces people to Jesus Christ. Week by week, as course participants explore Mark’s Gospel, they address three questions that cut to the heart of Christianity: Who is Jesus? Why did he come? What does it mean to follow him?
The Purpose Driven Life – Small Group Series (Rick Warren)	This 40-week video curriculum features pastor Rick Warren teaching through each chapter of his bestselling book, ‘The Purpose Driven Life’. The accompanying study guides contain lesson outlines and discussion questions that will take your SG deeper in your understanding of God’s five purposes for your life.  Each Volume is accompanied with video-teaching sessions (2 VCDs covering all the topics within that volume). Each teaching segment lasts about 8-15 mins.

Table 5: List of Recommended Bible Study Materials

### **6.2.1 Bible Study Materials for New Small Groups**

For new SGs, WSGM has prepared a set of Bible study materials with which they can use to start off their SG Bible study. There are 6 modules within this set of materials and they can be completed in 48 SG Bible study sessions (i.e. about 2 year of SG meetings if the SG were to meet fortnightly). Table 6 describes how the Bible study materials should be covered.

<b>Module</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>No. of Sessions</b>	<b>Type of Material</b>
1	Small Group Starter Kit	6	Study Book
2	Go Fish	6	Video
3	Building the Community of the King	6	Study Book

4	Christian Character	12	Study Book
5	Getting A Grip	6	Study Book
6	Praying	6	Study Book

Table 6: Details of How New Small Group Bible Study Materials Should Be Covered

All Bible study materials recommended for new SGs can be purchased from WSGM's office at discounted prices. These materials are described in detail at the WSGM website, <http://smallgroup.wesleymc.org/> (under the 'Resources → Bible Study' web page), with some of them listed in table 7.

Title	Synopsis
SG Starter Kit (Jeff Arnold)	Want to build significant relationships, grow in your knowledge and understanding of scripture, and learn how to reach out to others? But you don't know where to begin? This easy-to-use guide gives you everything you need for the first meetings of a SG. Getting acquainted, setting expectations, studying Scripture – it's all here in a step-by-step format that's sure to get you started on the right foot.
Go Fish (Andy Stanley)	In this 6-session companion study guide to the 'Go Fish' DVD, Andy Stanley explores the motivation behind sharing your faith. Discover God's heart for those who don't know Him and the role that we can play in introducing others to Him. Along the way you will be equipped with tools that will help you make sharing your faith a natural part of your life.  This study guide is complete with a leader's guide and 6 lessons, including conversation-starting exercises, discussion questions, and application steps.
Getting a Grip – Finding Balance in Your Daily Life (Bill Hybels)	'Getting a Grip' guides you toward wise choices and disciplined action in 5 vital areas of your life: your time, your health, your finances, your spiritual life, and your relationships. As you learn what the Bible has to say about each of these, you'll discover how able and eager Jesus is to help you obtain solid traction on the road of life.
Ephesians – Building A Community In Christ	We long to belong. We crave unity. We want to be loved and accepted by others. Paul's letter to the

<p>(John Stott)</p>	<p>Ephesians is about uniting all things in Christ. Here we learn how to break down what separates us from God, one ethnic group from another, husband from wife, parent from child and employer from employee. These studies provide a vision of the new society God has planned in His church.</p> <p>John Stott is one of the world's leading and most loved Bible teachers and preachers. In this guide you can explore Scripture side by side with John Stott, enhancing your own in-depth study with insights gained from his years of immersion in God's Word.</p>
<p>Prayer – Opening Your Heart to God (Bill Hybels)</p>	<p>The Creator of the universe wants to have a dynamic relationship with you. The key is prayer. Authentic, courageous, direct communication with God.</p> <p>Each session in 'Prayer – Opening Your Heart to God' will give you a new window of insight. You'll receive courage to lift 'dangerous prayers' with a confident heart. You'll discover how to handle the disappointment of unanswered prayer. And you'll be moved to a depth of honesty in prayer that will surprise you.</p> <p>If you long for a spiritual life that is deep, fruitful, and profoundly real, these studies will help you draw heart to heart with God.</p>
<p>Christian Character (Andrea Sterk and Peter Scazzero)</p>	<p>This study guide is designed to awaken us to the character of a true disciple and move us to hunger and thirst after righteousness. The effectiveness of our deeds in the world is determined by the holiness of our lives.</p> <p>These 12 inductive Bible studies are designed to help us grow in godly character. Several studies deal with basic yet profound truths undergirding the Christian life (such as justification and lordship). Others focus on those qualities which characterize the life of a disciple (holiness, faith, servanthood). Still others explore specific and often-neglected topics related to Christian character (such as temptation, self-image and spiritual gifts).</p>

