

Southern Asia Pacific Division



Integrated Evangelism Lifestyle MANUAL

A Practical Guide for Developing Care Groups
An Intentional, Christ-Centered, and People-Focused Approach to
Nurture, Discipleship, and Mission

THE IEL VISION

Every Church Engaged; Every Believer Renewed

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Dedication

The shift to Small Group ministry
was the brainchild of the late SSD
President

Pastor Alberto C. Gulfan, Jr.
Care Group Catalyst

He rightfully passed the baton of
leadership to

Pastor Leonardo R. Asoy
Dynamic Promoter of Care Groups

To them we dedicate this Manual.



Acknowledgement

Love at First Sight! That describes my first encounter with small group.¹ Since then, wherever the Lord led Pastor Rudy and me—from Central Philippine Adventist College (CPAC), to Central Philippine Union Conference (CPUC), to the West Visayan Conference (WVC)—we brought, with enthusiasm, the Good News of WIN!Wellness and the blessings of small group ministry. In writing this manual, we drew from the above trainings and our own Care Group experiences.

And as they say, “It takes a village to raise a child,” this guide is a collaborative effort of the SSD-IEL Committee, and these folks, for whom we are most grateful:

- Dr. Samuel Saw, SSD President, and Dr. Max Langi, Treasurer—for the full trust.
- Helen Gulfan, Dr. Miriam Andres, Dr. Hermogenes Villanueva, and Pastor Abraham Carpena—for laying down the basic IEL concepts, refining our ideas.
- Romhelyn Gay Deles and Teresa Costello—for organizing the first framework of this Manual.
- Macjanry Imperio for the infographics and cover; Roy Espina for the cover illustration; Gerson Lopez for the lovely interior layout and design.
- Pastor Rudy Baloyo, then Vice President and IEL coordinator, for the direction and research materials.
- The Care Groups in Calbayog City, Philippines and pilot groups in WVC for the inspiration and insight on what works and what doesn't.
- Dr. Bienvenido Mergal, the new VP for IEL, Nurture, Discipleship, and Reclamation whose academic paper on Small Groups fits the need of the hour. You came in the nick of time, Praise God!
- Pastor Wesley Szamco for composing the concise, precise, yet catchy IEL Vision.
- My SSD Care Group, for validating research findings on the strength of therapeutic and relational learning, and the spontaneity of small group evangelism.
- My Primary Care Group with Pastor Rudy—Merryll, Adrian, and Pauleen, for the inspiration.

And to our Lord, Jesus Christ, who modelled relational evangelism motivated by Love and Compassion; for the gift of words and wisdom in writing this manual.

May this guide enable and inspire us all that when Nurture, Discipleship, Reclamation, and Outreach come to mind, we easily think and do Care Group ministry! Godspeed!

For the IEL Committee,

Virginia Ponsaran-Baloyo, MAEd

¹During that SSD-sponsored training in Central Philippine Adventist College in 2010, we experienced small group and did a return demo of WIN!Wellness as modelled by Drs. Millie and John Youngberg, WIN! founders/writers.



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Introduction

Small groups have always been God’s plan! At Creation God designed man to belong to a family – the most important small group. After the Exodus, Moses divided the new Israelite nation in groups of ten. In the New Testament, Jesus trained the Twelve. When His disciples faced Jewish animosity, the book of Acts records that the network of home churches created converts from 120 to 10,000 in a matter of months!

And God is using them again! Modern research shows that one of the eight prevailing characteristics of healthy and growing churches is the presence and multiplication of holistic small groups.²

More than a hundred years ago Ellen White counselled the Adventist church to return to the biblical small group concept: “The formation of small companies as a basis of Christian effort has been presented to me by One who cannot err...If in one place there are only two or three who know the truth, let them form themselves into a band of workers” (*Testimonies Vol 7, 21-22*).

A survey of North American Division churches, however, showed that of the eight quality characteristics of growing churches (see box), having holistic small groups is their weakest.³ This problem is probably worldwide in scope.

A casual observation of our churches confirms this truth. So does the World Church. Statistics show that, “While the number of church members has grown significantly over the past fifty years, in the same period, four out of ten of all members have left the church.”⁴ It was recently reported that even as we baptize 3,000 plus every day, 1,000 are formally taken out from the church records.⁵

When people--especially the young--leave the church, apostasy is not always the reason. Life is rough for many, so having a safe, loving, and joyful environment with friends is a big comfort. They just need to gain, what Sister White says, “courage and strength from the assistance of the others”⁶ especially in times of adversity. Finding the needed support, they stay. If not, they leave the church by the back door.



EIGHT CHARACTERISTICS OF GROWING CHURCHES

1. Empowering leadership
2. Gift-oriented lay ministry
3. Passionate spirituality
4. Functional structures
5. Inspiring worship service
- 6. Holistic small groups**
7. Need-oriented evangelism
8. Loving relationships

~ Christian Schwartz

² Christian Schwartz studied 1,000 congregations and published his findings in the 1990's book *Natural Church Development*.

³ “Personal Ministries – small groups” available at <https://personalministries-adventistchurch-org-uk.adventist.eu/small-groups>.

⁴ 2015 Reach the World Strategic Plan, p. 7.

⁵ According to Pastor Anthony Kent, GC Ministerial Association, Asso. Director, during the SSD Advisory on May 16, 2016.

⁶ EG White, *Testimonies Vol 7, 21-22*



“Brotherly affection and love” (2 Peter 1:7, 8) are among the best marks of spiritual maturity. These are, however, difficult to express in solitude or in a large congregation, but are best felt in small groups.

“There is an evident need for comprehensive member-care strategies to enhance the experience in the local church family and thus improve membership retention patterns,” which is a World Church recommendation. In the Southern Asia Pacific region, the intentional plan to build a strong network of Small Groups, where believers are cared and disciplined is imperative.

Thus, in 2012, the SSD Executive Committee approved the Integrated Evangelism Lifestyle (IEL) initiative, with emphasis on Small Group Ministry. In SSD, small groups are called Care Groups (CG). Rather than random groupings, IEL Care Groups are intentional communities that model the welcoming atmosphere of the family of Christ. IEL Care Groups range from traditional Adventist families to a group of believers connected through common interests or those who are nearby-residents.

For some years now many churches in SSD have been blessed by the power of Care Groups. A growing number of converts have found faith from their communities of caring Christians.

Yet, the real and lasting benefits of Care Group ministries are still to be discovered. They need to be shared by every Adventist member, church, and institution in Southern Asia. To empower church leaders and pastors, as they mobilize every church member to “Reach the World,” SSD printed this IEL/Care Group Ministry manual as a guide.

Let us prayerfully study this manual and get actively involved. As Christians, we are all missionaries. We need to invest in the discipleship of our families, friends, and neighbors and help prepare them to meet Jesus at His Second Advent.

⁷ 2015 Reach the World Strategic Plan, 7.



A Word to Church Leaders and Pastors

The SSD-IEL Care Group Ministry Vision:
Every Church Engaged. Every Believer Renewed.

Nothing is more important than leadership. For Care Groups that flourish are usually led by committed and competent leaders, their passion easily caught by their members.

Integrated Evangelism Lifestyle is a new paradigm that needs leaders who are also careful planners. As a Union/Mission/District/Local Church leader, you have the primary role in IEL's deliberate and consistent implementation. God has called you to inspire widespread as well as local church ownership of these mission plans, the Total Member Involvement needed for organizing and sustaining Care Groups. Your diligent leadership will ensure the long-term sustainability of the Care Group "generation" in your area.

First Things First

Though most rewarding, evangelism can be difficult. But the Great Commission in Matthew 28: 18-20 comes with assurance of His presence: "Lo, I am with you always..." To acquire that godly spark, let's look back to the early church experience in Acts 1 -3.

- o Chapter 1 – The believers pleaded for the Holy Spirit; they had a devoted prayer life.
- o Chapter 2 – At Pentecost, God filled them with the Holy Spirit in answer to their prayer.
- o Chapter 3 – The disciples possessed amazing power and became very bold in their telling of the Gospel.

This is the same Power that Care Groups need. If we organize Care Groups in United Prayer, we shall witness Pentecost again.

As you commit to participate in IEL, your prayers must be accompanied by planning and acting on these plans. We recommend the following steps:

- **Own the IEL Vision.** Know more about Small Group ministry. Do your "homework." Talk to those who have done it. Do a "test group" or join an existing one to personally understand its benefits.
- **Share the Vision.** Promote IEL through awareness discussions and seminars. Preach about it. Collect reading materials on Small Groups ministry and share with your co-church leaders. Conduct a small-group "relational learning" from the WIN!Wellness "Hope" chapter. Don't rush and skip the discussion questions!



- **Set up IEL Committees** on all levels. Present the plan to the Executive Committee/ Administrative Committee/Church Board. Present the approved IEL plan to the congregation. See to it that an Elder is specifically assigned to oversee Care Groups.
- **Equip** church members with training and resources such as the WIN!Wellness book and this manual.
- **Support** members as they organize and/or participate in Care Groups in their areas of influence.
- **Visit and attend** organized Care Group sessions, especially in the early stages.
- **Evaluate** to improve/enhance the Care Group meetings.
- **Hold regular meetings** for CG leaders/officers for feedback, evaluation (see Appendix) and instructions.
- **Organize a Harvest Celebration** (See Appendix).
- **Conduct more training** when necessary.

Change can create resistance, so start with a few who share your vision. Experience the beauty and therapeutic benefits of relational learning in your Core Care Group (with the IEL committee as members). Remember, “The proof of the pudding is in the eating.”

Lastly, don't forget to...

- **Care for your own families**—your spouse and children. Involve them. Neglect can cause strains in your own relationships which might weaken your effectiveness as church leader. Remember, charity begins at home.
- **Celebrate** when you see people come to faith in Christ. Organize Harvest Celebrations in the Church, District or Mission levels for the glory and honor of God!

As you read this guide, pray for wisdom. Adapt and/or add activities according to your Church's need and situation. Jesus is coming soon. And we need to reach those within our world, to prepare them for His coming. We challenge you to be God's pastor and leader in planning, training, and implementing IEL to prepare the church, your family, friends, and even yourself. For “He who seeks to give light to others will himself be blessed.”⁸

Maranatha!

⁸ EG White, *Desire of Ages*, 142.



Chapter I

Developing SSD'S IEL Small Group Ministry

“Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.” - Acts 5:42 (NIV)

As a contemporary church movement, Small Group ministry emerged in the 1920's and 1930's. These days, small groups have evolved into a powerful, missional, and church growth program. Thousands of Christian congregations have been revitalized as members focus on praying, studying the Bible, and witnessing for Jesus.

SMALL GROUP BEGINNINGS

Partly due to our Methodist roots and the counsel of Mrs. White, “small groups” is not new to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Church planting spurred at our Church's early beginnings.⁹

Through Sabbath School classes in the early 1900s a “strong, steady, vigorous growth” and conversions were noted.¹⁰ To this day the weekly Bible study/lesson review grounds us to Biblical Truth. Although SS teachers mostly do the talking, the discussions allow members to feel “involved” as they share their insights and understanding of the week's lesson.

Contemporary Adventist Small Groups

The first to intentionally implement the small group system was the South American Division (SAD).¹¹ They introduced the “new” program in the 1970's, then more emphatically in the 1990's, as the basis of the Church's missionary outreach. In 2009 more than 65,000 small groups were organized. Churches developed particularly in these aspects: “spiritual growth, growth in relationships, growth in preparing disciples, and growth in planting new churches.”¹²

⁹When Mrs. White visited Melbourne, Australia, she witnessed a major Christian revival powered by Small Groups, with 2,000 groups meeting in homes David Cox, *Think Big, Think Small Groups*, p. 17

¹⁰L Flora Plummer, *Early History of the Sabbath-School Work*, pp. 11-12

¹¹With a population of 315 million, the South American Division (SAD) has more than 2 million members and 10,600 churches. The division includes Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Falkland Islands, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay, with adjacent islands in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Source: South American Division website.

¹²Chavez, Jolive, “Small Groups and the Development of the Adventist Church in South America,” 1- 7. Available at <http://www.academia.edu/>

Small Groups (SGs) in the South American Adventist context are “prayer meetings, Bible Study, and testimonies in family homes, involving on average between five and 15 people.” The studies are more Christ-centered, have “relational emphasis, more directly related to spiritual, social, and emotional needs.” SG members are encouraged to invite non-baptized friends and family members to these meetings. Visitors are then introduced to doctrinal studies presented by missionary partners in a Bible class.¹³

Why the Adventist churches in South America were so successful in baptizing, retaining members, and in planting new churches have been attributed to their vigorous Small Group program. Yet leaders have acknowledged that many small groups have also “died” and that “discipleship, membership retention and integral church growth” still need much improvement.

CHURCH REALITIES

Much of the Adventist style of evangelism is holding persuasive presentations of the Biblical message, in public or in doctrinal classes. After we see our “converts” conform to the acceptable Adventist standards, then we embrace them in the church.

But reaching the lost and keeping them in church has become increasingly challenging in this post-modern, secularized, and multi-cultural society.

Considered “one of the brightest spots in rising membership” SSD recorded 351,757 added to the Church from 2007-2011. In the same period, however, 50,947 were also dropped and reported missing. “Weak foundation before baptism, lack of nurturing, lack of friends and warmth in the church” were among those cited as causes. Apparently traditional evangelism and nurturing strategies have not been producing its desired results.

During the Adventist Church’s beginnings, Ellen White already urged early Adventist workers to innovate as needed: “Whatever may have been your former practice, it is not necessary to repeat it again and again in the same way.”¹⁸ We can imitate the “faithfulness and zeal” of our Church fathers, she said.



CARE GROUP BENEFITS

- Members grow more quickly in spiritual maturity.
- Fewer leave by the back door.
- A deeper level of care and concern is experienced for church and community.
- Better cross-cultural understanding exists among members if the church is a multi-cultural community.
- Spiritual gifts are more easily identified and developed.
- People with no church background are more easily won to faith in Christ.

¹³ The combination of applied relational studies in SGs and cognitive doctrinal studies in preparation for baptism were noted to have positive result. Jolive Chavez, “Small Groups and the Development of the Adventist Church in South America,” 1- 7. Available at <http://www.academia.edu/>

¹⁴ The number of SAD churches grew from 21,345 in 2010 to 25,942 in 2014. Andrew McChesney. Retrieved from <http://www.adventistreview.org/church-news/story2534>.

¹⁵ Jolive Chavez, “Small Groups and the Development of the Adventist Church in South America,” 1- 7. Available at <http://www.academia.edu/>

¹⁶ Report of GT Ng, GC Executive Secretary during the Autumn Council. Available from <https://news.adventist.org/en/all-news/news/go/2013-10-13/>

¹⁷ Five-Year Trend Analysis, 2015 SSD Secretariat Report.

¹⁸ Evangelism, (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Pub. Assn.) 125.



But we must “improve our light as they improved theirs, and do as they would have done had they lived in our day. We must walk in the light which shines upon us, otherwise that light will become darkness.”¹⁹

THE IEL FRAMEWORK: REASONS FOR BEING

Souls already hardly won getting easily lost. Weak foundation before baptism. Lack of nurturing, lack of friends. Members losing their evangelistic touch and sense of mission.

Here, in these lines are stark clues to the pressing challenges facing the Adventist Church. This prompted the Southern Asia-Pacific Division leadership to shift paradigms: Change the method of sharing Christ’s salvation; change our way of nurturing members to spiritual maturity.

Yes, we must “walk in the light that shines upon us.” After all, biblical and prophetic counsels, as well as research and church realities have offered opportunities for healthy growth. That is, if this time, instead of aiming for the BIG, we will have to think SMALL.

The cornerstone concepts of **Integrated Evangelism Lifestyle** are the same reasons for the Church’s existence: the **Great Commission** in Matthew 28:19, 20 and the **Great Commandment** of John 13:34, 35.

In Jesus’ plan, a successful mission does not only need the process and direction. His followers must first be equipped with Divine Power for the daunting task of evangelism. A spiritual **Revival** (Acts 1:8) and **Intercessory Prayer** (1 Tim. 2:1) must thus precede or be integrated in the IEL/Care Group experience.

When the Lord was here He “mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me.’”²⁰ **Christ’s Method Alone** is also the guiding principle behind the following programs that inspired IEL:

1. **Small Group Ministry**
2. **Family to Family project** (recently called Families Reaching Families)
3. **Health & Family Evangelism**

Small Group Ministry

Inspired by Small Groups’ big results, SSD developed IEL in 2012.²¹ It was a way to restore the Spirit-led small group dynamics in the New Testament or the Acts 2 churches. Following the inspired EG White statement from the “One Who cannot err,” Small Groups are to be the basis of “Christian effort for Adventists and non-believers.”

¹⁹ *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol 1, p. 262.

²⁰ *The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 143, 144

²¹ Under the leadership of the late SSD President Pastor Alberto Gulfan, Jr.



THE ACTS 2 CHURCH

From Acts 2: 42- 47 we can find these five components why the early church grew rapidly:

1. Fellowship. "They joined in the fellowship . . . and ate together with glad and sincere hearts" (v. 46).

2. Discipleship. "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching" (v. 42) during the Sabbath in the Synagogue, and in houses during the week, studying the Scripture together.

3. Worship. "They devoted themselves . . . to the breaking of bread and to prayer. . . . [They were] praising God" (v. 42).

4. Ministry. They gave "to everyone who had need" (v. 45).

5. Evangelism. "...[they enjoyed] the favor of all people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved" (v. 47). are more easily identified and developed.

Application to IEL: In IEL Small Groups become vessels for nurturing disciples, building biblical communities, and fulfilling the Mission. Today's Adventist congregations should be small-group churches. SSD Small Groups are called Care Groups (CGs). The tepid term (small!) acquires a name that is true to its theological purpose: to offer a safe, caring, and supportive environment to believers and seekers as they discover truths for growing in Jesus.

The Family to Family Project

Another program that helped shape IEL is the Family to Family (FTF) evangelism project of West Central Brazil Union Mission (now fully endorsed by the General Conference Family Ministries department). In FTF the entire Adventist family is involved to share the gospel with their neighbors, relatives, and friends. Prayerfully, they are to become winsome witnesses through their lifestyle of "purity and integrity" "because God created families to be the influential building blocks of society."²²

Application to IEL:

The SSD-IEL is a new model of ministry that makes homes as the arena of outreach. Each Adventist home is encouraged to function as **Care Group**—with parents and children growing in grace under the Spirit of God to be effective witnesses for Him. Families can witness to their communities in two ways:

1. Through their lifestyle—because a "well-ordered [and] well-disciplined family tells more in behalf of Christianity than all the sermons that can be preached,"²³ and,
2. By choosing one family to care for.

With a strong intercessory prayer agenda, a Care Group family builds friendship, makes sincere contacts with their Cared Family (CF), sharing resources, inviting them for health and family learning (WIN!Wellness) and at church events such as Visitors Day and socials. If ably trained they give Bible studies or invite their CFs to an evangelistic series.



