



## YOU Should Lead or Host a Small Group this Fall!

This fall we will begin a small group study on the book of Ephesians, and YOU should start a new small group, and host it or lead it! Can you imagine hosting a brand new group of people you've asked to meet with you for 8 weeks? You'll get to study truth together, pray for each other, share each other's struggles and blessings, and get closer than you ever thought possible! Doesn't just imagining yourself doing this bring out a flash of daring in your heart – to step out on the limb of life and ask God to work through you, your strengths and your weaknesses, to help another in his or her pursuit of God?

If you are going to do this, you will need to make it a priority by cutting something less worthy out of your fall schedule. Decide what needs to go so that you can go on mission for God and others!

You will be hearing more about our Small Group Fall Ministry over the coming weeks, but to get you thinking, here are two articles, the first by Brett Eastman, and the second by Samantha Krieger, that deal with starting a group, and frequently asked questions of small group leaders. C'mon, you're only going to live this life once – go for the gusto – the real gusto of working with God to love your neighbor as yourself!

Here's Brett Eastman's article from [www.lifetogether.com](http://www.lifetogether.com):

Some of you have been leading groups for six years—hosting is old hat for you. Some of you have been doing it for six months and may be looking to become a better host. And some of you just completed your first six-week study and, frankly, are still recovering from the experience.

Some of you may have stories like mine: John, who was a leader of a college group I was in for six weeks, tapped me on the shoulder and said, "Brett, I think you're ready to facilitate a group with a few other guys."

"Dude, I don't even know where my Bible is, let alone what's in it."

He said, "Brett you've been very faithful, and we're desperate; we need somebody to help these few guys." I said, "Thanks for your honesty, but I'm a little scared, and I don't think I can do it."

He persuaded me to lead, despite my insecurities. All I had to do was call and connect with a few friends.

Over the next couple of years I experienced community unlike I ever experienced with guys before. I was given the awesome opportunity to witness Jesus' ability to shepherd my heart as well as the hearts of others.

Jesus wants every sheep, even the one stray from the flock of 100, to have a faithful shepherd. And small groups help fulfill this desire.

Small groups follow the biblical model in Acts 2. The early church gave themselves to study, teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayer. And they gave to one another as they had need. Because of this commitment, they added to their numbers daily. It's clear that God blesses us when we meet together, fellowship together, study together—share life together. We need to meet in places like our neighborhoods, where we can include people who want to be known and need to know Christ.

### What Does It Take?

When called to lead, often the response is, "I don't have what it takes." But here are five simple principles to enable you to cultivate a healthy group that produces healthy lives over time.

1. **CONNECT** your group with one another. It's your job to create a circle of friends, so ask the Lord who he wants you to bring together for at least six weeks.

# DOVER CHURCH

## Coming Up...

July 11	Communion Sunday
August 1	Communion Sunday
August 16	Governing/Elder/Deacon Board Meetings 7:00 PM/8:00 PM
August 25	AWANA Family Fun Night
September 1	First Night of AWANA
September 20	Governing/Elder/Deacon Board Meetings 7:00 PM/8:00 PM

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2. **CULTIVATE** your spiritual journey. The dream is that you spur your group on toward love and good deeds. But this only happens by hearing the Word of God. Get into God's Word like you've never done before, because this is how you'll grow and be able to encourage others in their journeys.

3. **CHAMPION** your gifts together. Bring them in, build them up, and train them for ministry. Help people discover their unique God-given gifts. Celebrate and cheer on each other.

4. **COACH** your group to shepherd one another. Not all of us are called to be leaders and teachers. But all of us are called to disciple—or shepherd—one another. Our job is to send them out, not just bring them in and build them up. We need to send them out for the purpose of evangelism. All of us are called to one day have the name of someone we are shepherding.

5. **CELEBRATE** your lives together. The big idea here is to gather people, even when they go out and start a new group, and celebrate life together. Don't miss birthdays, anniversaries, or life-changing events.

### Where Do You Begin?

Now you know you have what it takes, but you may be wondering where to begin. It's as simple as ABC.