Table 7: List of Recommended Bible Study Materials for New Small Groups



### ***6.2.2 Bible Study Materials from External Sources***

For SGs deciding not to use WSGM's recommended Bible study materials, they can purchase Bible study materials from Christian book stores although no discounts will be given by WSGM for such purchases. Do note that, for those who want to purchase their materials from the Christian bookstore, SKS, they can inform the WSGM office and arrangements will be made by the office to deliver these materials to Wesley Methodist Church for collection.

## CHAPTER 7: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

To help Small Group Leaders (SGLs) better deal with some of the common problems his/her Small Group (SG) may be or is facing, this chapter has listed suggested answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about handling a SG.

### 7.1 Attendance

#### *1. What is a good size for a SG and how long should a meeting last?*

We suggest a good size for a SG can range from 6-15 members. Groups that are too small may find it challenging to keep meeting if a couple of members cannot make it for a certain week. Groups that are too large may appear to be impersonal. The leader may also find it difficult to minister to members effectively. If you find your group size too small, seek support from your PC Zone Leader on how to bring in new members.

Bill Donahue in “Leading Life Changing SGs” suggests that meetings should be “long enough to engage the group; short enough to create a longing to return again.” We find that most groups can be effective and fulfill their objectives for their meeting within two hours.

#### *2. How do I handle absenteeism in my group? Should we still meet if half the group cannot make it?*

One of the best ways to handle constant absenteeism is for the group to go back to its group covenant and to re-look at the group’s expectations of its members. The group needs to decide “what are we going to do with absenteeism?” The group can talk about specifics like if people are not turning up after a certain number of sessions, what are some things they can do. Expect some absenteeism because of members’ work or family commitments. However, pray for the Holy Spirit to lead you to know if the individual is persistently absent due to genuine reasons or because he has some struggles with the group’s structure or objectives.

The leader can also talk to the individual to find out how to help him. In some situations, the member may be more suited to join a group that meets on a different day or time. If this is the case, do work with your PC Zone Leader on helping the member transit to another group.

#### *3. How do I get members to come to meetings early?*

One way to encourage members to come early is to include that into your group covenant or ground rules - that all will plan to come punctually for group meetings and should we be delayed, we will inform the group leader or assistant. You can also start your meetings punctually so members know they will be missed or will miss out

on some aspects of the meeting if they come late. If you have a culture of starting and ending on time, it can encourage your members to be punctual.

## **7.2 Meeting Place**

### *4. Should SGs meet in church or in member's homes?*

We encourage groups to meet in members' homes but recognize that this may not be possible for all particularly new groups. Church meeting rooms are available for groups to use and leaders can book the rooms in advance with WSGM Ministry Coordinator at the SGM office. We would however like to encourage groups to progressively move towards meeting in homes especially if they have been using the church premises for more than two years. This will help make rooms available for newer groups.

## **7.3 Training**

### *5. Do leaders and assistant leaders need to be trained? If so, where can they get the training?*

We require leaders to be trained as they prepare to lead a SG as this will help them understand their roles and responsibilities and what is expected of them. It is also at the training sessions that leaders are introduced to the various support structures available to them and their group members. WSGM provides leadership training for new leaders two to three times a year and continual training for leaders through the SGMEqc courses.

### *6. What can I do if my assistant leader does not want to lead?*

This may happen from time to time and you can purposefully and gently talk with your assistant leader to ascertain the reasons he does not want to lead. The reasons may include a lack of skill, a lack of opportunity to lead, or other commitments like work, family etc. When you know the reasons, you will be in a better position to help the individual. You can also work with your PC Zone Leader on how to help your assistant leader and if necessary, find another assistant. We encourage SGs to put in place a leadership renewal plan as part of the Flowering environment and this can be done with support from your PC Zone Leader.