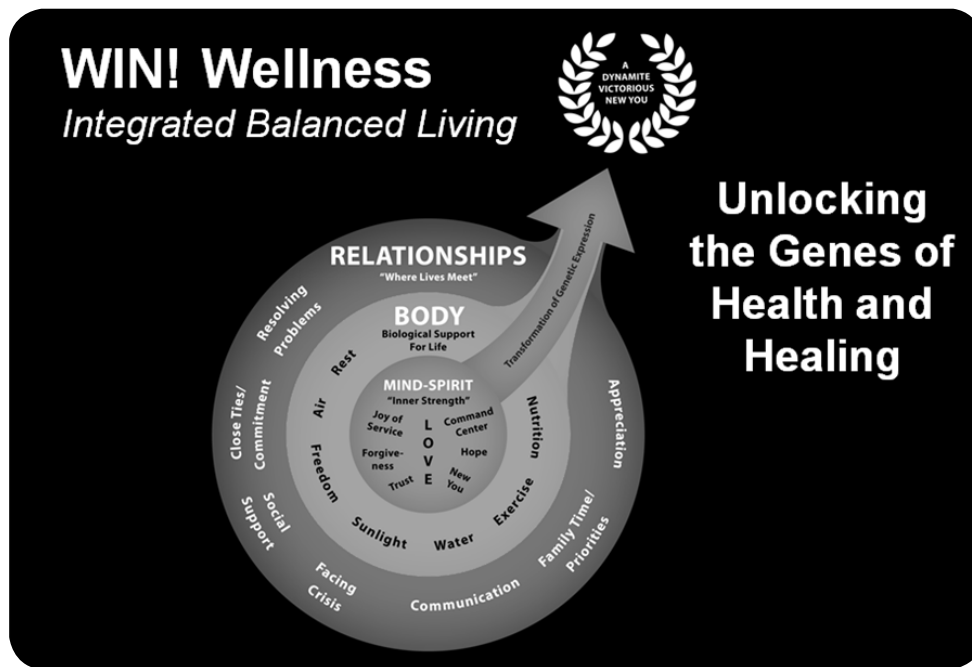
²² *Family to Family Church Guide*. Retrieved from <http://family.adventist.org/>. 9.

²³ EG White, *The Adventist Home*, 32

Health & Family Evangelism

Integrating the Health & Family Evangelism through WIN! Wellness Homes of Hope and Health program²⁴ is a plus factor in the Care Group experience.

WIN! stands for Wellness Integrating Needs. It emphasizes learning of 29 topics/factors for a balanced life that blends physical, spiritual, and relational dimensions of family life. Learning and applying WIN! to life increases the potential of families and CG members as winsome witnesses in their communities.



Application to IEL:

It is recommended that CGs invite their non-Adventist/non-Christian friends to a WIN! seminar/sharing activity. WIN!'s research-based wellness program makes families learn to prevent illness and degenerative diseases and restore relationships in families. Thus far Adventists feel comfortable in inviting their neighbors to the Health and Family Seminars.

"The marriage of Bible doctrine, even the most difficult, challenging ones, with conceptually compatible family-life concepts makes a package that is not only attractive but almost irresistible."²⁵ Responses to WIN!, reports say, have mostly been positive. The book has obvious, personal, and family life revival, as well as practical life-changing benefits.

²⁴The WINWellness was written by Drs. John and Millie Youngberg and their son, Dr. Wes Youngberg.

²⁵Gordon O Martinborough, "Five Benefits of Integrated Family-Life Evangelism." (April 2001). Retrieved from www.ministrymagazine.org



A WIN study always includes discussion questions. These allow participants to share their impressions and struggles with friends who are praying for them.

Integration in IEL

This section clarifies the meaning of “Integration” in IEL.

1. Evangelism is integrated in the life and lifestyle of every member, as opposed to evangelism being just a program or event. It has been observed that “church members seem to have few links between their weekly ‘church-life’ on Sabbath morning and their life-context during the week.”²⁶

“The world is watching Seventh-day Adventists, because it knows something of their profession of faith, and of their high standard; and when it sees those who do not live up to their profession, it points at them with scorn.”²⁷

Compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience (Col 3:12:12) must be seen in our human relationships. Otherwise, John and Millie Youngberg say, the relevance of our Bible studies and missions will be highly questionable. Discipleship in Jesus modelled attractively 24/7 makes Christianity contagious.

2. All church departments and ministries (Women, Children, etc) are integrated/united in Care Group Ministry. IEL is also interwoven in all of the departments’ functions, wherein strategic and action plans reflect Care Group concepts and support their growth. Departments may differ in ways of promotion and nurture.²⁸ But with regards to discipleship and evangelism the focus is Care Group. IEL is the way to Reach the World.

3. The newly baptized are intentionally “integrated” in church life. Having experienced newness as Christ’s followers, they must experience the joy of being involved in ministry and mission – a holistic journey in Jesus.

SMALL GROUPS: A MEMBER-CARE PLAN

Small Group ministry answers the urgent and vigorous need for an intentional program on “spiritual development that trains and disciples [members] for meaningful lives of witness in the world.”²⁹ As a major component of the Integrated Evangelism Lifestyle, it is SSD’s commitment to first, of all, care for Church members.

²⁶IEL Committee Report, October 2012

²⁷EG White, *Christian Service*, 277

²⁸Examples of Integration: The department activities in churches support and respect CG meetings and ministries; they involve the CGs as participants in church programs.

²⁹*Reach the World Strategic Plan 2015-2020*



It is expected that as members become participants of Care Groups they will experience the following benefits:

- 1. Experience the need to belong and of being loved.** It is only in the context of small group where these admonitions can be applied effectively.
- 2. Grow spiritually and come to faith in Christ as His followers.** We grow well when we grow together. Active participation in group study, sharing experiences, and prayer, facilitate this spiritual growth.
- 3. Easily engage in gifts-based ministry, in service and outreach.** With some coordination by the CG leader, members can minister in practical ways to meet fellow member's needs.

Commenting on the so-called social meetings of primitive Adventism Ellen White captures the best benefit of Small Group ministry to believers:

“We meet together to edify one another by an interchange of thoughts and feelings, to gather strength, and light, and courage by becoming acquainted with one another’s hopes and aspirations; and by our earnest, heartfelt prayers, offered up in faith, we receive refreshment and vigor from the Source of our strength. These meetings should be most precious seasons and should be made interesting to all who have any relish for religious things.”³⁰

The Holy Spirit has strongly impressed our Church leaders to reconsider what the Spirit of Prophecy, the Bible, and research, have been telling us all along. As we see what ills our contemporary churches the Lord presents opportunities for healthy growth, with potentials for impressive results.

We should no longer delay, but “taste and see” how we will integrate the IEL Care Group ministry in reaching the world for Christ.

³⁰EG White. *Christian Service*. 119.

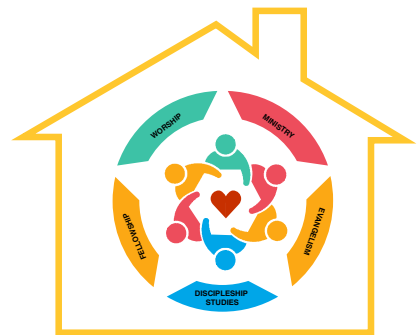
Healthy, Growing Care Groups: What They Are And What They Do

“They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of the bread and to prayer.” Acts 2:42

There are small groups. And then, there are Care Groups. Caring, healthy, and growing. Care Groups that are holistic possess dynamics found in the Acts 2 Church: fellowship, worship, discipleship, ministry, and evangelism.

In the IEL initiative, a Care Group is defined by these characteristics:

- The 5 to 10 persons comprising it have become a **basic Christian community**.
- They have chosen to fellowship together (usually at a member’s home), on a **Wednesday** or at **Vespers Friday**, or at a time convenient to the participants.
- They meet for **Christ-centered worship** and **discipleship** studies that are relational, yet biblically focused. The purpose is to lead members better understand Scriptures and apply its principles in their lives.
- **Ministry** takes place when they serve, pray, care for, and edify one another, even spending time together in social activities.
- **Evangelism** in the Care Group is also relational. After praying for a heart that is truly concerned of others, members cultivate meaningful friendship with 2-3 **Cared Friends** or a **Family (CF)**. They invite them to socials, community service events, or felt-need seminars. When the time is right, they invite them to Care Group meetings, an evangelistic series, or to doctrinal studies in a subgroup with laymen or missionary partners.



THE CFS IN CARE GROUPS: THE INVITED 2-3 CARED FRIENDS OR A FAMILY



5-10 Adventists + 2-3 Cared Friends



Adventist Family + 1 Cared Family



- As Care Groups grow with **new believers**, it's time to “give birth” to a **second group**.
- The Care Group experience continues to be a part of the newly-baptized disciples' spiritual growth. They can remain in their primary Care Group, but should be involved in a sub-group studying the New Member Bible Study Guide. They are fully involved in the church, regularly attending worship services.

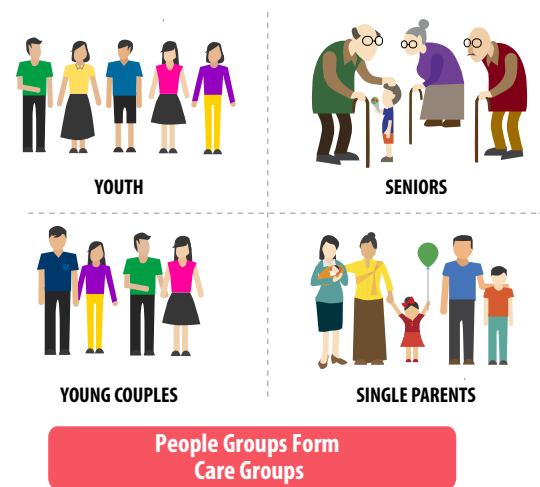
These, in essence, describe what Care Groups are and what they do.

The Care-Group Church

If a church is small, one Care Group may be enough. In large churches, groups can be formed for adults, youth, teens, children, young couples, etc. Linked together, as in a network, they are supervised by the Church Pastor or Elder (in-charge of Care Group or IEL), similar to what Jethro taught Moses in Exodus 18.

Every month, CG Leaders meet with their pastor/supervisor. They hear reports, feedbacks, or for more training.

The main goal of all Care Groups is to grow disciples. Spiritually transformed, the believer discovers a new perception in being a minister and missionary.



CARE GROUP PARTICIPATION: SOME PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES

HERE ARE SOME TIME-TESTED PRINCIPLES IN PLANNING FOR AND MINISTERING TO YOUR CARE GROUPS TO SAVE YOU A “HEADACHE OR TWO”:

1. People join groups in order to satisfy some individual need.
2. A person will remain in a small group if he or she finds the group's goals and activities attractive and rewarding.
3. People prefer to participate in groups where other members are similar in age, attractiveness, attitudes, personality, economic status, perceived ability, and needs.
4. The larger the group, the less its individual members participate in the discussion, activities, and so on.
5. The smaller the group, the greater the feasibility of shared leadership.
6. The meeting place either positively or negatively influences members' participation in the group.
7. A more socially and personally adjusted group member contributes to effective group functioning.
8. The spiritually sensitive group member contributes to the functioning of the group, while those claiming or projecting spiritual superiority inhibit group functioning.
9. Knowing why the group exists and how it achieves purposes stimulates higher levels of participation.
10. Shared ownership of goals builds positive interaction among the members.
11. Groups whose members are heterogeneous with respect to gender and personality types are more conforming and perform more effectively than groups that are homogeneous with respect to these characteristics.
12. Successful groups talk about and assess their goal achievement.

- Neal McBride. How to Lead Small Groups. 57, 58

Thus, a Care Group that is healthy and effective is known by its fruits:

- Members are spiritually mature and mission driven
- New believers who grow in Christ are added to group
- New leaders grow and are also willing to lead another group



PURPOSE-DRIVEN CARE GROUPS

What do you want to accomplish in your group? And how can your group fit into the life of your church? When these questions are clarified, they draw together those who have similar interests and goals.

SAMPLE CARE GROUPS GOALS:

- Choir/Singing Groups - music ministry
- Young married couples – reach out to fellow young parents
- Singles – witness to fellow single friends
- Seniors – pray and visit fellow seniors



RECOMMENDED CG THEME SONGS:

- Side by Side We Stand
- Song for the Nations
- Make Me a Servant
- Pass It On
- Love is in Your Hand
- We are an Offering
- We Are His Hands
- Lord, Be Glorified
- To Be Used of God
- The Family of God
- I Will Serve Thee
- His Grace is Sufficient for Me
- I'll Tell the World that I'm a Christian

Forming Care Groups

There are many ways for a Care Group to become one.

1. The IEL Committee converts Care Groups into Sabbath School classes or adopt the present Sabbath school groupings as Care Group (provided members are committed to attend regularly). Besides the Sabbath lesson review, members should meet for relational learning at Vespers or other times.
2. Let members choose their group. The IEL Committee can post the group leaders, and then ask interested persons to select the group that best fits their schedule and/or preferences.
3. Form Care Groups based on geographical location, common interests, ministry preferences, etc. This way they can easily determine group size and function.

Whichever way you form groups, when a group reaches ten members, it is closed. Be sure to have the right mix of individuals within each group (see box). New groups are begun as needed.

Building Group Identity and Function

Care Groups must take careful thought in choosing ministry **Name**, **Theme Song**, and **Purpose/Mission**. Their choices reflect and build the culture and identity of the group.

When it comes to finding your ministry name, “It’s better to be clear than clever.” Be careful about acronyms. (Example: MOPS – for Mothers of Preschoolers; XYZ – Extra Years of Zest, a ministry to senior adults). Seriously consider how visitors or people outside the church will relate to it.

Your ministry goals will impact the theme song/s you select. The message must be clear and appropriate without creating monotony. Coming from work or school, members might be very tired. The song(s) should lead them from the cares of the day to the greatness of God.

Choose songs that are joyful, sing-able, yet call attention to His glory, and inspire us to do the mission of the Church.

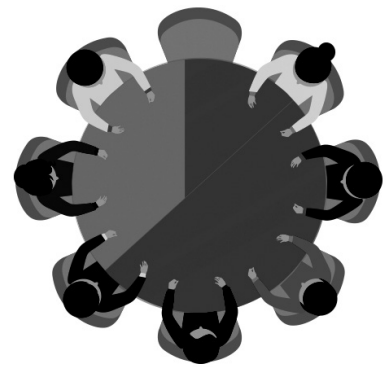
Though unified in this one goal, every small group has a unique personality. Specific goals or ministry can guide an individual group's activities and even the materials they use. Good food and casual conversation are important. But they are not the stuff that makes small group life.

Small groups need a reason for being: a mission or purpose. It makes your members know how to be committed and invested. Low-level commitment comes with low-level expectation, and often results to low-level fruit.

The Group Covenant

Small-group covenants are an important part of community ministry. They help members understand exactly the group's core values, standards of behavior, and even the group's mission goals. For the leader, a covenant is a tool to monitor the group's progress and evaluate the group's experience.

A covenant is sometimes called a contract, a set of statements which the group has agreed upon. It is good to set these ground rules at the beginning, and maybe written and signed or just read to the group. A sample covenant is available in the Appendix.



Group Size, Time, and Meeting Place

There should be 5-10 members in a group, so that later, you can still make room for an invited friend or two. If the church is small, there can be 5-8 members only. The moment your group will double in number it is ideal to divide into two. Limiting your group's size prevents many obstacles and ensures the probability of having a successful group.

The decision when to meet is based on the needs of your members. Some CGs meet on Wednesday (Mid-week Prayer meeting) or Friday evening (Vespers) instead of going to church.

The ideal location for group meetings is in a home. It can be the group leader's home or that of one of the members. The place must be comfortable and convenient. Everyone sits in a circle or around a dining table, and meeting your group goals (worship, Bible study, planning for outreach). If you see any of your purposes for meeting suffer, you may change the location, frequency, and time of meetings.

THE LEADERSHIP TEAM IN CARE GROUPS

Small groups most often thrive and grow when there is intentional and committed leadership. When led by leaders who are themselves good examples, the group understands their function and purpose.

The officers in a Care Group may consist of the Leader, Assistant or Apprentice Leader, Secretary/Treasurer, Prayer Leader, Host, and the rest, Missionary Partners. Having only 5–10 in members, CG leaders and members must take multiple roles. A Host, for example, can also be a Prayer Leader.



A leader's skills or gifts greatly impact the culture or emphasis in the group. Those skilled in teaching positively effect spiritual formation. Leaders who are evangelism experts make mission-driven groups. But since most Care Group members look for opportunities to share and learn from peers, skills in facilitating, making people feel comfortable sharing is expected of anyone who is a small group leader.

Whatever their strength and gifts, CG leaders must overall, care for the group's goals, plans, and growth--spiritual and numerical, in love and unity.

Responsibilities of Care Group Leaders

Care Group leaders carry these specific responsibilities:

1. **Plan and lead group meetings.** Prepare for and conduct group sessions. Be knowledgeable and skillful in facilitating group dynamics.
2. **Lead discussion.** Guide or teach others how to guide effective discussion
3. **Deal with conflict and problems.** Guide the group to confront and resolve interpersonal strife and general difficulties faced by the group.
4. **Follow up the various members outside of group meetings.** Express concern for members at various times apart from regular meetings.
5. **Attend planning and learning opportunities for group leaders.** When applicable, participate in the training and organizational meetings of any existing larger overall groups' program.
6. **Invest time in the group.** A leader must put in a minimum of two hours per week (excluding meetings) in preparation and group member contact.
7. **Seek help when confronted with difficulties.**
8. **Complete and submit progress regular reports to the Church.**
9. **Evaluate progress.** Make judgments and decisions about various aspects of the group's existence and accomplishments.³¹

Unity and harmony are keys to small group success. The Care Group leader must thus be supported by these co-leaders and partners in ministry. Here are their specific tasks:

The Assistant Leader

- Supports the leader as Interest, Nurture, and Reclamation Coordinator.
- Be aware of the group's needs.
- Serves as Prayer Leader and keeps a record of prayers answered.
- Conducts meetings when leader is absent.

³¹Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 9 are adapted from Neil McBride's *How to Lead Small Groups*, 33-34.



- Helps the leader in visiting the absent.
- Assists in the meeting of leaders.

The Host

- Provides his or her house for meetings.
- Provides adequate room for all members.
- Welcomes and greets all members and visitors when they arrive.
- Assists the leader and the associate leader whenever they need the host's help.

Secretary/Treasurer

- Records names and addresses of Care Group members; checks attendance.
- Keeps minutes/record of Care Group activities and plans.
- Keeps detailed records of expenses and income.
- Keeps Leader informed of all expenses and income.
- Fills out reports.