## July & August Dover Church Birthdays & Anniversaries

### July

- Jay/Alissa Schuiteman  
Kaleb Mortenson
- Dennis/Sue Rockhill
- Tim/Sharon McGarvey
- Drew Vogel  
Sue Rockhill
- Lu Jansen
- Roger Roghair
- Mel Elsberry
- Conrad/Joanne Harthoorn
- Jolyn Jacobsma  
Perry/Carol Borchard
- Jayce Elsberry  
Noah Norton
- Jan/Bev Schuiteman  
Jerry Boyer
- Lee Worthley
- Paul/Barb Lubbers
- Cynthia Pals
- Lee/Angela Worthley  
Margaret Roghair
- Alice Mortenson

### August

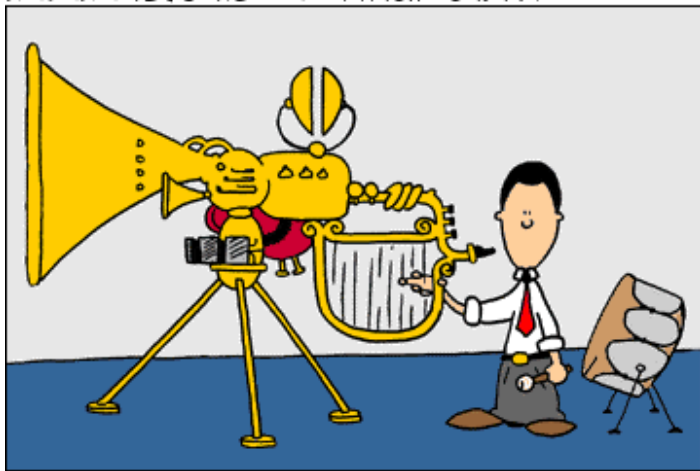
- Roni DeJong
- Dale/Lynette Nystrom
- Jason/Jessica Bruinsma
- Mel/Julie Elsberry
- Adam Vogel  
Hannah McGarvey
- Greg/Melissa Oolman
- Deb Menning  
Ted Penning
- Brande Pals
- Barry Lawrensen
- Geoffrey Oolman
- Dale Nystrom  
Jeff/Christi Vander Voort  
Jeff/Sue Taylor
- Doug/Jennifer Vogel  
Ed/Donna Mortenson  
Marvin/Joy Vogel
- Viv Reeves
- Jennifer Vogel  
Mark Vogel  
Thomas Holm
- Elaine Lawrensen
- Mark DeJong  
Sharon McGarvey
- Dan/Kiki Jongewaard
- Alex Menning
- Mary Holm
- Lu/Jane Jansen
- Tracy Jacobsma



First **ASK** God who to invite. That's what Jesus did when he sought his disciples. Go through your email and phone lists, and ask God to reveal to you who to invite to a six-week study, and be open to the unexpected person he might reveal.

Once God reveals those names, **BEGIN** inviting them right away. Don't hesitate, but pick up the phone and call them.

Then take the time to **CHECK** out material to use for the six-week study. There are lots of series: a Doing Life-together series, 40 Days of Purpose; 40 Days of Community; a Beth Moore series; an Experiencing God series; anything



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IAN HAD EVERY INTENTION OF MAKING SURE THAT HIS SPECIAL MUSIC WAS VERY SPECIAL INDEED

from Navpress. The key is to check out the material and begin prepping right away.

First Peter 5:2-3 urges believers to “Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, be because you are willing, as God wants you to be.” Some of you are saying, “I not entrusted with a flock, am I?” You’re given a circle of friends—this is your flock that God entrusted to you. Watch over it willingly, not begrudgingly, because there’s no one else to do it. And remember, your reward will be an unfading crown of glory in honor and praise of God Himself.

## 5 Common Questions about Small Group Leadership

Samantha Krieger is the content editor and a writer for SmallGroupTrader.com

**1. What if I don’t feel confident?** Leading a small group isn’t about your ability. It’s about what God will do through you as the group’s facilitator. When you realize it’s a team effort, your overall view of leading will change. You’ll start to feel confident because you’re in community and participating with others. Above all, when you trust in Christ to help you lead and guide the discussion, those feelings of inadequacy will slowly fade away.