## **7.4 Seekers**

### *7. How can I encourage my group members who are hesitant towards receiving visitors?*

There are many reasons why members are not ready to receive visitors. As a group leader, you can assess your group's developmental stage. If the group is in the initial stage of development where members are getting to know one another, it is natural that they do not want visitors. You can then start to prepare them by talking about multiplication and address their concerns when the group is more settled. Your group can also consider including into your group covenant, a plan to practice Christian hospitality and welcome visitors in the future.

However, if your group has been together for a few years and still does not want visitors, you may want to assess if your members have become too comfortable and are not willing to grow beyond their present stage. You can then listen to their concerns and address them. We cannot push them to welcome visitors but we can pray and ask God to prepare their hearts as you share and discuss the situation with them.

We would like to encourage you to seek help from your PC Zone Leader if you need help to address your members' concerns.

## 7.5 Group Life

*8. How can I help my members to be more active in group life i.e. taking up various roles etc?*

There are a couple of ways to encourage members to take up responsibilities. Start by sharing responsibilities with members as soon as possible and refrain from shouldering all of these responsibilities as a leader. You can include some basic roles and responsibilities in your covenant and discuss them with your group, seeking volunteers to take those positions for a period of time. For example, a one year term. This may encourage people as they know everyone has a part to play in group life. They will serve for a specific period of time and can choose other roles next year. Second, consider the spiritual gifts of your members and help them to discover and exercise these gifts in the group whenever possible. This will give them a sense of fulfillment and joy as they live out their potential in these areas.

*9. There are people of different personalities in the group. How can we learn to be sensitive to one another?*

1 Corinthians 13:13 tells us of faith, hope and love, the greatest of these is love. The best way to be sensitive to one another in the group is to pray for members to extend unconditional love. When a group is new, members are learning to trust one another and communication may be superficial. Differences in personality can become obvious and we can be prone to making quick judgments of people. Even in mature groups, members are still learning to accept and love one another and this is part of the process of growing in community.

As a group leader, you can help members recognize that we are all imperfect, there isn't a perfect personality and we are all striving towards Christ-likeness. This is a

process that takes time and the group environment is one the places God has placed us in to learn love, forgiveness, honesty, acceptance, respect etc. However, if you face challenges with certain personalities and they interrupt the group process over a prolonged period of time, do seek the help of your PC Zone Leader.

*10. How do I as a leader handle conflicts in my group?*

As members get to know one another, conflicts in the group are inevitable. Conflicts, when they are handled well, can lead to spiritual growth. As a leader, you should pray for the Holy Spirit to lead you as you seek to help mediate conflicts. It is important to listen to both points of view and look for the value in each opinion. You should help both parties to pursue peace, forgiveness and mutual understanding. It is also beneficial if you have an ongoing positive relationship with members of your group and they know you are helping them instead of taking sides. For more suggestions on handling conflicts, read Chapter 3 of this handbook. Seek support from your PC Zone Leader if you need more guidance.

*11. How do I facilitate the sharing of God's Word and not offend any member? (e.g. doctrinal issues)*

When facilitating to share God's Word, you will first need to be well grounded on reading, observing, interpreting and applying His Word. Present a balanced view through diligence in reading up or asking for other perspectives. Be sensitive and patient in understanding where the other members' are coming from in their interpretation. Be aware of your own bias and acknowledge the place where you can agree to disagree. Remember, focus on the interpretation but manage the emotions behind it.

*12. If I have people in my group who come with negative intentions, what should I do?*

It depends on what is meant by negative. Some individuals are negative in their personal sharing and if this is the case, you can encourage the positive by pointing out positives in his life (or other members') and affirm them. However, do not disregard what he says as he may be facing real struggles in his life. When you set the example and start sharing positives, people will follow. You can also take time after the meeting to find out how he is doing and if he needs any support.

If a person is negative to the extent of being critical and people in the group are upset or hurt, talk firmly to him to stop and attempt to resolve conflicts. Seek immediate help from your PC Zone Leader if he refuses to change. We do not want to allow individuals with negative agendas to dominate a group and destroy the group process.