The Missionary Partners

- Attend meetings regularly.
- Invite friends, relatives, or anyone in the neighborhood to attend the small group meetings.
- Provide a friendly atmosphere during and after the small group meetings.
- Encourage invitees to attend regularly.
- Pray for their invitees daily.

How Care Groups Thrive

The acceptance of Care Group ministry has been met by varying responses. Some consistently thrived, others stagnated or eventually died.

One reason why Care Groups die is because they just function as an option, an add-on service in the church, formed for a single purpose (such as specific nurture, ministry, or evangelism).

For groups to thrive and be effective the Church leadership, CG leaders and members must be united in supporting Care Groups as the “basic building block of the church itself.” As a basic church structure, Care Groups have worship, fellowship, and Bible studies. They also do ministry and outreach together, just like in New Testament times. And when small groups grow, so does the church!

Small groups must be considered as essential part of the church. They are biblical communities that belong to a church. On a Friday, 12 or so of them enjoy the fellowship and learning relationally. On Sabbath they meet for celebration and worship with the large congregation. There they are not lost in the crowd. They know they belong.

And when they know they are loved and cared, when the quality of relationship is good, Care Group members will keep coming.



Chapter III

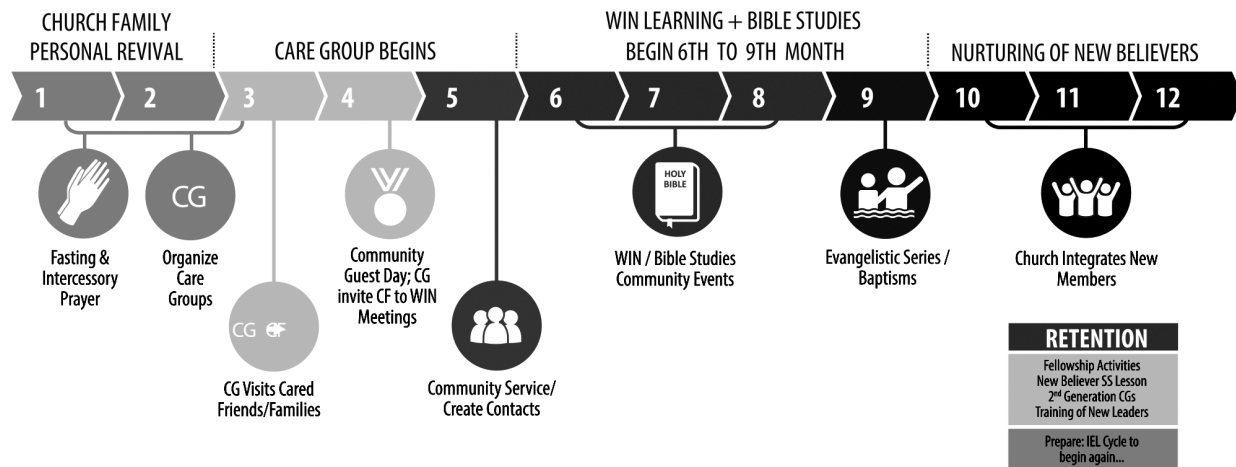
The IEL Project Timeline

“In almost every community, there are large numbers of people who do not listen to the preaching of God’s word, or attend to any religious meeting. Often, the relief of their physical needs is the only avenue by which they can be approached.” – Ellen G White³²

Mission to secular societies and those with non-Christian backgrounds is never a speedy process. It must be carefully prayed for and planned. Its implementation must be deliberate, and consistent.

The SSD IEL project is just like that. Following a course that is undergirded by Intercessory Prayer (James 5:16) and Christ’s Method Alone, IEL needs spiritual preparation and relationship building. Churches who engage in IEL commit to a process that will not be easily measured by big baptismal numbers or immediate result. As the Timeline below shows, IEL requires months (maybe years!) to break down prejudice, build genuine trust, and establish friendship.

IEL CYCLE



In consonance with Total Member Involvement (TMI) and Reach the World initiatives of the World Church, participating churches are to follow these simple steps:

PRAY...

- For the Holy Spirit’s guidance on what you and your church can do.

³² White, EG. *Reflecting Christ* (Wash., DC: Review & Herald, 1983), 254.

- For family members, friends, neighbors whom you want to win for Christ.
- For wisdom to map out a strategy for your church.

PLAN...

- A calendar-driven program to get involved in TMI and Reach the World.
- A schedule for revival meetings that should precede your outreach and evangelism-driven events in the church.
- Activities that will increase unity and joy of service as a church.
- Evangelism within own Care Group or an outreach to support church evangelism plans.

Then, **ACT** on those plans! ³³

The IEL Cycle

The IEL Cycle process describes events to take place in Adventist churches and families. It covers a period of one year, and is to be accomplished in three phases.

After the one-year cycle is accomplished, it is expected that churches, Care Groups, and families do the same process all over again. To a different group of people, to another set of friends and families.



PRE-PREPARATION PHASE

In the IEL mission plan, the most effective way to accomplish TMI and IEL Vision is when church officers and leaders in all levels prepare for IEL implementation by equipping “God’s people for work in His service” (Eph. 4:11 New English Bible). As “overseers to the church” they must “put to use all their ingenuity in devising plans whereby the younger members of the church may be led to cooperate with them in missionary work.”³⁴

³³ McKey, Duane. *Elder’s Digest*, April-June 2016. 7.

³⁴ EG White, 6T, 435.



Responsibilities of Division/Union/Mission Conference Leaders

To ensure long-term sustainability, Union and Mission leaders must have their own PRAY>PLAN>ACT strategies. These they do PRIOR to, DURING, and AFTER the one-year IEL cycle. They must PRAY, PLAN, and ACT well on the responsibilities expected of church “overseers.”

The Division/Union/Mission Conference Leaders carry these responsibilities:

- Own and share the IEL Vision.
- Ensure that strategies intentionally cascade to Pastors, Elders, and Church Leaders through sermons, trainings/seminars.
- Create and approve the IEL Committee in their respective levels. In local churches the IEL Committee is composed of the following:
 1. Chairman – Pastor or Head Elder
 2. Vice Chairman – one of the Elders
 3. Secretary – SS/PM Leader
 4. Interest Coordinator
 5. Nurture Coordinator
 6. Reclamation Coordinator
 7. The rest of the department leaders
- Plan a calendar of meetings, trainings, and activities utilizing all departments, in support of the IEL Care Group ministry.
- Equip Pastors and CG leaders with CG skills and resources (e.g., this manual, the WIN! materials).
- Require pastors to hold IEL trainings (and re-trainings) in their district/church level following the program in Appendix D.
- Require pastors to organize one Care Group for small churches (50 members and below) and at least three in large churches (100+ members), or form a Core Care Group in case churches are reluctant to embrace IEL.
- Monitor and evaluate participation of churches.
- Prepare report to the next leadership level (Local Church>Conference>Union>Division).
- Improve, enhance IEL program through gathering feedbacks, reorganization, and additional training.
- Always speak positively of IEL and Care Group ministry.

Responsibilities of the Pastor

Ellen White writes that ministers must “devote more of his time to educating than to preaching. Let him teach the people how to give to others the knowledge they have received.”³⁵ As in charge in the

³⁵EG White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, 20.



successful implementation of IEL, district and church pastors are expected to focus on coordinating, conducting trainings, and supporting the field work with materials.

In IEL, these are the specific work of Pastors:

- Serve as overall coordinator or chairman of the district or local church IEL Committee.
- Lead local church leaders in promoting Care Group ministry.
- Lead out or facilitate spiritual revival meeting in local churches to spiritually prepare for IEL.
- Train potential Care Group leaders using the SSD IEL Manual.
- Provide materials needed for the training of the care group leaders.
- Submit reports including IEL testimonies and success stories to the Mission/Conference as required.
- Prepare church or district for the yearly Care Group harvest Celebration.
- Evaluate the progress of the overall IEL program for future improvement.

The table that follows illustrates the major responsibilities of key IEL implementers in local churches within the one-year cycle. A detailed instruction follows thereafter.

IEL CALENDAR OUTLINE

PHASES	PASTOR/CHURCH ELDER	IEL COMMITTEE/ CHURCH BOARD	CHURCH MEMBERS/FAMILIES
<p>PHASE 1 PREPARATION MONTHS 1 & 2</p> <p>Purpose: Revival & Reformation/Inspire Church to Embrace IEL/Total Member Involvement (TMI)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Own/share IEL vision • Work with Church Boards • Conduct revival seminars • Train/demo CG meetings • Organize CGs/core CGs • Preach/teach WIN!Wellness • Train CG leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote TMI • Provide funding for resources • Set up plans for training in friendship building, etc. • Support revival • Promote/coordinate WIN!Wellness • Support plans for church events and outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend Revival Seminars • Read devotionals • Catch/own vision • Join CGs • Attend WIN! meetings • Fast & pray • Plan/pray for contacts
<p>PHASE 2 FRIENDSHIP MONTHS 3 & 4</p> <p>Purpose: Friendship-building</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit CGs/give feedback to IEL Committee • Meet CG Leaders monthly (or as needed) • Attend IEL Committees • Trains Bible Study Groups/Leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue support for training and resources • Attend CG Leaders meeting • Support Church “Love in Action” events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cared Friends/Family (CFs) • Attend own CG meetings • Create contacts with target families/friends • Do “Love in Action” for them
<p>PHASE 3 INTEGRATION MONTHS 6 – 12</p> <p>Purpose: Integrate Friends & Families to CG/Church Share Gospel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support CGs/Meet Leaders • Prepare evangelistic series • Prepare interests for Baptism • Prepare for next cycle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue training and support • Assist evangelistic series 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite CFs to CG • CGs study WIN!Wellness • Later, invite CFs to evangelistic series or • Bible Studies • Continue nurture and discipleship



THE IEL CYCLE IN DETAIL

The first four months of this section consists of more detailed and practical steps of the IEL Cycle for the Pastors, the IEL Committee, and the Brethren/ Care Group members.

PHASE 1: REVIVAL (Two Months)

1st Month's Focus: Prepare Church Spiritually

Weeks 1 & 2

Pastor/Elder

1. Take steps toward personal revival.
2. Study IEL Manual, Mark Finley's Revive Us Again; know more about Small Group ministry.
3. Visit and work with Church Boards/Elders to prepare for Revival meeting.
4. Prepare sermon schedule to promote Revival, Reach the World, TMI, IEL.
5. Preach and promote church, family and individual Revival see Appendix A for Sermons; use Chapter 2 of IEL Manual for foundation topics. Use posters, SMS, Social Media in promotion.
6. Experience CG by forming one with Church Board members
7. Be on the search for potential CG leaders.
8. Prepare to distribute IEL resource materials (IEL Manual, etc.)
9. Establish visitation as member-care/nurture by modelling it.

The IEL Committee

1. Seek Church Board approval for IEL/Care Group ministry.
2. Plan, organize, support training, and promote IEL in local church.
3. Promote participation in the one-week revival meetings starting on 3rd Sabbath.
4. Assist the pastor in preparing for commitment ceremony (4th Sabbath) and church socials (to promote unity; on 4th Sunday) with support from church and departmental leaders.

Brethren & Care Group Members

1. Pray and fast on the 1st Sabbath; for Church Revival concerns.
2. Actively participate in these aspects of Revival and Reformation: 777 Prayer, Believe in His Prophets, One Chapter a Day Bible Reading.



Weeks 3 & 4

Pastor/Elder

1. Promote Revival & Reformation, TMI, IEL in his sermons, Bible studies, visits, etc.; use SMS and Social Media to promote.
2. Participate in Core Group to model it for his members.
3. Conduct one week of revival meetings (beginning on the 3rd Sabbath) ; arrange CG discussion after end of every meeting (use own materials or the IEL Devotionals in Appendix B).
4. Conduct commitment ceremony for participants to all families (IF); encourage them to fill up TMI Commitment Card.
5. Organize CGs.



SUGGESTED TIMETABLE FOR CHURCH BEGINNING A SMALL GROUP MINISTRY BEFORE THE ONE-YEAR IEL CYCLE BEGINS

MONTH 1	Share Small Group concept with opinion leaders in the church. Make reading materials available.
MONTH 2	Share concept with Board of Elders and Church Board members during a business meeting or through seminars/workshops. The workshop should include actual Care Group experience. Include testimonies of Care Group members from other churches.
MONTH 3	Form IEL Committee. Select first Care Group leaders. Build and train leadership teams through instruction and modelling. Leadership Teams pray for wisdom in choosing the Core Care Group members (Church Board can be members.) The Core Care Group can serve as your future Care Group leaders.
MONTH 4	Leadership Teams invite other church members to form the Core Care Groups. Build and train Core group through instruction and training, especially in facilitating discussion.
MONTH 5	Core Groups use social events (birthday, wedding anniversary) to introduce non-Adventist friends to other Core Care Group members.
MONTH 6	Core Group members invite one or two non-Adventist friends to join.

- Adapted from David Cox's *Think Big, Think Small Groups*



IEL Committee/Church Board

1. Attend Revival & Reformation meetings.
2. Arrange CGs to sit together as discussion groups.
3. Assist pastor/elder in organizing prayer groups and preparing for a meaningful commitment ceremony.
4. Prepare potluck (4th Sabbath), socials to foster church unity, good relationship, and joy (4th Sunday).
5. Meet with CG leaders for plans and feedback.

Church

1. Participate in Revival; hold family worship or Time Alone with God (TAG).
2. Commit to IEL; sign Commitment certificate or IEL Card.
3. Identify Cared Friends/Families; submits names to CG leader.

PHASE 1: REVIVAL (Two Months)

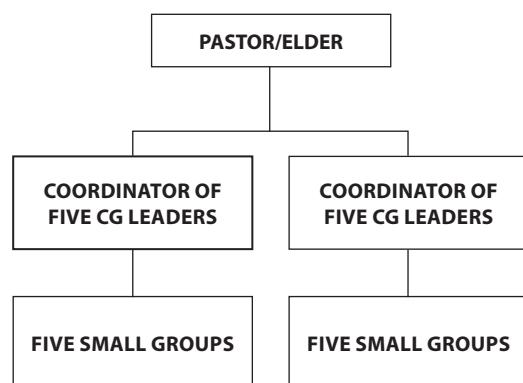
2nd Month's Focus: Prayer Intercession/WIN!Wellness Learning/CG Organization & Leaders' Training

Weeks 1 & 2

Pastor/Elder

1. Orient the church on intercessory prayer for cared friends/families.
2. Provide Revive Us Again WIN!Wellness materials especially to CG leaders.
3. Meet/train CG leaders (Week 2) regarding their responsibilities, especially in facilitating discussions in WIN!Wellness.
4. Designate IEL Committee members as coordinators for assigned CG leaders (see box).
5. Ensure presentation and discussion of WIN! or any Health/Family materials in church preferably at Personal Ministries time or at Divine service)
6. Use Sermons in Appendix A.

POSSIBLE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE FOR A SMALL GROUP CHURCH OF 100+ MEMBERS





The IEL Committee

1. Promote and coordinate learning of *WIN!Wellness* in the church (at Mid-week, Vespers, or AY (by professional presenters or by the laity who are willing to study and prepare well)).
2. Support organization of CG.
3. Support training and meeting of CG leaders.
4. Provide brochures and tracts for target Cared Friends/Families of CGs.

Church

1. Pray for Cared Friends/Families (CFs) daily for the whole month; read *Facets of Faith* devotional guide.
 - a) May use prayer patterns such as ACTS or P.R.A.Y as a guide.
 - b) Begin use of Family Prayer Journal (included in *Facets of Faith*).
2. Share intercessory prayer experiences during Sabbath School.
3. Take part in the *WIN!Wellness* experience at the church.

PHASE II: FRIENDSHIP (Two Months) ³⁶

3rd Month's Focus: Visitation/Friendship/CG Organization & Leaders' Training

Pastor/Elder

1. Continue to organize CG and train CG leaders.
2. Attend some CG meetings for feedback and evaluation to gather info for further training.
3. Meet with CG leaders/officers for reporting, encouragement, and feedback.
4. Promote the upcoming Community Guest Day/Visitors Day Sabbath (4th month).
5. Preach on Mission-centered sermons.

The IEL Committee

1. Support the ongoing CG meetings.
2. Prepare facilitators for the 4th month Sabbath School feature on *WIN!Wellness*.
3. Coordinate the 4th month Community Guest Day Sabbath with input and support from all departmental leaders.

³⁶NOTE: Inviting Friends, Families, and Communities can be challenging. In this case the IEL committee should plan for “mingling” events (Christ’s Method Alone!) such as: Free Clinic, Health or Family Seminar in public centers, cooking classes, Branch Sabbath School, Vacation Bible School, feeding program, or a Summer Class on reading, writing, Math, with Bible/Values story time, etc.



4. Involve/assign CGs as participants in Sabbath School, Divine Service or other church programs/services.

Brethren/Care Groups

1. Continue daily personal/family devotional time.
2. Participate in the CG meeting.
3. Visit CFs* (or a small group of people in a nearby community**) once a week to establish friendship ties doing any of the following:
 - a) Give Book of the Year on first visit and tracts (religious, health) in the weeks that follow.
 - b) Share *WIN! Wellness* topics.
 - c) Offer prayer when needed.
4. Invite CFs to home for a meal/snack or family activity; share *WIN!* and invite them to CGs.

*Suggested activities will depend on the religious environment in your area. In some places, religious literature may be a barrier to developing a friendship.

**In case a Care Group's outreach plan is to share *WIN! Wellness* or a Health and Family Seminar to a small community in the 5th Month, visitation and Branch Sabbath Schools may be the best opening programs. Simple but healthy snacks may be served.

PHASE II: FRIENDSHIP (Two Months)

4th Month's Focus: Community Guest Day/Invite Non-SDA's to Care Group

Pastor/Elder

1. Promote, participate/preach in "Community Guest Day Sabbath" with *WIN! Wellness* presentations; special features that will be understood by visitors who don't understand purely "Adventist language."
2. Make "Community Guest Day Sabbath" into a "Health Festival Weekend" which shall include Health Screening, Cooking Classes, Mini-Marathon, Fun Runs, Free Health Clinic, etc.; others can be introduced until Sunday.
3. Promote *WIN! Wellness* study and other IEL activities- regularly done.

Note: The most important influence in a person joining the church is the presence of friends in the congregation. Hold Community Guest Days as often as the church can afford. The programs should be designed to create relationships between church members and the community. Soul-saving friendship occurs in activities that meet people's needs.



The IEL Committee

1. Launch “Community Guest Day” Sabbath.
2. Feature WIN! Wellness during Sabbath School and afternoon programs; be creative; serve healthy juices and snacks.
3. Set date/promote start of CG meetings with non-believers.

Brethren/Care Groups

1. Invite and accompany their CFs to the Community Guest Day.
2. Invite non-SDA guests to join the CG.
3. Begin weekly CG meetings in homes* (if rooms are available, may be in church).