**2. How do I help my group really connect with each other?** Getting your group to connect and gel on an authentic level has a lot to do with how you choose to open up. If you lead with a heart of authenticity, your group will feel the freedom to do the same. If you pretend like you don’t have struggles or sin issues, your group will never be vulnerable and spiritual growth will remain stagnant.

Early on, share your story and give your group snapshots into your life and who you are. Be honest about your struggles or sin issues. Ask icebreaker questions to the whole group. Love on them well and carve out social time together. And before you know it, you’ll be amazed at how naturally your group gels as a whole.

**3. How do I deal with awkward silences after I ask a question?** Silence can sometimes indicate that you need to restate the question better. Launch questions that get people talking about themselves. If your group still isn’t opening up, set aside Bible study and discussion time for a few weeks and provide ways for your group to get to know each other in different settings.

Silence could also mean you need to practice more patience. Wait for about 20 seconds after you ask a question for your group to reflect and think. If your group still doesn’t answer, make eye contact with someone directly. i.e.: “John, what do you think about...?” You can also prompt the discussion by being the first to answer your own question.

**4. What if I don’t know an answer to a question?** Consider bouncing that question right back for your group to answer. Let them know you don’t know the answer but are interested in their feedback. Tell them you’d be glad to research that one later and get back to them. Being open allows for your group to see that you’re all on the journey together. Tough questions, even though intimidating, can carry your group into new depths spiritually and relationally.

**5. What do I do when there’s conflict?** Even though it’s really tempting, don’t run away from the inevitable conflict. Bring it to the surface by going to that person alone. Find out what’s driving the conflict (Prov. 20:5). Is something triggering a selfish attitude, a constant need to talk, or a critical tone of voice? God speaks about what to do with conflict all throughout Scripture (Matt. 18). Aim for healthy conflict that will build community and not tear it down.

**So, what are you going to do?** Do you feel a nudge from God? Go for it! We will help you. Talk with Pastor Dennis – all his contact info is on the back of this newsletter.

# On Purpose

## MISSIONS FOCUS on NWC student Ansley who is on a Summer of Service trip to Zimbabwe!

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Since my last update, I really feel like I've finally become 'one' with the culture and surroundings. I feel like I know how to act in different situations according to the culture. I'm also starting to use the Shona language a little more.

Last Saturday, three missionaries took me and Kelsey to a game park. I was a little nervous to go but all was well. There were 15-20 people in our group. We all jumped in an open trailer and a guy on a tractor pulled us around the park. We saw a lion and hyennas (which were in a fenced area), giraffes, elephants, rhinos, buffalo, zebras, impala, African cows, monkeys, warthogs, and more that I'm forgetting. An interesting animal we saw was an elephant that was raised by buffalo. This elephant was the first one at the park many years ago, and as a baby, the park workers put her with the buffalo so she wouldn't be alone. She grew up and now thinks she is a buffalo! She has been put with other elephants, but immediately goes back to the buffalo.

This past Monday, my 'teammates' and I went to a flea market. I must say, I love the flea market. At the one we usually visit, there are tons and tons of statues in all different sizes, bowls, wall hangings, clothing...you name it! I love going there and bargaining with everyone.

Yesterday, I wore an African wrap around skirt to my orphanage. The house mother and helpers all laughed and said I was looking more Zimbabwean everyday! When I was talking to the adults, I saw two of the younger girls washing the socks and shoes they wore to school. I decided to jump in and help. The two are around age 10. I grabbed a sock and tried to wash it like they did, and they saw me and started laughing because I was not doing it the 'right' way. After a while, I managed to do it the correct way.

All the kids there help out without being told. They'll wash dishes, wash clothes, help prepare food, serve tea at tea time, clean, and all other basic household chores. Even when they have homework, there are usually 3 or 4 of them helping one another.

This past week I'm starting to feel more at home. I have been able to really see God work in Zimbabwe. I go to a couple Bible studies during the week, and it's so cool to see the people and how God is working in their lives. I'm excited for the continuation of God's work during the rest of my time here.

Thank you for all your continued prayers! Please Pray...

- I keep building relationships
- I don't get too drained with the time I have left
- I continue to travel safely through town

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