*13. How about people who visit the group and members sense they have special needs?*

When someone calls asking to visit your group, re-direct them to call the WSGM office. We have procedures for helping a seeker to find a suitable group. If the seeker has not been filtered through the WSGM office and somehow visits your group, ask for their contact details as the office would like information of visitors to groups for reference and follow-up.

From time to time, we may have seekers who, through the process of interacting with members, reveal they have special needs. These could be issues of health, finances etc and you know they need careful attention. If this happens, contact your PCZL and/or PTM immediately and avoid taking any action before consulting your leaders. Brief your members on what to do too. If they want to meet you or your members individually outside the meeting, inform your SGL or PCZL. Never meet a seeker of the opposite gender on your own outside group time. Keep your PCZL updated.

#### *14. How do I encourage group life outside our SG time?*

It is great that as a group leader you are interested in helping your members to grow in community outside the meeting times. For a start, you can organize activities for your group and they can be as simple as a meal together or doing things together as a group such as taking a course, going for a mission trip or serving in a short term project. Have a member look into the aspect of fellowship, and you can discuss with him some activities the group can do together. If not, look for volunteers with an interest or gifting in this area.

Group life outside the meeting time need not be formally planned. When your members grow deeper in their relationship with God and with one another, members may initiate telephone conversations, meet each other online, over lunch breaks etc.

#### *15. I would like to encourage my group members to practice Christian disciplines. How can I do that?*

You can start by doing a practical study on some of the Christian disciplines like Quiet Time and prayer as a group. After that, choose one or two disciplines that the group can practice during every SG meeting. You can also set aside some time during meetings for members to share disciplines they have been practicing. Another good way to encourage this is to attend a course like the SGMEqC which offers courses on spiritual disciplines.

#### *16. How can I motivate group members to buy-into our group goals?*

Members will be motivated to share group goals when they have had a part in developing them. When you are setting Nurturing goals, try to get as many members involved as possible and to get their inputs. Members can then agree to work on a few common goals and commit to helping one another achieve them. As a leader, you should also be setting personal goals for your own growth and for the growth of your group. For example: a personal goal of attending two SGMEqc courses this year and identifying someone to become an apprentice leader by a certain date.

*17. What can I do when I have a member who comes to group meetings and unloads all his worries to everyone and takes up much of our group discussion time?*

When you have a member that dominates group sharing and takes away time that allows others to share, you can consider the following suggestions. Firstly, go back to your covenant or ground rules. Set the rule that everyone will be given a chance to speak and due to the time limitations, each can only speak for (example) five minutes. Group members also will not interrupt someone who is speaking.

If you sense that the individual's concerns are genuine and he needs help, take time after the meeting to talk to him in private and offer a listening ear and prayer support. Explain to him that the meeting time is not the best platform for him to share everything upon his heart due to time constraints but he can speak to you individually if he needs help. If the person is a seeker, avoid meeting individually but consult your leaders. You can also refer him to your PCZL or PTM if you find you are unable to provide him with the help he needs or if he is persistent in his ways and it disrupts the group process.

*18. One of my group members has a partner of a different faith and shares some "questionable" thoughts with the group. What should I do?*

Facilitate a non-judgmental but supportive safe space for the member to process through the issues with the feedback of the group. If the issues become complicated or emotions intensify, it might be better to summarize and then suggest a follow-up outside the regular meetings.

Remember that situations like these require a firm reaffirmation of the biblical teachings and values as well as a pastoral response to the emotional and spiritual struggles the individual is going through. Listen with love, challenge and encourage decisions towards faithful discipleship. Consult your PC Zone Leader or the PTM when you need help.

*19. How can I help members to share beyond the superficial level?*

New groups that have just started will face this initial struggle. However, this is normal and the group can move beyond this stage as relationships deepen. We suggest three ways you can help group members to share beyond the superficial level.

First, set the example yourself. As their group leader, you can be the one to initiate sharing at a personal level and as you model it, they will share at the same level when they are ready. Do not be discouraged if they don't reciprocate. We grow at different pace and some people might need more time before they feel safe to reveal their inner thoughts, joys and struggles.