Note: Some guests may not be open to attend Community Guest Day, but are willing to join a CG fellowship at a home.

PHASE III - INTEGRATION (Eight Months)

5th Month’s Focus: CG with CF Meetings/Planning “Mingling” Community Activities (Part 1)

Pastor/Elder

1. Support CG meetings with CFs.
2. Help in planning Community Service programs with IEL Committee and CGs.*
3. Meet with CG leaders (and the elder coordinators) for encouragement, coaching, and reporting.
4. Prepare Bible Study sub-groups; make sure the doctrinal studies are also relational (with application to life) such as done in CG discussions.

***Note:** Choose programs that are simple and can be done regularly. They should meet felt needs of the community such as: BSS, VBS, Feeding Program, Breastfeeding Techniques, Cooking Classes, Exercise Club, etc.

The IEL Committee

1. Assist in implementing planned Community/CG social events based on the identified needs and the church’s capability: Community Fun Days (Happy Father’s Day, Mother’s Day, etc.), Health Lectures, Cooking Classes, Operation Community Clean-Up, etc.
2. Promote the community event(s) to the church and the community (once plans are finalized).
3. Support CG’s participation in SS, AY, Vespers, as singers, participants, etc.



Brethren/Care Groups

1. Share CG testimonies/experiences to non-CG members of the church.
2. Participate in Church Worship as CG (as singers/program sponsor).
3. Continue GC meetings, encourage CFs to attend church/Bible Study groups.
4. Pray for CFs.

6th Month's Focus: "Ministering/Sympathizing" Community Activities (Part 2) with Bible Study

Pastor/Elder

1. Meet with CG leaders once or twice for nurturing and instruction. Attend and support community activities.
2. Launch Bible study sub-groups for Bible interests, if any.
3. Attend and support the community activity taking time to meet community leadership. Explore other needs your church might be able to assist.
4. Monitor Bible Study sub-groups, if any.
5. Ensure IEL Committee remains committed on the program.

The IEL Committee

1. Keep Church and CG spirit high for ongoing outreach in communities and in CGs.
2. Support IEL Bible study groups.

Brethren/Care Groups

1. Continue CG weekly meetings.
2. Invite and accompany CFs to community activities.
3. Participate in community activity with CG.
4. Take CG Break # 1 after the 8th week of meeting, and take time for social activity or Fun Day with CFs (Example: Family Fun Day, picnic, a field trip, etc.)

7th and 8th Month's Focus: Care Group Meetings with Cared Friends/Families/ Community

Pastor/Elder

1. Meet with CG leaders for nurturing and instruction.
2. Support the monthly bonding/socials or community activities.
3. Support the Bible study groups.
4. Prepare for evangelistic series.

The IEL Committee

1. Host community activities to create contacts, with support and participation from all departmental leaders.
2. Support Bible study groups.
3. Prepare for evangelistic series.



A STRUCTURE FOR CHURCH GROWTH: CARE GROUP/COMMUNITY SERVICES/REAPING EVENTS

The regular Care Group meeting is at the “center of church life.” As a result of their involvement in small group meetings, some people may make decisions of following Jesus and becoming baptized.

But while members build these friendships for Care Group evangelism, the church should continue holding **Community Services*** of various kinds. Such activities can accomplish these purposes:

- Create contacts
- Raise awareness of the Church’s existence
- Build a positive image of the Church
- Enable people to enter into a closer relationship with Adventists

Contacts and interests generated from these events—outside of Care Group may be invited to a **Reaping Event**. Revelation Seminars, Bible Marking Seminar and other public evangelistic meetings are necessary programs that will help seal decisions in following Jesus.

*Welfare programs, community clean-up, Health Expo, Vacation/Holiday Bible schools for children, Mother’s Class, Happy Father’s Day Party, Teen Talks, Stress Management Seminars, and community services of various kinds

Brethren/Care Groups

1. Attend CG weekly meetings, this time with CFs from community contacts.
2. For eight weekly meetings, study/share *WIN!Wellness* (Book 1: Getting Started)
3. On the 1st week of the 8th month, take a CG Group Break #2 for a community/socials/fun activity.
4. Resume Care Group *WIN!Wellness* learning of Book 2.
5. Recommend Bible students to layman/elder/pastor, if any



THE WIN!WELLNESS BOOKS

- BOOK 1: GETTING STARTED
- BOOK 2: PRESSING FORWARD
- BOOK 3: FINISHING STRONG



9th Month's Focus: The Reaping

Pastor/Elder

1. Launch evangelistic series/Revelation seminar or any reaping campaign, if necessary.
2. Prepare potential baptisms at the end of the series.
3. Plan the closing ceremony of *WIN!Wellness* for participating CGs.
4. Conduct a special Renewal of Marriage Vows celebration (use as guide, Commitment Chapter in *WIN!* series).

The IEL Committee

1. Get involved in evangelistic series.
2. Assist baptisms.
3. Support closing ceremony of *WIN!* for participating CG.
4. Coordinate the Renewal of Marriage Vows with assistance from departmental leaders.

Brethren/Care Groups

1. Invite and accompany CFs to evangelistic series or IEL events at the church.
2. Encourage decision to follow Jesus.
3. Support new believers/friends at their baptisms.
4. Attend closing ceremony of *WIN!Wellness* for participating CGs.
5. Support Renewal of Marriage Vows.

10th to 12th Month's Focus: Nurture/Appraisal/Reorganization

Pastor/Elder

1. Ensure nurturing program for new members is in place.
2. Provide *In Step with Jesus* (New Member's Bible Study Guide) as a continued CG study guide.
3. Integrate new members into church activities.
4. Support CGs as they reorganize or develop second generation groups.
5. Church board, IEL Committee, and Pastor evaluate the existing IEL program.
6. Secure follow-up materials for newly-baptized or review/finish *WIN!*
7. Consider plans for using Care Group(s) to plant new congregation(s).
8. Prepare Church for the next cycle.



IEL Committee

1. Monitor CG's in integrating new members.
2. Support Cg division.
3. Supervise CG's starting a new cycle.
4. Support plans for starting new congregations by CGs.
5. Ensure Church is going to another cycle.
6. Evaluate church's IEL program.

Brethren/Care Groups

1. Grow into a new CG.
2. Consider merging with other CGs to start a small company, worshipping in the same CG relational manner, with discussions and application to life.
3. Facilitate integration of new members into church life.
4. Ensure new believers have increasing number of friends.

The World Church and SSD need all the cooperation and help of the Union/Mission leaders in mobilizing their respective workers to lead every church member to fulfill the extraordinary prophetic mission God has given to His remnant church. After all, the plans and objectives that were drawn and agreed upon will be useless without the involvement of our local churches.



**CARE GROUP MONTHLY ACTIVITIES
A QUICK VIEW OF ONE IEL CYCLE**

1ST MONTH	Care Group leaders invite members.
2ND MONTH	CGs begin to meet/pray for Cared Friends/Families.
3RD MONTH	CGs pray/visit Cared Friends & Families; invite them to Community Guest Day.
4TH MONTH	Invite Cared Friends/Families to Community Guest Day or to a birthday/anniversary/social gathering to introduce them to your CG mates; invite to CG meetings.
5TH MONTH	Church hold Community Service programs to "mingle" and create contacts; invite contacts to Care Group for WIN!Wellness learning.
6TH MONTH	CG's continue meetings; take a break on 8th session for social activity or Fun Day. Invite non-believers to Bible Study groups.
7TH - 8TH MONTHS	More CG meetings, Bible Study
9TH MONTH	Reaping, evangelistic campaigns; Baptisms
10TH-12TH MONTHS	New believers nurtured in Care Groups; form new Care Groups.



Chapter IV


The Care Group Meetings

Sabbath worship is the most important meeting of week. Yet, no matter how special the Sabbath services become, most of us are merely spectators. The main commitment and participation of the majority in these structured, formal, congregational gathering is merely attendance.

But the experience of exchanging thoughts and feelings of our faith journeys, of spontaneous celebrations—with friends who know each other well and have common interests—these can only take place in small groups meetings.

Care Group meetings are intentional structures for discipling, nurturing, teaching, witnessing, and building relationships. When blessed and used by God, the essential parts of the Care Group meetings will make this become a reality.

Meeting formats may vary among Care Groups, but it should be organized enough and follow a basic outline, a workable model. Notice how the five Acts 2 Church components are incorporated in the schedule:



DISCIPLESHIP IN SMALL GROUPS

Small groups are for breeding disciples. What is a disciple? One who **walks with God daily, studies His Word, applies its teachings** to all areas of his life, and equipped with spiritual gifts, **invites others** to be followers of Jesus through a life of **service** and **personal witness**.

Fellowship: Meal/Ice Breakers/	15 mins
Worship: Praise Songs/Prayer/Testimonies	10 mins
Discipleship: Care Group at Study/Discussion	40 mins
Prayer (Intercessory/Thanks)	5 mins
Announcements/Invitations for Ministry/Evangelism	5 mins

Total 1 hour and 30 mins

A cardinal rule in Care Group meeting is to begin and end at the agreed-upon time. What is interesting is that many times, most people stay and continue to chat afterward. Sometimes the best group meeting is the meeting after the formal meeting.

Now, let's define these essential parts of the Care Group meeting.

The Fellowship

This is the Warm Up period and is necessary prelude to the Care Group at Study. Especially during the first few meetings of the Care Group (with or without visitors) we must resist the temptation of short-cutting this fun part. Some groups include Ice Breakers questions such as “What do you miss about childhood?” or “What day in your life would you like to relive?” (See Appendix G for more Ice Breakers).

Make time for a short introduction of each member or a simple game. Just be sure you engage in light-hearted conversation. Even the most shy should be able to join in the discussion and help us get to know the other person better.

Offer simple snacks or a refreshing hot or cold drinks. This is a welcome treat especially for those who come straight from work. There must be a relaxed, friendly atmosphere where group members exchange pleasantries before the meeting starts.

In your meetings, include in the fellowship time testimonies and praise songs. Print short choruses, and maybe later, happy hymns. A Christian life can be very serious, but the joy of singing should enliven the meetings!

Discipleship Study

Bible Studies in Care Groups are characterized by relational and relevant discussions. They are to build relationships, meet group members' needs and not just pass on information. And since the atmosphere is so relaxed, everyone should be able to express an opinion or answer a question.

In IEL, the first six to eight meetings should center on spiritualization topics from *Revive Us Again* by Mark Finley (See Appendix B). (For families involved in the Family to Family project, they read *Facets of Faith*). When your Cared Friends/Families start to attend, share with them for at least eight meetings, topics from the *WIN!Wellness* book or from the simplified WIN! handouts available from the SSD website (<http://adventist.asia/>).

If you have already used WIN!, a short passage from the Bible, not more than a chapter, can be studied. The Serendipity Bible, with its small-group style questions in the margins, is an excellent resource. Some use the Friday lesson of the Sabbath School Bible Study Guide.

With or without non-Adventist visitors, CG learning should include a wide range of subjects relating to daily life such as health, wellness, parenting, etc., and what it means to be a Christian.

Levels of Questioning

A good leader knows how to ask relevant questions that can stimulate the members' desire to study God's Word and incite active application of the biblical truth. The following levels of questioning will encourage good discussion and lead to application, or living the truth. Asking these type of questions is



TESTIMONY TRIGGER QUESTIONS

"Have you experienced anything meaningful that you would like to share?"

"How did Jesus bless you lately?"

"What are you thankful to the Lord for?"



FIVE WIN!WELLNESS COMPONENTS

WIN!Wellness is effective even as a discipleship and evangelism material because of these five components. So if you must shorten the WIN lectures, make sure these five are covered:

1. GRIPPING STORY.
2. Scientific INFORMATION.
3. BIBLICAL INSPIRATION. (What does the Bible say on the same subject?)
4. Questions that inspire INTENTIONAL TRANSFORMATION.
5. Adventist beliefs, all done in the framework of HUMAN NEEDS.

essential to Bible Study or any CG learning:

- I. **Primary/Easy:** What does it (verse/article/author) say?
- II. **Understanding/Discovering Meaning:** What do the verses mean to you? What lesson, message have we discovered in this verse/topic?
- III. **Application:** How can you apply this lesson/message to life?

Although no formal presentation is necessary, the Bible Study, or lesson series should not be too casual or unfocused. Therefore, the leader must always be well-prepared. He must read the material, and be familiar with the subject and the aim of the study.

The *WIN!Wellness* series is the essential learning material for the IEL Care Groups. If books are not available, the handouts can be downloaded from the SSD website.

How to Use WIN!Wellness

There are many ways to use WIN! It can be read “Solo,” by a couple learning with a friend, by a family, and in your Care Groups!

- Invite neighbors, coworkers, relatives, and friends to join a small home group.
- One book may be shared with the group, or each member may have their own copy.
- Busy people prefer short sessions. Meet for one hour once a week, or more frequently.
- *Homes of Hope and Health* topics typically last 30–35 minutes, followed by 20–25 minutes of Reflect/Discuss interaction. If the topic generates a lot of discussion, then the group finishes the chapter the following week.
- Discussion time at the end of each chapter is extremely important. Group support motivates lifestyle change.



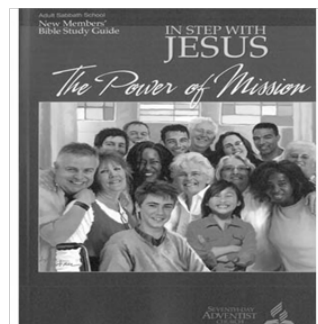
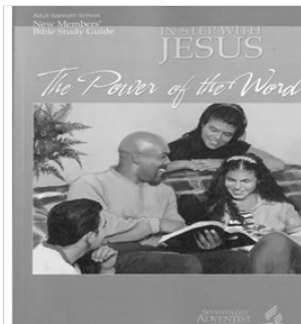
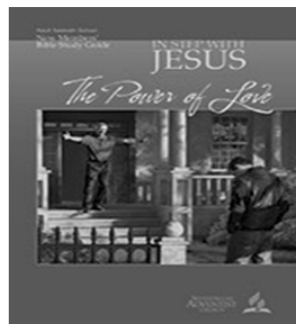
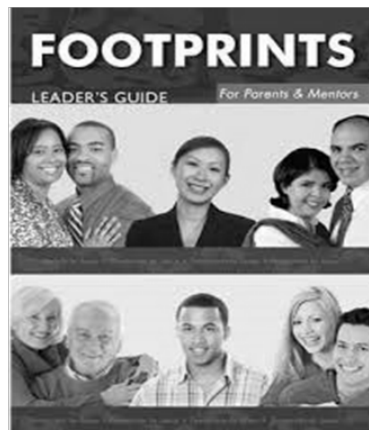
Conversation Starter for WIN!

Distribute health magazines to neighbors, friends, and even strangers. Give a loaf of bread, veggies from your garden, or overabundance from your fruit tree, then say: “Do you know of 5-6 friends who are also interested in healthful living and family topics who you think could join us in a weekly session where we would study together as a group and learn how to better balance our lives?” Then organize a group in your home or in someone else’s home for a weekly one-hour session. - Millie & John Youngberg, *WIN!Wellness Homes of Hope & Health*

Materials for Care Group at Study

OTHER RECOMMENDED MATERIALS FOR CARE GROUP LEARNING ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. *Revive Us Again*, by Mark Finley
2. *Studying Together*, by Mark Finley
3. *Facets of Faith* (30 readings, Family Ministries)
4. Julian Melgosa's Homes of Hope and Healing (8 Lessons, Source: <http://www.adventist-womensministries.org/>)
5. KID's Footprints Curricula: *Footprints for Parents and Mentors* (12 Lessons Small Group Bible Studies) & *Footprints for Kids* (24 Lessons Small Bible Studies); Source: In Discipleship website <http://www.indiscipleship.org/>
6. Age appropriate *Sabbath School Bible Study Guides* are available from the Children's Ministries and Youth Ministries website.
7. *Cornerstone Connections*, Sabbath School Bible Study Guide for Teens <http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net/>
8. *New Members Bible Study Guides* - New resource produced by the General Conference Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department as a means of welcoming new members to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Source: <http://www.instepwithjesus.org/>



What if your CG visitors become Bible interests and they express the need to study Bible doctrine? Should you convert the CG meetings into a doctrinal class?

We recommend that you accompany your friend/s to a sub-small group: the Baptismal Class, Seekers Service, to a Revelation Seminar, or an upcoming evangelistic seminar which your church will organize. The primary evangelistic role of Care Groups is to introduce people to Jesus, explain in practical terms what life in Jesus means. Doctrinal studies are best led by the experts in teaching and explaining Adventist fundamental beliefs.



FIVE GENERAL FOCUSES OF PRAYER

- Praise for who and what God is (Hebrews 11:15).
- Thanksgiving for what God has done and is doing (Ephesians 5:20).
- Confession of sins (Proverbs 28:13).
- Prayer for others (James 5:16).
- Prayer for personal needs (James 1:5).

The Prayer

“Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit...” Zech. 4:6. God’s guidance should be sought, especially at the beginning of CG meetings. But when the group aims to reach the secular and unchurched, prayer in the early stage of group meetings might make guests uncomfortable. You decide what is best.

It is presumed though, that Care Group members will spend much time in prayer before or after the gathering, in thanksgiving and intercession. In time, when members get to know each other better, prayer will become a spontaneous part of the Care Group meeting.

In developing life-changing effects on CG members, this prayer guide can help:

1. Prayers should be short, spontaneous, but sincere.
2. Offer prayers as a response to the Bible study.
3. They must be closely related to the special needs of members, of their families, and even their circle of acquaintances.
4. Record requests and answered prayers, to keep track of the progress of the group’s prayer life and to inspire members. The host or assistant leader may be appointed to do this.
5. Individual prayer requests may be opened up to the group but should not let others into the embarrassing secrets of your life. Still, John counsels that caring Christian communities must “confess [their] sins to each other and pray for each other so that [they] may be healed” (1 John 5:16).
6. There is no need for everyone to kneel down.
7. “Laying of hands” prayer must be conducted sensitively, as not every one, especially newcomers, might be comfortable with it.



HOW DO WE PRAY?

PRAYER IN CARE GROUPS MAY TAKE THESE VARIETIES OF FORMS:

- Chain prayers
- Written prayers
- Responsive prayers
- The ACTS prayer (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication; see Appendix), with songs in between.
- Prayer in 2’s or 3’s
- Communal – read or recited together

Meaningful Worship

Generally, worship is about praising God, thanking Him for His goodness—the first and greatest commandment (Matthew 22:37, 38). Worshipping God also involves everything that we do in everyday life that gives Him honor. Serving one another, especially the expressions of natural kindness to one another—is worship. Even the clothes worn at the CG meetings can be acts of worship.

God is also honored with our testimonies. When we share how we respond to Him and His ways, how we see Him after the Bible study, or through the group interaction. In small group worship, we see God “up close” and alive, through His gentle guidance in our lives.

