



Small group E-Newsletter

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The Small group vision

To see every person, connected in a healthy small group for the purpose of living a transformed life in Christ and community.

The 4 W's of Small groups

(What we do?)

Welcome – Connecting with each other

Worship – Connecting with God

Word – God addressing us, focus on application

Work – Share, pray, plan for reaching out (witness)

Dear Small group leaders, co-leaders and host,

Report on SG leaders meeting-May 22(Sun)

For our team mates who couldn't attend, we miss you.

We had a good meeting with the 27 leaders who were present.

1) The following was discussed:

Partnership with SG leaders to pilot test & edit free small group resources.

- Compilation of new small group song files
- Is there a need for sermon discussion questions?
- New policy to allow local Chinese fiancé and aged parents of BICF members to worship in BICF. Certain criteria have to be met and they to submit the application form for a special pass.

2) SG leader's training

Discussion: My small group seems to fall apart in the summer and it's hard to get all the members back in the fall. Can I do anything about this?

How to tell if your group needs a break? How to keep connected through the summer & re-start with a bang?

*please refer to appendix below

4) Funny SG leader's training video from MacLake & discussion in sub-groups under their coach.

5) A new ice breaker game book was distributed. Please request from Doris if you didn't get one.

New free SG resources for you on the BICF small group website.

[Small Group Leader's Corner](#)

[Small Group Resources](#)

[Training weblinks](#)

Small Group campaign 2011

Time your studies now to participate in this community wide campaign!

Dates: **Oct 16 – Nov 20 (6 weeks)**

Title: Freedom In Christ (Galatians)

DVD and study guide will be provided free (Chinese & English)

Does Your Small Group Need a Vacation?

How to tell if and when you need to take a break

- **When Group Members Can't Attend**
- **When There's a Shift in Focus**
- **When the Group Becomes Stale**

***Not for Everyone** -If group attendance is strong and growing, and has momentum behind it, then a vacation may be counter-productive.

Seize the opportunity to develop potential leaders

If you are a leader who needs a break over the summer months, this is a great opportunity to let others in your group facilitate whatever you decide to do as a group. Part of shepherd leadership is developing some of your group members to become leaders.

Here are a few strategies to try:

- Announce that you need to take a break from leadership for the summer. Ask volunteers to take ownership and leadership over planning and executing events during the period.
- Help the group plan a devotional Bible study for each meeting time over the summer. Either use a devotional study guide or sermon discussion
- Suggestion. Do a study of all the —one-anotherll passages in the New Testament. Each week a couple took a passage of their choosing and planned an action-oriented activity for it. For —serve one anotherll (Galatians 5:13), we washed each other's cars. For —teach and admonish one anotherll (Colossians 3:16), we shared our favorite Bible verses and told why. For —be hospitable to one anotherll (1 Peter 4:9), we did a progressive dinner.
- As people take on leadership roles, be sure to set up debriefing sessions. Provide lots of positive feedback and watch for teachable moments.

Keep Connected Through the Summer

Practical ideas to help carry your group's momentum into September

One thing to keep in mind during this season is that small groups are about relationships—not meetings. You can break from regular meetings, but a group should never break from doing life together.

Don't wait for summer to hit and attendance to dissipate before talking over what you want to happen during summer.

Here are several creative ways to stay in touch during the summer:

- Sending cards, inspirational or funny notes through email
- Take pre-summer photos of group members and post them on the fridge as reminders to pray for each other and stay in touch with one another.
- Arrange for all the remaining members to sit together in church on Sunday.
- Plan more social events at which you can hang out together and invite some new people to join you. (welcome corner)
- Suspend the deep Bible study, do devotional studies, sermon discussion, or find other creative ways to grow spiritually together.

- Keep praying for friends, both individually and as a group, Pray especially that the Holy Spirit will open their hearts and that you will have an opportunity to take the next step with them, spiritually.
- Put together a summer calendar with each group member's vacation schedule and availability for social events, then use it to map out when the whole group can get together. (Also include birthdays, anniversaries, or special occasions within the group.)

We all know the old adage that —a change is as good as a rest, so perhaps your group simply needs to do things a little differently in order to thrive over the summer. Take into account the life stage of your group members. Change will look different for a group of retired folks, empty nesters, and families with young kids.

Here are some ideas:

- Continue to meet weekly or bi-weekly, but skip the living room in favour of an outdoor area or patio.
- Use other casual time to catch up, and take turns bringing cold drinks.
- Take turns planning a variety of summer socials, and make sure they are family friendly.
- If you know your attendance will be down for much of the summer, plan to meet with another small group or two in the same boat.

Re-Start with a Bang

Don't let a summer break turn into a sluggish fall for your group.

How can we effectively re-start our groups after a break in momentum?

1. Build Anticipation

It's important to resume your meetings with energy and enthusiasm. The goal is to re-awaken a hunger for small-group community—both in you and your members.

- Use sms and emails to generate and share your anticipation of what God will accomplish this year in your group.
- Plan special events now—including holidays—and share them with your members so they can get involved.

2. Tackle the Details

Plan your group's meeting schedule & SG study material by confirming the place and times for everyone. Set your group's start date

See if group members have ideas for new people that can be invited. You want to solidify as many details as you can now, and then bring a list of the remaining items to your first group meeting. Tackling the smaller issues now means you won't clog up that first meeting with a lot of energy-draining administrative questions. Part of this preparation includes checking out what study material your group might enjoy or benefit from this coming year. Start gathering ideas now, and research any special needs that might develop within the group. If your group hasn't been together during the summer, be ready with sample studies or ideas at the first meeting so that people will not be choosing content —cold turkey. Even if the group doesn't ultimately choose any of your suggestions, it's always a good thing to be ready.

3. Don't Delay

Re-start with a bang, and consider gathering everyone first at a special event, such as a pot bless dinner , tea or dessert. Share about what God has been doing in their lives over the summer, and to ease back into the grooves of community.

4. Plan for the Future

Fourth, if you haven't done this already, start developing a leadership team for your group. This should include an apprentice leader, or someone you can mentor in the coming year. Start casting the vision for shared leadership—with both your apprentice and group—as a way to participate in the expansion of God's kingdom. The start of a new ministry year, complete with new ideas and a new vision, is a great blessing and benefit to the entire small-group ministry. Enjoy it. Get creative. Have fun!

<http://www.smallgroups.com/articles/2008/doesyoursmallgroupneedavacation.html>