Second, create an environment that is safe for sharing. If people do not feel secure, they will be hesitant to be vulnerable. You can therefore include in your group covenant areas like respecting confidentiality, learning to be non-judgmental,

exercising love, acceptance and seeking to listen first when one is sharing and not seek to give advice too soon or when it is not asked for.

Finally, before you expect the group to share at a deeper level, seek to bond the group and for them to get to know one another through fellowship time. This may help 'break' the ice and allow members to bond through fun activities. Include ice-breakers as a regular feature in your meeting. Another way is for the group to have an overnight activity.

*20. After meeting for a few years, I feel my group is stagnant. What can we do?*

We suggest you review your group's vision and goals to check if you have accomplished them and if you need to make some adjustments. Perhaps there needs to be some re-alignment and members can talk about what they hope to achieve by being in the group and where they believe God is leading them. You can also pray about encouraging the group to be engaged in areas that are beyond their comfort zone, for example, plan Flowering activities like practicing the empty chair. You should also pray for God to help the group move towards sharing their current group life with others who do not yet know Him. Having a renewed vision and direction from the Lord can rejuvenate the group as you trust the Lord to help the group move ahead.

## **7.6 Group Discussion/Bible Study**

*21. How do I know if a group discussion is on the right track?*

The key to knowing if your discussion is moving in the right direction is to spend time in preparation and to be familiar with your materials. During preparation, you will be taking time to consider the objectives of your study, questions to ask and what are some other issues that are related to the questions that may be brought up during discussion. When you have these in place, you will be in a better position to discern when a discussion is going off tangent and you can lead them back by either summarizing what has been discussed or saying "thanks for all the enthusiastic inputs... and if we have time after the study, we can talk more about... for now, let's get back to the question which asks..."

*22. How do I know which materials to choose for bible study and where can I go to get them?*

When selecting materials for bible study, it will be good to discuss with your group some areas of their walk with God they would like to see growth. The group can then decide on what is relevant and look for these materials in Christian bookstores. If your group has set goals for the year, these goals can also be a guide for the selection of materials. There are materials available from the WSGM office and these are listed in Chapter 5 of this handbook.



# **APPENDIX A: DETAILED ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF WESLEY SMALL GROUP MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

## **Chairperson**

### ***Role***

The primary role of the Chairperson is to work in concert with the Pastors and PTMs to provide leadership for the WSGM. In addition the Chairperson has pastoral care responsibilities to the PCZLs, APCZLs, and Convenors.

### ***Considerations for Nomination***

- Show evidence of a maturing witness for Jesus Christ, the love for God's Word and of living in practical obedience to His commands.
- Must not be a recent convert. (1Timothy 3:6)
- Has a good reputation both in his family and outside<sup>8</sup> (1Timothy 3:4-7).
- Be committed to the Mission of the church and the WSGM.
- Be a member of WMC.
- Has been a PCZL.
- Has the gifts of leadership and administration
- Have good interpersonal and relational skills.

### ***Responsibilities***

- To provide Scripture-based leadership and chair all Exco meetings and Committee meetings, as appropriate.
- To formulate plans and strategies with the PTMs and Pastor to steer the SGM for nurture and growth.
- To report to the Local Conference and represent the WSGM in the LCEC.
- To make presentations and other sharing as and when required.
- To encourage and drive collaboration with other ministries in WMC.
- To provide care for the PCZLs and Convenors.
- To be responsible and accountable to the LCEC.

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<sup>8</sup> It must be qualified that by "good reputation" we refer to him or her as being one who shows growing maturity in Christ and not towards the secular measurement of "success" in one's career.

## **Pastor of Wesley Small Group Ministry**

### ***Role***

To provide spiritual leadership and shepherding to the WSGM.

### ***Responsibilities***

- To assist the PIC of WMC in running the WSGM by carrying out the following duties and responsibilities:
- To pray regularly for all members of the SG Committee.
- To provide pastoral care, counseling and visitations of SGs.
- To provide leadership and counsel in the planning, organization and execution of all SG Events, Seminars, Activities and Ministries.
- To work in concert with the Chairperson and the Exco to provide leadership and growth for the WSGM.
- To be accountable to the PIC and LCEC for the running of WSGM.