Adoring God with all our heart, soul, and strength through songs should be part of CG worship. Because it is “good to give thanks unto the Lord, And to sing praise to [His] name” (Psalm 92:1).

What should Care Group singing be like?

1. Praise and worship songs should focus on His goodness, love, and mercy. The best praise songs are those that are sung to Him and focus on the Father, Son, and the Spirit (Example: *To God be the Glory, Majesty, Amazing Grace*).
2. For closing song sing about our experience of Him, or our responses to the lessons learned. (Example: *Seek Ye First, Side by Side, I Come to the Garden Alone*).
3. Short and lively choruses are ideal especially for first meetings with visitors. Introduce hymns later. Make sure everyone has copies of the songs.

Ministry in the Group

Ministry in the group can be integrated in and outside the meetings as members care for, encourage, serve, edify, and pray for one another.

In a small group everyone gets easily involved using one’s God-given gifts. As a result we readily recognize and express appreciation for the way God has touched our lives through the fellowship and service rendered by fellow CG members.

These acts of love create a unique bond of closeness among members. Thus, the feeling of “not belonging” or of isolation is rare among CG members.

Communication in small groups tends to be honest and open, so it is quite natural to express some burdens. The group also responds naturally, using their gift of encouragement and prayer. Within the safety of the small group doubts and questions of faith can arise. What comfort in discovering that even mature Adventists have the same concerns! Thus the personal testimony, especially of difficulties overcome through Christ, become powerful truths learned.



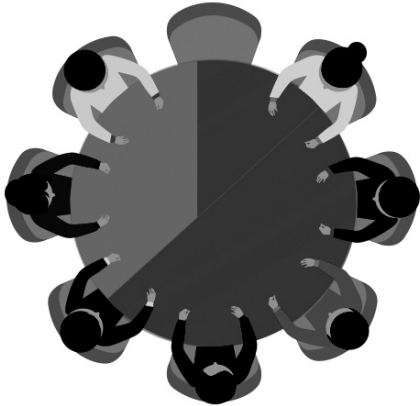
PRACTICAL SERVICE FOR FELLOW

CARE GROUP MEMBERS:

- Assist parents at the birth of a baby.
- Serve at family special occasions.
- Help a member move house.
- Care for the sick or injured, the grieving by providing meals, cleaning, running errands, child care, visits.
- Supply money in time of need.
- Help elderly or single mom with basic chores.

In a crisis, the leader can lead in coordinating care. It is wise to talk initially with the person in need to determine the extent of help needed.

Group members minister to each other, but they also work together as a team in the service of others. As they identify, use, and develop their gifts, members grow as disciples of Jesus, growing more like Him. It is most likely they will also grow in number.



In the Care Group, the empty chair means, “There’s Always Room for You,” and suggests that Small Groups should grow in size and number.

The Group at Evangelism

Martin Luther said, “It is the duty of every Christian to be Christ to his neighbor.” Evangelism is a way of telling people you care, and that God cares about them. Usually it’s about imparting biblical truth. In a healthy small group, evangelism takes place in these situations:

1. When members befriend unchurched individuals to show them the love of Christ, meet their real, felt needs, and eventually invite them in the fellowship meeting.
2. Personal testimonies and intercessory prayers are spontaneous ways of witnessing. It is relational witnessing that make “seekers” see Christian love in action: we love God, we love each other, and we love them, too. This may lead them to eventually accept the Seventh-day Adventist truth as it is in Jesus.
3. Doing your own community service as a group.
4. Supporting the outreach program of the church.

Going for outreach projects together enhances group relationships. Solicit ideas from the group to maximize enthusiasm and participation.

But people nowadays can easily detect ulterior motives. Genuine relationships must first be established with people before we can even invite or “evangelize” to them. We must accept them regardless of where they are in their spiritual journey. This is reflecting Christ’s compassion and concern.

GROUP LIFE EXPECTANCY

Constant change is expected of Care Groups. Some “die” (That’s OK, but you must begin again!), others grow and divide. In the IEL project, group life expectancy is one year, the culminating period. Then members can join a new group, which means further growth and new challenges.

When there are more than 12 members, the group can also divide themselves. The assistant leader assumes leadership of the original group, and the former leader becomes the new leader of the new group.

Lack of enthusiasm and boredom can sometimes creep into the group meetings. But it doesn’t seem nice to hear them “breaking up.” The culminating period of one year as termination point becomes a natural and graceful way to end or move on.

Thanksgiving on Last Day of Meeting

We recommend that a celebration/thanksgiving event be organized on the last meeting. This minimizes reluctance to leave or part from the group. A reunion should be organized, say quarterly, so that friendships continue even though the groups have ceased meeting.

Even if there are no new members or conversions in the group, the sense of satisfaction of having grown spiritually and relationally should be cause for celebration. And a special Sabbath worship should mark this event. This will inform the congregation how God has blessed the Church through small group ministry.

LIFE OUTSIDE GROUP MEETINGS

Apart from the meetings, CG life should include attending their fellow member's important life events—be they sad or enjoyable. It's good to be there during times that reflect the realities of your member's season of life: Birthdays, anniversaries, thanksgiving get-together for passing licensure exams, etc.

Every group activity is relational. These events should be opportunities to strengthen relationships and show interest in people. Especially for new groups, leaders should plan and seek ways to help the group know one another, outside the group's study time.



ONE YEAR LIFE CYCLE OF IEL CARE GROUPS

PHASE 1 – PREPARATION (MONTHS 1 & 2)

Purpose: Organization of Care Groups
Discipleship Studies: 8 Topics from Mark Finley's *Revived by His Word*

PHASE 2 - FRIENDSHIP (MONTHS 3 & 4)

Purpose: Build Friendship with CFs
Discipleship Studies: WIN!Wellness

PHASE 3 – INTEGRATION (MONTHS 6 – 12)

Purpose: Integrate CFs to CG/Church, Share Gospel (Doctrinal Class or Subgroup, Evangelistic Meetings, Bible Seminar)
Discipleship Studies: WIN!Wellness, New Members Bible Study Guides

Chapter V

The Care Group Leader

“Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseer – not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock” (1 Peter 5:2-4).

Small groups are actually “small churches.” Hence, Care Groups need good leaders who are church leaders in the fullest sense.

Being a Care Group leader, you may feel not qualified to lead or help the group as you’d like. But, if God has called you to lead one, then He will give you the ability to do so. You are a part of His plan.



QUALITIES OF CARE GROUP LEADERS

BY THE APOSTLE PAUL
(1 TIMOTHY 3:1-13; 5:17-25; TITUS 1:5-16)

Care Groups are “small churches” and must be led by leaders who possess the following qualifications as described by Paul’s letter to Timothy and Titus:

- Mature in the faith and not recent converts
- Known for their consistent Christian lifestyle and Christ-like behavior
- Gentle
- Hospitable
- Knows Christ’s teachings
- Able to teach

Interestingly, notice that Paul places “able to teach” at the last. Attitude and spiritual maturity truly matter more than teaching skills!

Responsibilities of a Care Group Leader

As you lead your group through meetings and activities, these are essential things to do:

1. **Pray.** Stay connected to Him in prayer, continue to seek His will. God will always show you the way. Pray for group members by name. Be very specific in your prayer requests.
2. **Keep the purpose in mind.** Make sure everyone understands the purpose of the group from day one. Your job as a leader of the group is to continually cast vision in every meeting.
3. **Keep learning.** Leading a care group is not easy. You feel inadequate because of your limited knowledge. The key is to keep on learning and sharing your ideas with your fellow leaders. Understand that developing a healthy group takes time. Just concentrate on one step at a time.
4. **Trust God.** The Bible says, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not into your own understanding” (Proverbs 3:5-6). Remember that God is in charge.
5. **Don’t be afraid to share your weakness.** Everyone has a weakness. Moses, David, and Joseph were weak, reluctant, and afraid. As leader, the most significant thing you can share with the members of your group is your weakness. They will not share their weaknesses until you are willing to do the same.
6. **Ask for help.** Partner with someone of the same sex in your group for

prayer support as well as for practical assistance in administration, hospitality, and accountability.

7. **Be loving.** Though imperfect, leaders will also be lovingly followed by their members especially if they love Jesus, love the people, and the Church. Love, the Bible says, “covers over a multitude of sins” (1 Peter 4:8).

Qualities of a Good Leader

Steve Gladen, who oversees 2,500 small groups at Saddleback Church in California, USA has observed that leaders who do well possess these three outstanding qualities:

1. *They lead with heart.*

Before you can be an effective spiritual leader, you must surrender your heart to Christ and connect with your group with your heart. Jesus often used the example of a shepherd tending the flock: “I am the good shepherd; I know My sheep and My sheep know Me” (John 10:14). You must know your “flock,” and they must know you. Show that you care for them like you care for yourself.

2. *They lead with Compassion.*

Christ had compassion for the people He was serving, “because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd” (Matthew 9:36). Christ didn’t weep over buildings, fancy programs, or other material things; He felt compassion for people.

3. *They lead with Motivation.*

Jesus entrusts your Group’s care to you. The greatest motivation for leading a Care Group is when Jesus says to us, “Well done, good and faithful servant” (Matt. 25:21).³⁷



LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT: THE FIRST CARE GROUP MEETING

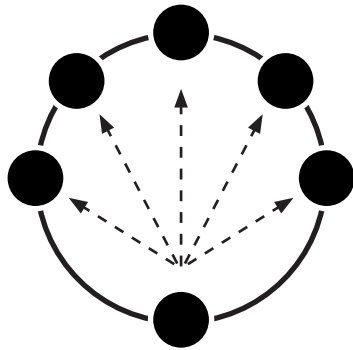
The first meeting sets the tone for the life and future activities of the Care Group. Love – in the form of Kindness, Joy, and Respect for group members must be the prevailing values. Thus, a covenant should be drawn – written or discussed, with the consensus of the group. The covenant contains the time and place of meeting and the attendance vows. With two or three attending less frequently, the group might easily vdisintegrate. The covenant may also contain how the group will respond to needs. (If there are non-Christians in the group one may choose to ignore a covenant).

THE LEADER AS GOOD FACILITATOR

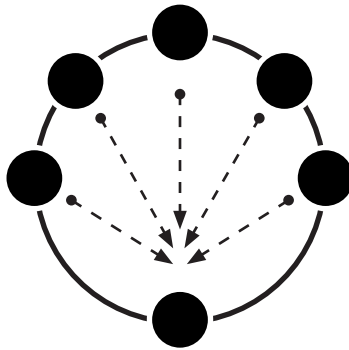
Care Group leaders must lead their group in the Bible study discussions, ministry, and evangelism. All three are keys in building your group relationally and as a caring community.

Having good discussions is the key element in the members’ growth spiritually and relationally. Thus, the leaders’ role must be to keep the discussion biblically focused and applicable to life. Seated in a circle, everyone can see each other. All cellphones are turned off before the group starts.

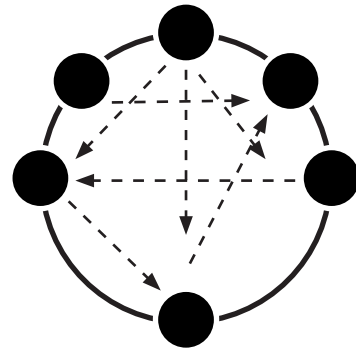
³⁷ Steve Gladen, *Leading Small Groups with Purpose*, 37-39



NOT THIS: LEADER DOING ALL THE TALKING



NOT THIS: GROUP ANSWERING ONLY THE LEADER'S QUESTIONS.



BUT THIS: LEADER GUIDES DISCUSSION; MEMBERS TALK.

How to Lead in Discussions:

1. *Let the group know that you don't have all the answers.* Offer to do some research and come back next time with a response. Better yet, ask a member to research the question.
2. *It's OK to interrupt you anytime if they have a question.* And there is no such thing as a dumb question.
3. *Don't do all of the talking.* The leader might do more talking to explain something. But then, he/she must facilitate the conversation and keep it moving from member to member.
4. *Be a good listener.* James 1:19 tells us to be slow to speak and quick to listen. Listen with your eyes as well as with your ears.



RELATIONAL LEARNING THREE LEVELS OF QUESTIONING THAT ENHANCE RELATIONSHIPS

I. Primary Questions: easy to answer

- In Eph. 5:22, 25 what is Paul's counsel to the wives, to the husbands?

II. Understanding Questions: draw principles out of the Scripture passage.

- Why does Paul counsel wives to "submit" to their husbands" and the husbands to "love" their wives?
- Why do you think he is so concerned of this subject?

III. Application Questions: help the members apply the principles to their own lives.

- As a wife/husband what specific things can you do to follow Paul's counsel?
- How does knowing these principles make a difference in your role as loving spouse?
- Now that you understand this, what changes should you make in the way you treat your spouse?

5. **Ask open-ended questions.** Open-ended questions prompt members to answer with more than a simple Yes or No. Example: “What did you like or dislike about this subject?” Use **Why** or **How** questions to get people to open up.
6. **Remember, the purpose is people development, not on getting through the material.** Allow members more time to discuss, process, and grow with the information.
7. **Be prepared.** Always read the assigned reading and familiarize yourself with the questions before the group arrives. Never be afraid to say, “I don’t know the answer to that question. I’ll find the answer before next week.”
8. **Try to involve everyone.** Ask the shy members what they think about the topic. Let them know they don’t have to share if they don’t want to.

GUARDING DISCUSSIONS

Different expectations and perspectives can cause friction among the group members. It is important to know about and be prepared to deal with these various situations and expectations – to assure that all the members benefit from the discussion, including yourself.

While leaders are not to dominate discussions, they are responsible to manage difficult situations by doing these:

- Give appropriate input at appropriate times
- Connect the discussion to the topic
- Stop inappropriate sharing.

Below are some situations to watch out for:

1. Confessing anyone’s faults, gossiping, or complaining about another person.
2. Doctrinal discussions which become divisive and argumentative. Remind group to exercise charity.
3. Negative attitude towards the church ministry or leadership. Concerns for the church can be brought to the leadership, or talked about in the Care Group in a healthy, positive way. (Say: “First let this be our subject of prayer. What else can we do to help in this area?”)
4. Someone’s continual problem dominating group discussion. You can minister and care for this person within your CG, but he/she might need professional help or someone outside the group.



TECHNIQUES TO MOVE DISCUSSION FORWARD

LISTEN TO THE COMMENTS BEING MADE AND BUILD ON THEM:

- Make clarification: *Will you please restate what you said?*
- Re-direct topic: If someone is leading the discussion on a different subject, bring it back to the topic by saying, “Thanks for your opinion. Does anyone have something to say about... (restate topic).”
- Extend discussion with open-ended question: “What do you think about this, Lea? Has anyone else felt the same? What did you do?”



Leading the Group in Ministry

Church members have an important role in the various ministries of the church. In fact, every believer is a minister (1 Peter 2:9), called by God to serve Him according to his/her spiritual gifts.

Together, CGs can lead, as well as support the various ministries of the Church. They can visit fellow church members, sing, lead the Sabbath worship and programs/services, prepare new believers for baptism (e.g., sub-group of laymen who give doctrinal studies).

Ministry within the Care Group takes place when members care for one another especially in times of need. This helps to foster closeness among members. Sometimes a member's need may be small. At times, it can be big: death in the family, sickness, or birth of a baby. Especially in the absence of families and relatives, your group may be closest to the need.

As leader you lead in organizing your group to ensure that care is being provided. But you may need to initially talk to the person in need what kind of help the group can extend. Make sure you involve the group. Otherwise you deprive them of practical ways to build relationships with those in need of help.

Here are some examples of practical service to fellow Care Group members:

- Provide meals and support in times of grief or prolonged sickness in the family.
- Visit, care for the sick or injured.
- Offer a fruit basket or meals to the sick.
- Share some amount of money in times of genuine need.
- Provide child care when a parent has no one to help.
- Share information that may be helpful.
- Read the Bible, sing, and pray when they are sick.
- Go on an errand when they are unable to do so.
- Give an appropriate book or booklet.
- Serenade them on their birthdays, anniversaries, etc.

Care Groups empower members to also get involved in ministry in the local community. Since members just make use of their gifts or skills, the ministry is personal and informal.

It benefits the pastors and church leaders, when members relieve them of some of their ministry functions. As basic units of the church Care Groups have the freedom to run their own ministries according to the needs of their fellow members.

Leading in Evangelism

The Gospel Commission (Matt 28: 18-20) is a non-negotiable element for all Christians – but especially for Care Groups. But nothing can bring more terror or just plain perspiration to the average Christian than when you mention “evangelism.” Yet evangelism is also one of our greatest privileges and joy!

Care Groups of 5-10 members make effective units for evangelism. The benefits cannot be exaggerat-

ed! Here are reasons why CG evangelism is easier than the traditional ways:

1. **Minimal goal.** We labor only for two to three friends, or a family.
2. **Encourages teamwork.** Groups become closer when they work to spread the Gospel together.
3. **Easy participation.** Even the shy can join. Witnessing is natural and spontaneous.
4. **Maximum participation, yet minimum organization.**
5. **Minimum expense.** No need to print handbills, posters, etc.
6. **Less risky and threatening.** In non-Christian areas Christian meetings may be open to attack by “opponents or fanatics.” But the CG discussions held in homes, on family and health issues, makes for effective though “silent” preaching.³⁸

Leaders should find ways to make their CG evangelistic and every member a witness. The group gets encouraged for evangelism when they see these in their leader:

1. Personal evangelism as a lifestyle.
2. Ability to teach, facilitate the CG well so that believers and visitors alike will keep attending and learning.
3. Commitment to lead the group to reproduce.
4. Compassion for unbelievers.

As leader you can keep your group focused on evangelism. Here are ways to do it:

1. Plan activities that non-believers might attend.
2. Pray that God will guide your group to support the Church’s evangelistic program.
3. Better yet, find your own outreach project.
4. Look around carefully and ask: Who are the people in my “world”? What drives them? What are their interests? What are their needs – even those needs that they are not even aware of? How can my group serve them? Fill the “cracks,” so to speak –or help them with a need that you can do.
5. Celebrate when visitors become believers!

Care Groups peopled by disciples of Jesus are naturally evangelistic. How can we tell that your group has ceased to be evangelistic? Check if you see these indicators: ³⁹

1. Decline in number of guests and even members who attend.
2. There are no new group members for more than six months

³⁸ In Maryland, Lagos Church in Nigeria, Small Groups are in the form of Sabbath School Action Units of 6 to 8 members living in the same area. “They meet weekly in their respective areas for Bible study and prayer. They launch action unit crusades that may be planned by the local church, the local field, or the union at least twice a year. They help sponsor church projects. They also support needy members.” Oyinloye, J.M.A. “Sabbath School Action Units.” Retrieved from www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1997/12/sabbath-school-action-units.

³⁹ *Lawless, Chuck*, “Keeping Small Groups Evangelistic.” Retrieved from <http://www.outreachmagazine.com/ideas/10986>.