## **Pastoral Team Member**

### ***Responsibilities***

- To assist the Pastor in charge of the WSGM and work with members of the SG Committee in running the WSGM by carrying out the following duties and responsibilities:
- Providing pastoral care, counseling and visitations of SGs and PCZLs.
- Appoint and guide a suitable PCZL to integrate new SGs formed through the Baptism Membership Classes (BMC), Alpha and other channels.
- Ensure that all PCZL quarterly reports are promptly submitted and issues raised are being followed up.
- Monitor ongoing projects in WSGM and ensure that there is proper accountability.
- Ensure that all potential PCZLs and SGLs are carefully selected and interviewed before they are recruited.
- Ensure all enquiries and requests concerning the SGs are followed up promptly. To monitor all enquiries to join SGs.
- Provide counsel and/or help resources to troubled members / leaders.

## **Convenor of Sub-Committees**

### ***Role***

The primary role of a Convenor is to form and lead the Sub-Committee under his or her charge. The role is a leadership role, although in some small Sub-Committees, the Convenor will also have a “doing” role. The Convenor is also expected to nurture and care for the members of the Sub-Committee. All Convenors must actively identify and prepare potential leaders to take over their responsibility of Convenor, in the fullness of time.

### ***Considerations for Nomination***

- Show evidence of a maturing witness for Jesus Christ, the love for God’s Word and of living in practical obedience to His commands
- Must not be a recent convert. (1Timothy 3:6)
- Has a good reputation both in his family and outside (1Timothy 3:4-7).
- Be committed to the Mission and Vision of the church and the WSGM.
- Be a member of WMC.
- Has been a SGL for at least one year.
- Exhibit passion and gifting in the area of ministry that the Convenor is taking charge.

### ***Responsibilities***

#### **Convenor for Prayer Sub-Committee**

- To lead team members to pray and intercede regularly for the WSGM leadership.
- To encourage and facilitate prayer within WSGM through activities/events/programs.

#### **Convenor for Events Sub-Committee**

- To plan and lead team members in the organization of WSGM related events such as Annual Ministry Event, SG Weekend and other WSGM-wide events.

#### **Convenor for Training and Resources Sub-Committee**

- To develop and implement training curriculum with PTM for WSGM.
- To recruit trainers and facilitators for WSGM training.
- To develop and update the WSGM resource library on bible study and SG ministry related materials.

### Convenor for Communications and Publicity Sub-Committee

- To work with the WMC Communications Department and appointed webmaster on the communication of WSGM related information, news, events and resources through the WSGM website.
- To work with “Tidings” editorial team on the publicity of WSGM related articles.
- To work with PC for WSGM on the updating of the WSGM notice board.
- To develop and maintain WSGM promotional materials.
- To liaise with other WSGM Sub-Committees to provide communications and publicity coverage.
- To assist the Chairperson and Exco in reviewing/developing appropriate communication channels to publicize the WSGM.

### Convenor for Evangelism

- To challenge SGs to recognize and carry out the Lord’s call for His disciples to evangelize through appropriate strategies (e.g. Go Fish) and events (e.g. My Story, This Christmas).
- To collaborate with other WMC ministries on training and outreach opportunities, whenever possible.

### Convenor for Missions

- To challenge SGs to organize themselves to undertake short term mission trips through the provision of available dates (of mission trips), pre-mission training and resources for the coordination of logistics.
- To collaborate with other WMC ministries on missions opportunities, whenever possible.

## **Treasurer**

### ***Responsibilities***

- To communicate budgetary requirements of the church to the various members of the SG Committee.
- To facilitate and consolidate the annual budget plan for WSGM.
- To highlight any budgetary discrepancies or concerns to the Exco.
- To advise on the financial guidelines of the church as required by members of the Exco and Convenors.

## **Program Coordinator**

### ***Responsibilities***

- To assist the PTM, Pastor in charge of WSGM and Chairperson in the following duties:
- Facilitate, provide logistical support and coordinate the organizing of all activities, events, projects and ministries in the WSGM.
- To make periodic checks (in-person) when necessary, on SGs meeting in church to ensure that the rooms and facilities booked are fully utilized.
- Provide administrative and logistical support in organizing all SG trainings and workshops.
- To ensure that publicity is given to courses being conducted.
- To be present at training sessions to provide administrative and logistical support when necessary.
- Provide secretarial support for Exco meetings.
- Serve as course co-ordinator for the BMC.
- Assist the Pastor in-charge of WSGM to plan the BMC facilitators' schedule.
- Work with BMC class co-ordinators to ensure smooth running of events.
- Work with BMC administrator for administrative and logistical aspects of the BMC.