3. Failure to form a new group in two years.
4. No outreach events within the last six months.

How will Care Group members participate in witnessing? How will they reach “their world”?

1. Invest in relationships with those outside the church—Christians or non-Christians. Seek especially those who are already close to us—neighbors, relatives, friends, former members, colleagues at work.
2. Offer something that is of shared interest. One Badminton Club sponsored a friendship tournament and prepared a vegetarian meal for the guests, all non-Adventists.
3. Introduce your friends socially to group members at such events as anniversary, concert, birthday, etc.
4. Just invite them to the group.

Through these relational investments we have opportunities to invite someone to our Care Group, an appropriate church activity, and maybe later to an evangelistic series.

Bridging the Cultural Divide

In SSD, there are several groups that must be reached: Christians outside our faith, the unchurched, the secular, and those from other cultural, ethnic, religious, and racial backgrounds (Moslems, Buddhists, Hindus, etc.). These groups may feel they are good where they are. Or they may not be attracted by the gospel and don't feel a need for salvation.

Yet in their comfortable paradise some “cracks” (or need) may appear. These cracks that we have to fill may be family problems or health issues.⁴⁰ In affluent societies, where technology and affluence increases isolation, there may be a strong need to belong.

The Adventists must deliberately place themselves “within the cracks of society.” When we conduct family-life and health mini-seminars using *WIN!Wellness* program, we will fill these “cracks.” As we attend to the universally felt need for better home and health life, they will at last discover “the most important, though sometimes unfelt need of salvation.”⁴¹

As leader your group may have several members representing a culture, or a former non-Christian religion. Such members may become bridges to remove the cultural/religious barriers. Tap the gifted among them, and look for ways that they will be trained to lead in this kind of evangelism.

From Care Group to Church “Every small group is a potential church.”⁴² In fact, Cox believes that

⁴⁰ Jan Paulsen. “Serving Your Community: Filling in the Cracks.” *Ministry*. September 2014, 9.

⁴¹ Gordon Martinborough. “Five Benefits of Integrated Family-Life Evangelism.” (April 2001). Retrieved from www.ministrymagazine.org

⁴² In the South American Division (SAD) small groups have opened new pastoral districts and, consequently, new conferences and missions. Chavez, Jolive. The Maryland Adventist Church in Lagos, Nigeria established churches after merging several Sabbath School Action Units into a Branch Sabbath School, and eventually, into a church.- J.M.A. Oyinloye

church planting is “better” approached when started with small groups.

When a small group has grown into several groups, resembling a congregation of 20, 30 or more, it is tempting to immediately hold regular Sabbath services. This happens usually after a large evangelistic meeting, and the subject on Sabbath was already presented.

But Cox cautions about doing a regular church Sabbath worship. This may “lessen its overall impact” on the new members, especially if they are not yet committed to the group. The fellowship may be warm but the new seekers might not find the worship “sufficiently stimulating” to want to return.

As such, the Small Group format should be preserved (short 1 ½ hour meeting) and the large type-congregational worship should be avoided, until “75 to 100 people can form a congregation.”

Apart from his direct role to fellow CG members, a leader has these other responsibilities as the group’s liaison for the pastor and Church:

- Works in consultation with the church pastor and others to deal with matters beyond the scope of the group.
- Communicates the aims and vision of the group with the larger church, and those of the larger church with the group.
- Keeps the goal of growth through conversion fresh in the minds of members

A Task Too Daunting?

Leading a Care Group will keep your schedule busy, your prayers longer. As you read through the responsibilities, you might think of all the time and hard work, and the possibility of failure.

But God knows the human heart. He knows it is not immune to fear. The task is so enormous and we realize our insufficiency.

So He assures the faithful and the diligent church leaders of small groups: “You can do all things through Christ who will give you strength” (Phil. 4:13).



SOME REMINDERS...

1. Invite those who are willing to join the group; don’t force.
2. Avoid the doubling of membership.
3. Seek to reclaim backsliders.
4. A Care Group can be turned into an SS Class. But turning an SS class automatically into a Care Group may not be ideal.
5. Schedule for the group’s special events (including socials) should be planned ahead.
6. Before inviting non-Adventists their names should be mentioned in prayer for two months.
7. In every meeting, a vacant chair should be provided.
8. Wear decent clothing during the meetings.
9. Every member should be given the chance to lead out in prayer and lesson discussions, especially if he/she is able.
10. Since growth is the goal of every group, after one year a CG should divide; the assistant leader becomes the leader of the new group.

⁴³ Cox, *Thing Big, Think Small Group*, 65.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 90-91.

Conclusion

“God’s work is to be done in his way and his Spirit. In various places small companies are to consecrate themselves to God, body, soul, and spirit, and laying hold of the throne of God by faith they are to work zealously... The vital current of his love will make itself felt, and will be recognized as from heaven in the good works of his people... Not one who has tasted the goodness, the mercy, and the love of God, can be excused from working for the souls of others.”⁴⁵

If as a Church, your personal ministries and outreach programs have been serving you well, continue to use them. The Care Group can still serve its purpose especially in the areas of nurture and discipleship. But since it happened at Pentecost. It shall happen again. The Spirit of Prophecy tells us that as we wait for His coming, we’ll do so “in small groups.”⁴⁶

Adventists are unified in our vision and mission to explicitly obey the Bible and the counsel of our Adventist Church founder, Ellen G White. And since many studies have proven that of the eight characteristics of healthy and growing churches, the most important, “without a doubt,” would be the “multiplication of small groups,”⁴⁷ common sense tells us one thing: Small group ministry is going to play a large part in how we do church in the coming years. It is our intentional approach for the nurture and retention of believers. The Care Groups’ loving visitation and fellowship is also our deliberate attempt in reclaiming our lost brothers and sisters.

Care Groups in Southern Asia are very important because of what they will purposely produce: disciples. Not mere members but authentic followers of Christ. They “consecrate themselves to God, body, soul, and spirit.” They participate in local church worship. They lead and work. They reclaim the lost. They nurture one another. They work for others outside our faith. And “while they are doing these things, actually enjoy themselves!”⁴⁸

God loves the world so much (John 3:16). He desires to see people coping well and not falling, “the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament...” in love (Eph 4:16). Over and above that, it is His dream that our families, including children, will be His disciples. Through our invitation and care, He wants the demography of heaven to be full of our relatives, friends, and neighbors.

With our united, sincere prayers, God promises to pour out His power. “The secret of success...” and “the greatest results” are possible when we “rely most implicitly upon the Almighty Arm.”⁴⁹

⁴⁵ EG White. “Followers of Christ will be Missionaries,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, 8 January, 1895.

⁴⁶ See Appendix C for more Biblical and Spirit of Prophecy support for Small Group home worship and ministry.

⁴⁷ Christian Schwarz, *Natural Church Development: Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches*. Church Smart Resources: II. 32.

⁴⁸ David Cox., *Think Big, Think Small Groups*. 48

⁴⁹ EG White. PP 509.



Leaders in the Division/Union/Mission/Conference are committed to providing resources and support. The only limiting factors may just be clear directions—hence this manual, and committed leadership—your part of the bargain.

If it seems that doing Care Groups is too difficult, remember this: “As the will of man cooperates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength.”⁵⁰ “Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established” (Proverbs 16:3).

God’s work on earth will not be finished by pastors or prominent church leaders alone. Laypersons who were disciples of Jesus will proclaim the everlasting gospel by publicly sharing the Bible, doing loving acts and even through their lifestyle, without saying a word. This is Total Member Involvement. This is Reach the World.

In the Southern Asia Pacific region, Adventists would do well to move in unity and in one beat to live the Method of Christ. May IEL’s Care Group Ministry and Mission impact and prepare all those in our sphere of influence for the coming King!

⁵⁰ www.whiteestate.org/devotional/ofc/11_25.asp



Appendix

Helps For Care Group Leaders

- A. Revival Sermons**
- B. Devotional Readings – Revive us Again by Mark Finley**
- C. The Bible and EG White on Small Groups**
- D. Guide for Weekend Seminar**
- E. Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches**
- F. Ministry Ideas: Projects of Kindness**
- G. Ice-Breaker Ideas for Building your Group Relationally**
- H. Care Group Evaluation Form**
- I. Example of a Relational Group Covenant**
- J. Proposed Format for Care Group Harvest/Celebration**
- K. Theme Songs**



Appendix A

Revival Sermons

SERMON 1

Reaching the World

Luke 19:10

The Scriptures show that Jesus had a clear vision of His mission. In the context of His encounter with Zacchaeus, Jesus illustrated and then clearly stated a crucial aspect of His mission. Since Jesus' mission is our mission, let us reflect on the story of Jesus' encounter with the tax collector.

I. Follow Jesus' Example

The story of Zacchaeus illustrates and states Jesus' mission. That tax collector had a strong desire to see Jesus. So Zacchaeus was planning to find a way to see Jesus. To mingle with a crowd and try from a distance to glimpse the face of Jesus would not work, since Zacchaeus was small in stature. So he became creative; he figured out which road Jesus was passing through, ran ahead, and climbed into a sycamore tree.

Zacchaeus did not know Jesus' mission statement, so he thought he'd found an excellent way to see Jesus yet remain unseen. Zacchaeus thought he was the one looking to find and see Jesus, but now, seeing Jesus looking up at him, hearing Him mention his name, Zacchaeus begins to realize: It is not I who am searching, looking to see Jesus, but it is Jesus who is looking and searching for me.

"And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and saw him, and said to him, 'Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house' " (Luke 19:5). What did You say, Jesus? You must visit me? Why "must"? Why me? Are You planning to punish me for my shortcomings and evildoings? What is Your agenda? What is the main purpose of Your desire to see me and visit me? When the people saw Jesus visiting the house of the tax collector, they started to grumble, saying: "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner" (verse 7).

It is very remarkable that Jesus finishes this visit by explaining the "must" of His visit, and He does so by revealing His mission statement: "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost" (verse 10). Said Jesus, Please, when you try to interpret My actions, see them in the light of My mission, My purpose of life and ministry: "I have come to find and save, not find and punish." Jesus came to give eternal life, but Jesus knew that salvation is accepted only when it is offered by someone who loves, who cares, who meets our needs.

II. Make Jesus our Partner in Mission

Today, Jesus invites His followers to identify themselves with His mission statement. He is looking for partners, those who are willing to make His mission statement their own. It is the supreme desire of our



Redeemer to have in me and you someone who will make His mission statement a living reality.

How would our churches look today if every member had the same mission statement? We need a reformation that leads us to Jesus' full mission statement. Throughout His ministry, Jesus stressed the importance of loving, forgiving, and caring. That's why He was not ashamed to mingle with those considered to be society's sinners and outcasts. This is why He left the crowd that was following Him and visited Zacchaeus, the tax collector.

It is also of great interest to note that the Gospel of Luke does not record any rebuke or reproach while Jesus was in the house of the sinner Zacchaeus. Jesus simply shared His love and acceptance. Looking at Jesus, Zacchaeus understood: "Jesus has no other agenda but to help me and save me!" This love of Christ not only converted Zacchaeus, but also brought him to a reformation of his life, to a divine transformation.

III. Change in Life is Achieved Through Love and Care.

The life of Christ clearly demonstrates that change in life is achieved more successfully through love and care than through sermonizing, confrontation, or criticism. Warm, loving, caring churches are places where people feel accepted no matter what. These kinds of churches are places where people want to come, and want to bring with them their friends and neighbors.

If, every member becomes a loving, Christ-like person, he or she will be a living, walking center of influence for Christ and His kingdom. Jesus not only gave His life for sinners— He ministered to those whom He encountered, meeting their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs. He spent a significant amount of time just caring for people and healing them. Yes, His ultimate goal was to save them, to give them eternal life, but Jesus knew that salvation is accepted only when it is offered by someone who loves, who cares, who meets our needs.

Conclusion

Let us never forget Jesus' mission statement. May it become our mission statement as well. If we are serious about reaching this world for Christ, we have to follow Christ's example. We need more love for one another, more love for the erring, more love for our neighbors, more love for those who do not yet know Christ, more love for God Himself, more love for His Word, more love and acceptance for His mission statement. Let us pray that Christ's mission statement becomes ours as well!

- General Conference Ministerial Association

SERMON 2

Reaching the Cities

We can't do everything, but we can do something. We can't change the whole world, but we can change the world where we are. That's what Jesus wants us to do in the city or community where we are:

make a difference! How do we make a difference? By doing “good,” just as Jesus did; intentionally, creatively, passionately, consistently doing good.

I. Use different approaches for witnessing

Jesus did good wherever He went. While there’s no exact formula for witnessing and soul-winning, the Bible and Christian literature reveal a variety of methods that can be used when we witness and do good. Here are just a few: One-to-one appeals; Storyteller narratives, such as Solomon in Proverbs 7:6-27, or Jesus in Matthew 12-15; Direct confrontation, such as Stephen in Acts 7:1-51, or Jesus in Matthew 15:3-9; Gospel proclamation, such as Peter in Acts 3:12-26, or as Jesus instructed the 72 in Luke 10:1-22; Intellectual conversation, such as Paul in Acts 17:22-34, or Jesus in Matthew 22:29-32; Personal testimony, such as the blind man in John 9:1-34.

The operative word is to do: do something good, and do it now. As Ellen White wrote: “The world needs today what it needed nineteen hundred years ago—a revelation of Christ. A great work of reform is demanded, and it is only through the grace of Christ that the work of restoration, physical, mental, and spiritual, can be accomplished.” She further wrote: “Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with [men and women] as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me.’” (MH 143)

II. Embrace the challenge with energy and enthusiasm

Seventh-day Adventists around the world, all 18 million, are being challenged with a fresh, bold outreach appeal called Mission to the Cities. Every Adventist is asked to personally reach out to his or her neighborhood, community, and city to minister in practical ways as 12 We can make a difference by doing “good,” just as Jesus did; intentionally, creatively, passionately, consistently doing good. Christ did. Each believer can demonstrate their love for God and people by sharing the lifechanging, Christ-centered good news found in the Bible in the context of the Seventh-day Adventist message. Adventists respect the various religious faiths that base their beliefs in the Bible. However, we passionately believe that the Adventist message, the three angels’ messages (Rev. 14:6-12), is God’s message for this crucial time in history. We believe God has called Adventists to share this truth.

So how do you feel when confronted with this appeal to be involved in personal evangelism? Some believers are impressed with the sheer magnitude of the task and experience feelings of enthusiasm, even excitement. Others, when they contemplate the sacrifice that will be required, feel a sense of depression.

The good news is that we can successfully execute the challenge of ministering to the communities in which we live. We can embrace the challenge of Mission to the Cities with energy and enthusiasm. The apostle Paul helps us with this challenge of effectively using Christ’s method for reaching the cities.

III. Follow biblical principles for successful witnessing and evangelism

In Acts 20:17-24 Paul outlines four simple principles for successful witnessing and evangelism. In succinct language he summed up both the attitude and actions of Christ’s followers who want to do good.



Paul goes on to identify by his example four attitudes of an effective worker for Christ.

1. The Holy Spirit was Paul's partner. For Paul, evangelism was a team effort, not a solo activity (verses 22, 23). The Holy Spirit, his companion, was a constant source of support and guidance.

2. Paul was empowered to surmount obstacles. He put duty over danger (verse 23). He maintained this mind-set by communicating with his Partner, focusing on his high calling, and by remembering why he was doing what he was doing.

3. Paul found inspiration in opposition. He envisioned the eternal prospect over temporal comforts (verse 24). Paul knew that in every trial God has a greater benefit on the other side.

4. Paul knew God had a purpose for his life. He realized that while he couldn't finish other people's purpose, he could finish his own. Paul did the work assigned to him, knowing that God would accomplish the rest.

Conclusion

We will be successful if we assume the same attitude as Paul: not being overwhelmed by the immensity of the task, doing good where we are whenever we can, and trusting God for the outcome. How can we make a difference? By doing "good," just as Jesus did; intentionally, creatively, passionately, consistently doing good. Then we can, like Paul, finish our race and ministry with joy.

- General Conference Ministerial Association

"Go Ye into all The World" With Family & Health Evangelism WIN! Wellness: Homes of Hope & Health - Integrated Balanced Living John and Millie Youngberg

An Introduction to the WIN! Wellness Program.
This program is a wonderful compliment to the Care Group evangelism strategy.

The Elijah Message is the Last Day Message: "And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers...." Malachi 4:6

The time is ready for "Heart Turning" in Marriages and Families

"[Satan] is intruding his presence in every department of the household...perplexing, deceiving, seducing, everywhere ruining the souls and bodies of men, women, and children, breaking up families... And the Christian world seem to regard these things as though God has appointed them and they must exist." -Great Controversy, 508



This world is no longer a safe place for families. It's time for Jesus to come.

“The restoration and uplifting of humanity begins in the home. The work of parents underlies every other. . . The well-being of society, the success of the church, the prosperity of the nation, depend upon home influences.” --Ministry of Healing, 349

Jesus is coming. It's time for TOTAL restoration of broken families.

- We have come to the “times of restoration of all things.” (Acts 3:21).
- Tell me what sin has taken away, and I will tell you what Jesus is ready to restore.

Family healing affects physical healing.

- Relationships in families affect physical, emotional health in a positive or negative way.
- Jesus is coming and families need to prepare: Physically, mentally, spiritually, and relationally.
- Jesus came to heal the broken hearted and set the captives free (Isaiah 61:1).

Jesus is coming. Is your family getting ready?

- In Ezekiel's time the temptation that Satan put before families was: “We will be like the Gentiles, like the families in other countries.” –Eze. 20:32.
- Today the temptation of many families who profess to be God's children is:
 - To watch the same television like others
 - To visit the same internet sites as others
 - To eat the same food as others
 - But God is calling His children to “come out ...and be separate,” (2 Cor. 6:17) since they are heading for a different homeland.

Jesus is coming. We need healthy families and a balanced lifestyle.

- o We need to know health principles so as to prevent sickness in our families and in families of others.
- o The purpose of the Three Angels' Messages is to prepare a people who will reflect the image of God physically, mentally, spiritually and relationally. They will stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion “having His Father's name written on their foreheads.” “They are without fault before the throne of God” Rev. 14: 1,5.

Jesus is coming. Our children have a great work to do in the last days.

- o “When heavenly intelligences see that men are no longer permitted to present the truth, the Spirit of God will come upon the children, and they will do a work in the proclamation of the truth which the older workers cannot do because their way will be hedged up.”
- o They “will be endued with the Spirit of God.”



- o They will be enlisted “in the army of workers to help the sick and suffering.”
- o They will “take part in the medical missionary work.” --Adventist Home, 489

What did the given statements say to you? Do you believe that Jesus is coming?

Reflect and Discuss—10 minutes

- The Elijah Message
- Satan Intruding in Families and Marriages
- Restoration and uplifting of families
- God is calling His children to come out from worldly influences
- Prepare teens and children to do medical missionary work just before Jesus comes when the work will be hedged up for adults

Jesus is coming. We and our families must be ready and help others to be ready for this glorious event!

What can we do to prepare others for Jesus to come? Consider doing the Family and Medical Missionary work which is an entering wedge to the gospel message. Do you have a desire to help others to know Jesus?

John and Millie Youngberg have studied the same quotes as you have read. They were impressed by God to help others to do Family and Medical Missionary work by preparing and equipping those who desire to serve the Lord with ready-to-use materials. **They say it was a “Heaven born idea” which is: Homes of Hope & Health**

WIN! Wellness Homes of Hope & Health:

- o Is family and medical evangelism prepared for small groups and seminars.
- o Is designed to equip others to fulfill the gospel commission.
- o Blends family, physical, mental-spiritual wellness
- o Helps prevent illness and degenerative disease
- o Is an easy-to-use research based wellness program for church and non-church members
- o Gently presents doctrines
- o Is a tool that Divisions, Unions, Conferences, Missions, and local churches can readily use.
- o It is simple to use.
- o Anyone who can read can use it.
- o It is a Ministry of Healing Model which includes the family
- o In Ministry of Healing there are 7 chapters that are on the family
- o Family and health go together



WIN! Wellness Homes of Hope & Health Instructional Material

- o Many people die because of lack of knowledge or because health laws are not followed.
- o WIN! Wellness is about helping people to LIVE— Live longer, healthier, happier and holier.
- o The WIN! Wellness 3 books and DVDs can save lives—maybe yours!
- o And save lives for eternity.
- o You can change the demography of heaven.
- o A series of 3 new books for small group ministry are for solo, couple, family or small group learning.
- o A Digipack of 3 DVDs with hundreds of outstanding PowerPoints for seminars, professional presentations, and evangelistic meetings is available.
- o You are the Presenter of Homes of Hope & Health
- o The non-audio DVDs have 29 full scripts and all you need for your ministry.
- o It is designed to equip anyone who has a passion to do family and medical evangelism.

John and Millie claimed the promise given to Abraham: I will bless you and you will be a blessing to the nations. Large metropolitan cities, little villages, small towns worldwide are waiting to hear the good news of salvation. Lifestyle changes need to be improved in preparation for last day events. Who will do this needed family and health ministry? You? Your church?

The Harvest is ripe and waiting

- o “Pray therefore the Lord of the Harvest that He will send forth laborers into His harvest.”
- o God needs people like you to do this ministry—to prepare others for the coming of Jesus.



Appendix B

Devotional Readings

From Mark Finley's *Revive Us Again*

These readings are recommended to be used as revival resource for nightly meetings or by Care Groups. Either way, there should be a Care Group discussion period using the discussion questions.

Devotional #1 - Why is the Second Coming of Christ Delayed? - *Revive Us Again*, pp. 57-60)

Introduction

We are a people who should not be here. Jesus longed to come long ago. Why hasn't He come? Is He waiting for more famines, earthquakes, and wars? Certainly not! Let's examine three reasons why Christ has delayed His return.

1. Christ waits in love. He is waiting for the gospel to be preached with all power so all humanity will have an opportunity to be saved.

Mrs. White points out the church's role, "By giving the gospel to the world it is in our power to hasten our Lord's return. We are not only to look for but to hasten the coming of the day of God. . . . Had the church of Christ done her appointed work as the Lord ordained, the whole world would before this has been warned, and the Lord Jesus would have come to our earth in power and great glory" (DA, 633, 634).

"He has put it in our power, through cooperation with Him, to bring this scene of misery to an end" (Education, 264).

2. Christ's waits for His Church to reveal His incredible character of love to a waiting world and watching universe.

"Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in this Church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then he will come to claim them as His own." (COL, 69).

A waiting world and watching universe must see, once and for all, that the work of the cross is finished in the lives of God's people. God longs to develop a group of people at the end time who are passionate about knowing Him, absolutely convinced that His way is best, and consumed with sharing His love with others.

3. Christ waits for the full manifestation of wickedness to be revealed in all this world.

"Christ waits not only for a complete demonstration of His love to be revealed through His people but also for the seeds of rebellion to be fully mature in the hearts of those who reject His love. He must let wickedness, evil, and sin run its course so the whole universe will see the ultimate results of Satan's rebellion and will be secure in His love forever.

God keeps a reckoning with the nations. . . . When the time fully comes that iniquity shall have reached the stated boundary of God's mercy, His forbearance will cease. " 5T, 524).

"There is a limit beyond which the judgments of Jehovah can no longer be delayed" (PK, 417).

The church can hasten the coming of Jesus but it cannot delay it indefinitely. There will be a convergence of a praying, converted, transformed people revealing His glory, filled with His Spirit, proclaiming the message of His love in truth in a world of ever-increasing wickedness. God will one day soon declare before the universe, "It is finished; it is done. My people have revealed My character of love to sin-polluted world.

Personal reflections:

1. Is God calling you to do something that you are putting off?
2. Are attitudes of jealousy, pride, animosity towards others lurking deeply within your heart?
3. Do you become easily irritated with others and hold grudges?
4. Do you overstate your accomplishments and exaggerate your successes to make yourself appear superior to others?

God is calling people in this last generation who know Him deeply, who love Him supremely, and who share Him passionately. Would you like to commit yourself to being one of those people? The only way to be ready for the second coming of Christ is to get ready today and stay ready tomorrow.

Prayer:

"Lord, knowing you is the most important thing in my life. If there is anything lurking in me that I may not be fully aware of, please reveal it to me. I am willing to surrender any habit or attitude not in harmony with Your will." Amen

Devotional #2 "Prayer & Revival", pp. 7-13

The greatest revivals in the history of the world have been the result of earnest, heartfelt intercession. The sparks of revival are kindled on the altar of prayer. Revival and prayer are inseparably linked. Without persevering, prevailing prayer, there is no corresponding power. Ellen White could not be clearer in stating this divine reality. "*A revival need be expected only in answer to prayer*". (Selected Messages, bk.1, p 121) p. 7.

The New Testament church was bathed in prayer. The believers heeded Jesus' admonition to "wait" for the promise of the Father (Acts 1:4). They believed as they sought God together that they would receive "power" when the Holy Spirit descended from heaven upon them (Acts 1:8). Prayer was at the heart of the New Testament churches' power.

Prayer was also at the very heart of the early Advent movement. The pioneers of the Advent movement were great men and women of prayer, sometimes spending a good portion of the night in prayer. Ellen White constantly urged these early Adventists to seek God in prayer. "*The greatest victories gained for the cause of God are not the result of labored argument, ample facilities, wide influence, or abundance of*

means; they are gained in the audience chamber with God, when with earnest, agonizing faith men lay hold upon the mighty arm of power” (Gospel Workers, p. 259) p. 9. We too, must bath ourselves daily in prayer, and believe the promises of our Savior that He will be with us always.

Believing that the second coming of Christ was imminent, these early Adventists humbled their hearts, confessed their sins, and interceded for their families, friends, and communities. No matter their discouragement, when the day of disappointment came, the early Adventists had a genuine revival. Prayer initiates revival. Prayer sustains revival. Prayer nurtures revival, and prayer follows revival. Note: (“The Great Disappointment” refers to the grief experienced by the 100,000 Millerites who expected Jesus to return on October 22, 1844. - See more at: <http://www.ellengwhitetruth.com/life-times/two-great-disappointments/the-great-disappointment#sthash.AQO9rQZG.dpuf>).

Revivalist Leonard Ravenhill put it this way, “Without exception, all true revivals of the past began after years of agonizing, hell-robbing, earth-shaking, heaven-sent intercession. The secret to true revival in our own day is still the same. But where, oh, where, are the intercessors” (p. 9-10).

One of the greatest revivals in history was the Welsh Revival of 1904 (pp.10-11). Twenty-six-year-old Evan Roberts had been praying for 13 years that his life would be totally controlled by the Holy Spirit. He pled with God for an undivided heart—a heart totally committed to the kingdom of God. He continued to pray day-by-day and often times, late into the night. Then it happened...at a youth meeting in Evan Robert’s own church. Sixteen young people were converted. The sparks of revival begun in this humble village church would ignite the flames of revival throughout the country. It is estimated that within 9 months, 100,000 people were converted in the tiny country of Wales. The crime rate dropped. Drunks and prostitutes were transformed. Pubs reported losses, and many taverns were turned into places of prayer. Political meetings and sporting events delayed or postponed because people were at church. And profanity disappeared from the miners lips. An entire nation was changed because a young man, Evan Roberts, and a group of his young friends took our Lord’s example of passionate intercession seriously.

One of the most dramatic moments in recent memory is the fall of the Berlin Wall. Few realize the mighty, concentrated prayer movement that led up to the breathtaking events in East Berlin on November 9, 1989. Christian Fuhrer, a young German pastor in Leipzig, opened the doors of his church each Monday evening for prayer and discussions on freedom. These prayer sessions grew until one Monday night in October of 1989, eight thousand people crowded into the church. Thousands more stood outside the Nikolai Church. A nationwide freedom movement was birthed in the cradle of prayer. People by the tens of thousands in villages, towns, and cities across East Germany joined the Leipzig intercessors. On that Monday night in October, nearly one million people were praying for freedom. Twenty years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, commenting on the absolute necessity of earnest intercession, Pastor Christian declared, “We realized that if we stopped praying, there would be no hope for change in Germany” (p 12).

In *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 346, Ellen White reminds us that “At the sound of fervent prayer, Satan’s whole host trembles”. Prayer makes a difference, and intercessory prayer is powerful! Just as the Berlin Wall fell as God’s people prayed, so the walls that keep us from an intimate experience with

Jesus fall as we plead with God. The walls that hold back the mighty revival that God longs to send to His church crumble at the sound of earnest intercession. Walls of pride, prejudice, anger, bitterness, lust, complacency, lukewarmness, and materialism all give way to the moving of the Holy Spirit through prayer. Prayer is an absolute necessity if revival is going to take place.

Discussion:

- Share a time when you experienced the power of prayer. Mention God's specific leading in your life, confirmation of your conviction, or answer to a specific prayer.

Devotional #3 "Prayer & the Great Controversy", pp. 13-16

We all participate in the conflict between good and evil. This conflict between Christ and Satan is a battle between the forces of hell and the forces of righteousness. The struggle is real, and you can probably think of times when you have struggled. I'm sure you would agree that the struggle in this world is intensifying with each passing year. Just this past week alone...we have seen reports of the terrorist attack in Paris, 25 people killed in an attack in Nigeria, 2 shot in Palestine, 147 people left for dead in Kenya, 41 people lost their lives in a suicide attack in Lebanon, and many people effected by the 7.0 earthquake that triggered a small tsunami of the coast of Japan... *just to name a few*. And this was all in the course of just 1 week.

There are thousands upon thousands of good and evil angels involved. Revelation describes the battle this way, "*Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and his angels...and one-third of the angels in heaven rebelled against God*" (Revelation 12: 4 & 7) p. 14. The forces of evil bring disappointment, disease, disaster, and death to our world. The forces of righteousness bring joy, peace, health, and life.

Prayer enables God, in the context of the great controversy between good and evil, to work more powerfully than if we had not prayed. Prayer is the weapon to defeat the powers of hell. Through prayer we give God permission to move mightily in our behalf. In this universal struggle, God voluntarily limits Himself. He does not violate our power of choice. God will never force anyone to serve Him.

But what happens if I do not pray? He does everything He can, within the ground rules of the conflict between good and evil, to save all humanity. Whether I pray or not, He is reaching out to my family members. Whether they pray for me or not, He is working in my life. Whether I pray or not, there is a measure of protection that God gives through angelic beings.

But when I pray and seek Him, I open up through prayer new channels that enable God, in the context of the conflict between good and evil, to do things that He would not do otherwise. God not only respects the power of choice of people who are not praying, He respects my power of choice as I pray. "*It is a part of God's plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask*" (The Great Controversy, p. 525) p. 15.

As we pray, God pours out His spirit through us. Prayer enables the illimitable God to help those in need. A marvelous passage in the Bible, 1 John 5:14-17, describes what happens when we pray. "*This is*

the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us" (p. 15). Many passages in the Bible encourage us to pray. But this passage does more than admonish us to pray. It does more than urge us to pray. It does more than encourage us; it actually explains why prayer is so effective. In 1 John, chapter 5, verses 14-16, the apostle declares, "*Now this is the confidence that we have in Him.*" Our confidence is not in our prayers. Our confidence is in Him. The apostle continues, "*If we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know we have the petitions that we asked of Him*" (p. 15). We can have absolute confidence that as we come to God, He will hear our petitions.

The next verse reveals what happens when we interceded for someone else. "*If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death*" (p. 15). The sin which leads to death is the unpardonable sin. The sin which leads to death is the unpardonable sin. It is the point at which people have hardened their hearts against God. "*He will ask.*" Who is the one doing the asking? It is the intercessor. What happens? "*He [God] will give him [the intercessor] life for those who commit sin not leading to death*" (p. 16). God pours out His life through us to touch the life of someone else. We are the channels through which God pours out His illimitable power. God honors our heartfelt intercession for someone else. It is intercessory prayer that makes a difference. Isn't this amazing! Intercessory prayer is powerful and we need to do that for one another. And remember that there is POWER...MIGHTY POWER...in our every prayer.

Discussion Questions (choose one to discuss):

1. How do the tragic current events happening in our world make you feel?
2. If more people understood the power of prayer, how would this change our world?
3. Have you experienced the prayers of someone else affecting you?

Devotional #4 "The Prayer Life of Jesus" pp. 16-18

Jesus is our great model in intercession. He regularly retreated to a quiet place to pray. He sought God for strength to meet the challenges of the day. He pleaded with His Father for strength to overcome Satan's temptations. The Gospel of Mark records one of Jesus' early Morning Prayer sessions in these words: "*Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed*" (Mark 1:35) p. 16.

If Jesus, the Divine Son of God, understood that prayer is a necessity, don't we need prayer much more in our own lives? Jesus recognized that inner spiritual strength comes through prayer. Luke's Gospel records Jesus' prayer habits. "*He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed*" (Luke 5:16) p. 16. Prayer was not something Jesus only did occasionally when a need or problem arose. Instead, prayer was a vital part of His every day life.

Prayer was a vital part of Jesus' life. It was the key to staying connected to the Father. It was the essence of vibrant spirituality. Jesus' prayer life was a vital part of His life. Daily the Savior renewed His relationship with His Father through prayer.

Jesus' prayer life gave Him courage and strength to face temptation. He came from these prayer sessions with a spiritual freshness and deepened commitment to do the Father's will. Describing one of these prayer times, Luke adds, "*As He [Jesus] prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe became white and glistening*" (Luke 9:29) p. 17. Jesus radiated the strength that comes from moments in God's needed time in His Father's presence to overcome the fierce temptations of Satan. We certainly need time in God's presence much more!

Jesus was never too busy to pray. His schedule was never too packed to spend time with His Father in communion. He never had so much to do that He rushed in and out of His Father's presence. Jesus came from these intimate times with God spiritually revived. He was filled with the power because He took time to pray.

R.A. Torrey laments the busyness of today's Christianity, which at times is so powerless. Torrey says, "*We are too busy to pray, and so we are too busy to have power. We have a great deal of activity, but we accomplish little; many services but few conversations; much machinery but few results* (p. 17)."

Ellen White makes the same point. "*Many, even in their seasons of devotion, fail of receiving the blessing of real communion with God. They are in too great haste. With hurried steps they press through the circle of Christ's loving presence, pausing perhaps a moment within the sacred precincts, but not waiting for counsel. They have no time to remain with the divine Teacher. With their burdens they return to their work*" (Education, p. 260) p. 17.

One thing is for certain. We cannot face the devil in our own strength. Prayer is the answer. Through prayer God bathes us with His presence and power. Through prayer He touches the hearts of our loved ones. Armored with prayer, we can face the enemy at the end times. It is impossible to live godly lives in the end times with an inconsistent prayer life. When our connection with God is broken, our power from God is cut off. When there is little prayer, there is little power. Prayer is our humble acknowledgement that we cannot live the Christian life without His strength. It is the admission of our inability to cope with Satan's temptations alone. Through prayer we are more than able to handle Satan's temptations. The devil is no match for the praying, trusting child of God.

On our knees, pleading with God, we will experience miracles. We will see God's hand move in miraculous ways. As Jesus did, we will come from these seasons of prayer refreshed and invigorated. We will sense that God is working through our prayers to transform the lives of others around us as well. Would you like to experience a spiritual revival in your own life? Do you desire a renewed spiritual experience? Are you tired of spiritual complacency? Do you long for a spiritual revival in your church?

Our Lord has promised to answer the earnest longings of His children. He will respond as we seek Him. His promises are ours. He has said, "*If My people pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land*" (2 Chronicles 7:14) p. 18.

Jesus adds this promise: "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Luke 11:13) p. 19. Read on in your book on pp 19-25 about engaging in the ACTS prayer model. Many of us are familiar with this model and have used it. Let us engage in this prayer model throughout this coming week in our



own personal devotions (look at your homework assignment below).

A-Adoration...give praise and glory to God, your heavenly Father. Praise lifts our minds from who we are to who He is. It directs our attention to His greatness not our weakness, to His wisdom not our ignorance, and to His might not our feebleness.

C-Confession...Confess to Christ the attitudes, habits, and practices He convicts you of that are not Christ like. Confession clears the way for the Holy Spirit to work mightily in our lives.

T-Thanksgiving...Think of very specific things God has done for you recently and thank Him.

S-Supplication...Jesus assures us to “Ask, and it shall be given to you” (Matthew 7:7). James admonishes us to “ask in faith without doubting” (James 1:6) p. 21. And Paul was confident that “my God shall supply all your needs” (Philippians 4:19) p. 21.

Discussion Question: In the busy society we live in today with demanding, over-packed schedules, how do you find the balance of accomplishing your duties and still spending quality time with the Savior?

Homework: Read pp 19-25 in the book, *Revive Us Again* by Mark Finley, and do the personal application on pp 26-27 in preparation for next week.

Recommended reading: *Too Busy Not to Pray: Slowing Down to be with God*, by Bill Hybels

Devotional #5 “Evangelism and Revival” pp.98-111

Imagine that you were in the upper room with the disciples two thousand years ago. The integrity of God’s word is at stake. His reputation is on the line. The honor of god’s throne depends on the fulfillment of His promise. In spite of overwhelming obstacles and insurmountable odds, the disciples clung to that precious promise. *“Being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, ‘which,’ He said, ‘you have heard from Me...But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witness to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth”* (Acts 1:4-8) p. 99.

The outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost was not simply because the disciples had met the conditions. Certainly the Holy Spirit would not have met the conditions. Certainly the Holy Spirit would not have been poured out if they had not met the conditions, but meeting the conditions of receiving the Spirit, in itself, was not enough.