## **Ministry Coordinator**

### ***Responsibilities***

- Maintain all WSGM data (e.g. Leaders' profiles.)
- Provide administrative and logistical support to the PTMs and PCZLs for the formation of new SGs coming out of the BMC, Alpha or other channels.
- To facilitate the booking of meeting rooms.
- To facilitate the borrowing and sale of bible study resources.
- Ensure that the SG Directory in the WSGM website is constantly updated.
- To make periodic checks through telephone calls to ensure that SGs are still meeting.
- To ensure that the data on SG meeting details (eg. day, time and place of meeting) is updated.
- Administration of PC Zones
- Work with PTMs to ensure PCZL reports are promptly submitted.

- To keep a record of all reports submitted.
- Update of zonal groupings and contact list of all SGLs.
- Receive and process in a systematic manner all enquiries received to join SGs. Provide regular updates to PTMs and Exco.
- Administrative support for WSGM training courses
- Prepare advertisement and registration forms.
- Photocopy training notes and prepare file.
- Administrative support for WSGM Events
- Process payments for expenses incurred.
- Support the Pastor and PTMs in other administrative tasks when needed.

## APPENDIX B: FORMS

### Formation of New Small Group in Wesley Methodist Church

#### NEW SMALL GROUP DETAILS

Name Of SG: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Asst. Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Commencement Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Day and time of Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

Frequency of Meeting (e.g. once a week / twice a month, etc): \_\_\_\_\_

No. of members: \_\_\_\_\_

Age Group:	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 - 15	<input type="checkbox"/> 26 - 30	<input type="checkbox"/> 41 - 45	<input type="checkbox"/> 56 - 60
	<input type="checkbox"/> 16 - 20	<input type="checkbox"/> 31 - 35	<input type="checkbox"/> 46 - 50	<input type="checkbox"/> 61 - 70
	<input type="checkbox"/> 21 - 25	<input type="checkbox"/> 36 - 40	<input type="checkbox"/> 51 - 55	<input type="checkbox"/> above 70

Study materials to be used: (Please provide details) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### **For Official Use:**

##### **A Interviewed by PTM**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

##### **B Application Status**

Approved / Not approved

PTM's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

##### **C Assigned Pastoral Care Zone**

Zone: \_\_\_\_\_





## Wesley Small Group Ministry Pastoral Care Zone Leader Recommendation Form

### RECOMMENDATION FOR WESLEY SMALL GROUP MINISTRY PASTORAL CARE ZONE LEADER

#### Potential Pastoral Care Zone Leader's (PCZL) Particulars

Name: (Mr/Mrs/Mdm/Miss/Dr) \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No.: \_\_\_\_\_ (Hp) \_\_\_\_\_ (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Office)

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ S(\_\_\_\_\_)

Profession: \_\_\_\_\_ Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Potential PCZL Assessment

	Description of Potential PCZL	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Committed to SGM Vision					
2.	Has Shepherding Passion for SGLs					
3.	Expects Evangelism to be Expressed in SGs					
4.	Is a Team Collaborator					
5.	An Encourager of People					
6.	An Enabler (One who Equips and Empowers)					
7.	A People Developer (One who Identifies Potential)					
8.	Has a Regular Prayer Life					
9.	Accepts Bible to be Authority and Guide for Daily Living					
10.	Believes in the Leading of the Holy Spirit for the Ministry					
11.	Able to Lead by Example					
12.	Is Available for Zone Commitments					

(1 – Strongly Agree, 2 – Somewhat Agree, 3 – Somewhat Disagree, 4 – Strongly Agree, 5 – Unsure)

**Small Group Ministry Experience in Wesley Methodist Church**

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**Other Ministry Experiences**

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**Current Ministry Involvement**

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**Comments**

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**Recommender's Details**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact No: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Ministry Relationship to Potential PCZL: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of Time Recommender has Known Potential PCZL: \_\_\_\_\_(weeks/months/years)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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