The Holy Spirit was poured out on the Day of Pentecost as a signal to the early church that Jesus’ sacrifice was accepted by the Father in the heavenly sanctuary. Luke makes this clear in Acts 2. *“This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear”* (Acts 2:32-33).

The mighty outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost was Heaven’s gift, confirming the Father’s acceptance of the magnificent sacrifice of Christ on Calvary’s cross. The three thousand baptized that day

were an eloquent testimony of the risen Christ's power to change lives. The fullness of the Spirit testified to the fullness of Jesus' power.

The disciples gathered in the upper room that day numbered 120. The challenge of reaching the world with the gospel seemed impossible. Our best population estimates for the Roman Empire during the first century are approximately 180 million.

Although there certainly were a few more Christians than those gathered in the upper room, the percentage of Christians to the world population to the world population was infinitesimal. For example, if we use the 120 figure, there would have been one Christian to each 1.4 million people in the world.

In comparison, today we have approximately one Adventist to every 422 people in the world. In an age of Roman military might and materialism, Greek philosophy, and pagan religion, their task would have appeared much more daunting than ours.

These early believers did not have mass media, radio, television, or the Internet. They did not have the social media network such as Facebook, Twitter, or text messaging. They did not have a network of satellite television stations. They did not have seminaries, publishing houses, and a worldwide hospital system. They did not have a worldwide church organization; but this they had—the fullness of the Spirit. They had Jesus' promise that through the outpouring of His Holy Spirit, they would reach the entire world with His message of love and truth.

The results were astounding! Journey with me through the book of Acts and catch the inspiration as we stand back in awe at the moving of the Holy Spirit. The book of Acts reveals what God can do in a very short time through consecrated men and women who believe His promise and act upon His Word.

When the disciples woke up on the Day of Pentecost, they had no idea that the church would add three thousand new members that very day. Acts 2:41 records, "*Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them*" (p. 101). And this was just the beginning. Acts 4:4 adds, "However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand" (p. 101).

You will notice that the text says the number of men was five thousand. If we add women and children, the numbers dramatically increase. Most estimates are that by the time of Act 4, the Christian church numbered fifteen to twenty thousand. In just a few short weeks, the church membership exploded. The record of this amazing phenomenon continues in Acts 6:7, "*Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith*" (p. 101).

As the disciples preached under the influence of the Holy Spirit, the risen Christ touched the hearts of many Jewish religious leaders. Many of them, along with their congregations, accepted this new faith. The impact of the New Testament church continued to increase in remarkable ways.

One Roman writer put it this way: "*You are everywhere. You are in our armies, you are in our navies, our senate and market places,*" (p. 101) referring to the widespread reach of Christianity.

Pliny the Younger, governor of the Roman province of Bithynia on the north coast of modern Turkey,

wrote to Emperor Trajan around A.D. 110. Pliny's statement is significant because it was written nearly eighty years after the Crucifixion. Pliny described the official trials he was conducting to find and execute Christians. He stated, "Many of every age, of every social class, even of both sexes, are being called to trial and will be called. Nor cities alone, but villages in even rural areas have been invaded by the infection of this superstition [Christianity]" (Epistulae 10.96.gjr) p. 102.

This quote from Pliny shows us that in remote province, Christianity had invaded every level of society in a few generations. Ninety years later, around A.D. 200, Tertullian, a Roman lawyer turned Christian, wrote a defiant letter to the Roman magistrates defending Christianity. He boasted that "nearly all the citizens of the cities are Christians" (Apologeticus 37.8, gir) p. 102. The story of the book of Acts is the story of remarkable growth of the Christian church in a very short period of time.

Discussion Question: What thoughts go through your mind when you read the statements by *Pliny the Younger*? Compare that to statements being said against religion today.

Homework: Read pp. 102-111, and complete the personal application on page 112.

Devotional #6 "Revival & a Finished Work" pp. 113-120

The figures are staggering. The task seems overwhelming. The mission before us appears, to all human reasoning, impossible. The world's population reached seven billion by the year 2012. Now, in 2015, we are up to 7.3 billion people. There are over a billion people in both China and India. The continent of Africa has just topped the one billion mark. Of more than six billion people on the planet, only approximately 30 percent, or 2.2 billion, are Christian (based on 2010 data).

There are 1.5 billion Muslims, 1.1 billion secular agnostics and atheists, 900 million Hindus, and 375 million Buddhists, along with hundreds of other religious groups. Although the Seventh-day Adventist Church is one of the fastest growing Christian denominations, baptizing about one million people each year, with 16.3 million members, we are approximately only 1 percent of all Christians and only a fraction of a percent of the world's population. This leads us to some thought-provoking questions.

- How will the work of God on earth ever be finished?
- Is it possible for the gospel in the context of the three angels' messages to circle the globe in a relatively short time?
- What will give us the breakthrough in the proclamation of the gospel that we long for?
- When will we see the fulfillment of Jesus words, "This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matthew 24:14) p. 114.

Here is the key: The mission of reaching lost people with the "everlasting gospel" is His mission. It is not ours. He invites us to cooperate with Him in finishing His work. God never asks us to do anything that he does not empower us to do. As we unite with Him in His mission of reaching a lost world, He promises to mightily pour out His Spirit to enable us to accomplish the seemingly impossible. There are three aspects of Jesus' promise that we will explore briefly. They are the all-encompassing nature of the promise, the all-embracing conditions of the promise, and the all-empowering results of the promise.

1. The all-encompassing nature of the promise. The story of the book of Acts is not the story of a few isolated individuals receiving the outpouring of the Holy Spirit here and there. It is the story of the church receiving the mighty outpouring of the Spirit.

The church sought the infilling of the Holy Spirit. The church prayed. The church opened its heart to the blessing of God. The church confessed. The church repented. The church committed itself to mission, and God answered from heaven. This fledgling church earnestly sought God in prayer. Acts describes the scene in this way: “*And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance*” (Acts 2:4) p. 116. Notice carefully that the text says, “*And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit*” (p. 116). Who were the “*all*” that were filled? Not simply the disciples—all of those in the upper room—the one hundred and twenty believers.

Peter quotes the fulfillment of Joel’s prophesy, he declares, “*And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants, I will pour out My Spirit in those days*” (Acts 2:17, 18) p. 116.

2. The all-encompassing conditions of the promise. There is one thing for certain: the outpouring of the Holy Spirit will not come without earnest, heartfelt intercession. Luke records that the church in Acts “*all continued with one accord in prayer*” (Acts 1:14) p. 118.

The reason God invites us to earnestly pray for the Holy Spirit is not that he is unprepared to give us His Spirit but that we are unprepared to receive it. It is not that God is not longing to give us the Holy Spirit. It is that we do not long to receive it as much as He longs to give it. It is not that God is slow to pour out His Spirit in its fullness. It is, rather, that we have been slow in receiving the fullness of the Holy Spirit’s power. It is not that God does not recognize our need of the Holy Spirit to finish His work. It is, rather, that we do not fully recognize our need.

Is it possible that, at times, we have substituted human plans, methods, and organizations, as important as they are, for the power of the Holy Spirit? Listen to this powerful statement from the pen of inspiration, “*Do not rest satisfied that in the ordinary course of the season, rain will fall. Ask for it...We must seek His favors with the whole heart if the showers of grace are to come to us*” (Review and Herald, March 2, 1897) p. 119.

3. Biblical conditions for revival. One of the biblical conditions of revival is heartfelt intercession. God grants the Holy Spirit to those who seek Him. Another essential element of revival is confession of all known sin. Ellen White makes it plain that “*those days of preparation were days of deep heart searching*” (The Acts of the Apostles, p. 37) p. 120. Their confessions mingled with tears. The disciples recognized that their pride and desire for the supremacy had limited what Jesus desired to do for them. They opened their hearts to the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit. They longed to reflect His loving character to others. Christ was everything to them. They now understood the meaning of His sacrifice on the cross more fully. They grasped the significance of salvation through His grace. Filled with His love, charmed by His

grace, and armed with His resurrection power, they were able to turn the world upside down through the infilling of His Holy Spirit.

In 1888, two young preachers, A.T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner, presented a series of messages at the Minneapolis, Minnesota, General Conference Session. As they presented the “*matchless charms of Christ*,” the reaction of the delegates was mixed, but ever so powerful (read more on page 120-121). What in the message of 1888 is so compelling, so life changing, so powerful? Simply put, it is this: Jesus Christ longs to save us more than we long to be saved. Jesus came to redeem us from both the penalty and power of sin. This message of His all-sufficient, saving grace is an urgent appeal to confession, repentance, and total dependence of Jesus. It is a call away from self-sufficiency, a dependence on human works or accomplishments. Let us close with the reminder that *God longs to pour out His Spirit on His church again. He longs to break our hearts with His love, transform us through His grace, and fill us with His power.* I can think of no greater Christmas present!

Discussion Question: Look back at the ‘thought-provoking questions’ in the introduction and discuss them with your group.

Homework: To finish the book, pp 120-126, and the personal application of what you can do to share God’s last-day message on pages 127-8.



Appendix C

The Bible And EG White On Small Groups

Biblical Foundation of Small Groups

Throughout the Bible, we see examples of care groups in various forms. In the Old Testament, we see Moses' struggles to be an effective leader to thousands. His father-in-law's wise advice in Exodus 18:21-22 led to the organization of groups with leaders appointed over each. In the New Testament, Jesus modeled the care group concept with His 12 disciples. In the IEL program, twelve is suggested as the ideal number of members in a care group based on ministry experts.

How did the early Church take care of or nurture new members? The answer can be found in Acts 2:41, 47; 4:4; 5:14; 6:7; and 12:24. From the beginning, the New Testament church had two essential types of meetings. Believers met daily in their homes and gathered together regularly at the temple. (Acts 5:42; 2:46-47)

This pattern of Christians meeting in homes for study, worship and prayer is seen frequently in scripture:

1. Peter upon being released from jail in Acts 12 goes to the house of Mary where “*many were gathered together and were praying*” (Acts 12:12)
2. Lydia hosted the disciples' meetings in her home (Acts 16:40)
3. A meeting in the **house** of Jason (Acts 17:5-6)
4. Paul taught from **house to house** (Acts 20:20)
5. Church services were held in the **house** of Priscilla and Aquila (Romans 16:5; 1 Corinthians 16:19)
6. The church that met in the **house** of Philemon (Philemon 2)

EG White on Small Groups

“The formation of small companies as a basis of Christian effort has been presented to me by One who cannot err. If there is a large number in the church, let the members be formed into small companies, to work not only for the church members, but for unbelievers. If in one place there are only two or three who know the truth, let them form themselves into a band of workers. Let them keep their bond of union unbroken, pressing together in love and unity, encouraging one another to advance, and gaining courage and strength from the assistance of the others. Let them labour in Christlike forbearance and patience, speaking no hasty words, using the talent of speech to build one another up in the most holy faith. Let them labour in Christlike love for those outside the fold, forgetting self in their endeavour to help others. As they work and pray in Christ's name, their numbers will increase, for the Saviour says: “If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 18:19 Testimonies Volume 7, p. 21, 22

“In the church there was a revival of the missionary spirit. An earnest desire to learn how to work for the Lord was shown. Small companies gathered for prayer and Bible study. All moved forward with harmonious action. Believers went to places where the people have no opportunity to hear the Word of God and gathered the children for Sabbath School. Efforts were made to help isolated families. Plans were laid for these families to meet with other families for Bible study. Thus the way was opened for the light to shine forth from the Word of God” *The Indiana Reporter*, 25 February 1903.

“Let small companies assemble in the evening, at noon, or in the early morning, to study the Bible. Let them have a season of prayer, that they may be strengthened, enlightened, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit . . . If you yourselves will open the door to receive it, a great blessing will come to you. Angels of God will be in your assembly. You will feed upon the leaves of the tree of life. What testimonies you may bear of the loving acquaintance made with your fellow-workers in these precious seasons when seeking the blessing of God. Let each tell his experience in simple words. This will bring more comfort and joy to the soul than all the pleasant instruments of music that could be brought into the churches. Christ will come into your hearts. It is by this means only that you can maintain your integrity” *Testimonies* Volume 7, p. 195.

“A Christian is a Christlike man, a Christlike woman, who is active in God’s service, who is present at the social meeting, whose presence will encourage others also. Religion does not consist in works, but religion works; it is not dormant” *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 935.

“We meet together to edify one another by an interchange of thoughts and feelings, and to gather strength, and light, and courage by becoming acquainted with one another’s hopes and aspirations; and by our earnest, heartfelt prayers, offered up in faith, we receive refreshment and vigour from the source of our strength . . . All who are pursuing the onward Christian course, would have, and will have, an experience that is living, that is new and interesting. A living experience is made up of daily trials, conflicts and temptations, strong efforts and victories, and great peace and joy gained through Jesus. A simple relation of such experiences gives light, strength and knowledge that will aid others in their advancement in the divine life” *Testimonies* Volume 2, p. 578, 579.

“Preach less, and educate more, by holding Bible readings, and by praying with families and little companies.” “To all who are working with Christ I would say, Wherever you can gain access to the people by the fireside, improve your opportunity. Take your Bible, and open before them its great truths. Your success will not depend so much upon your knowledge and accomplishments, as upon your ability to find your way to the heart. By being social and coming close to the people, you may turn the current of their thoughts more readily than by the most able discourse. The presentation of Christ in the family, by the fireside, and in small gatherings in private houses is often more successful in winning souls to Jesus than are sermons delivered in the open air, to the moving throng, or even in halls or churches” *Gospel Workers*, p. 193.

“God’s work is to be done in his way and his Spirit. In various places small companies are to consecrate themselves to God, body, soul, and spirit, and laying hold of the throne of God by faith they are to work zealously, keeping their souls in the love of God. The vital current of his love will make itself felt, and will be recognized as from heaven in the good works of his people. Those little companies who know

the truth, with one voice should bid their minister go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Each one should seek to do individual work for another. Not one who has tasted the goodness, the mercy, and the love of God, can be excused from working for the souls of others,” (“Followers of Christ will be Missionaries,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, 8 January, 1895.)

“Although the social meeting is a new thing, yet they are learning in the school of Christ and are overcoming fear and trembling. We keep before them the fact that the social meeting (similar to small group meetings) will be the best meeting in which they may be trained and educated to be witnesses for Christ” *Manuscript 32* 1894.

“But on such occasions as our annual camp meetings we must never lose sight of the opportunities afforded for teaching the believers how to do practical missionary work in the place where they may live. In many instances it would be well to set apart certain men to carry the burden of different lines of educational work at these meetings. Let some help the people to learn how to give Bible readings and to conduct cottage meetings. Let others bear the burden of teaching the people how to practice the principles of health and temperance, and how to give treatments to the sick. Still others may labour in the interest of our periodical and book work,” *Testimonies for the Church* Volume 9, p. 82, 83.

THE SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION FOR HOMES OF HOPE & HEALTH

Biblical Support: Matt. 24: 38 -39, II Tim. 3: 1 and 2, Gen. 12: 3; 28: 14, Acts 3: 25

Many homes are without hope or peace and need Jesus. The goal is to help our neighbors and friends to start or continue to grow in a powerful spiritual way during these difficult times when in many countries the economy is uncertain, many are unemployed and also there are so many fractured relationships and gigantic health issues. When there are uncertainties in life, individuals are more open to learning new things and are drawn towards a spiritual renewal. The demography of heaven could be changed because of this ministry for millions. We want salvation for those who are in our neighborhood and for our friends and family. The health message for many is the first step towards a new spiritual walk with God. It is the “entering wedge.” Spirituality and a close relationship with God also contribute to our personal health.

Personal relationship with God is vital

Prayer cover and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit are vital before, during and after the *Homes of Hope & Health* series. Without the aid of the Holy Spirit this ministry cannot be successfully carried out.

This ministry will not be as effective as it should be without daily personal prayer. Make it a priority to daily study the Bible, and read devotional Spirit of Prophecy books on health and family as God guides you. Pray fervently and plead with God to help you in this ministry for Him. Ask for the Holy Spirit to baptize you, fill you to the fullest and give you wisdom, protection and help to do this most important work. And God will!

Spirituality and Health

Ellen White and scientific research indicate that personal spirituality contributes to healthful living and that asking for forgiveness has healing power.

“The religion of the Bible is not detrimental to the health of either body or mind. The influence of the Spirit of God is the very best medicine for disease. Heaven is all health; and the more deeply heavenly influences are realized the more sure will be the recovery of the believing invalid. The true principles of Christianity open before all a source of inestimable happiness.” *Counsels on Health*, p. 28

Small groups are important for sharing the Gospel

Jesus ministered to a small group of 12 and a larger group of 70. In spite of personal attention and the small group of 12 it took some time for the teachings to be internalized and right actions to become a part of their lifestyle. Jesus also had three very close followers—a triad group—Peter, James, and John as a smaller intimate group of confidant friends. Then Jesus had three special friends whom He ministered to and were like family. They were his “at home” comfortable group of friends—Martha, Mary and Lazarus.

This too may happen as friendships are made in the *Homes of Hope & Health* small group ministry. Research is telling us that with the increase of electronics people are having less real close friends and many people are lonely. Good friends to fellowship with are needed not only for companionship now but when facing crisis—either theirs or yours.

In Bible times there were small groups who met with each other for fellowship and prayer. After Peter was jailed, an angel let him out. Peter found his way to a home of friends. They had gathered in their small group to pray for Peter and were so busy praying that when Peter knocked at the gate that they didn’t even recognize that it truly was Peter that was awaiting entrance.

On a different occasion the Bible says that the apostles “went back to preaching and teaching the people about Jesus, both in the Temple and in their homes, sharing with them the good news that [Jesus] was the Messiah” Acts 5:42 Clear Word. The apostles met with small groups in the home.

Ellen White writes, “The presentation of Christ in the family, by the fireside, and in small gatherings in private houses, is often more successful in winning souls to Jesus than are sermons delivered in the open air, to the moving throng, or even in halls or churches” --*Gospel Workers*, p. 193. (1915) {Ev 587.2}.



Appendix D

Training Guide for Weekend Seminar

(Beginning Friday Vespers to Saturday Afternoon)

Friday - Vespers

I. Foundation Topics (20 minutes; from Chapter 1 & 2 of IEL Manual)

- a. Church Initiatives – Reach the World, TMI
- b. Why Small Groups Ministry -- Biblical, SOP, and Research Foundations
- c. Why WIN! Wellness – Family & Health Evangelism by John & Millie Youngberg (see Appendix); including a sample presentation (Level 1 “I do it” [competence].)

II. Workshop: Care Group Experience # 1 (10 minutes)

- a. Members form Care Groups of 5- 7 persons
 - i. Message: Members choose their groups
 - ii. Insert: Short Principles of Successful CG groups
- b. CGs choose Group Name, Theme Songs (Explain Choice)
- c. Group Meeting: Assignment for workshop on Saturday PM, assign each member to discuss 2-3 slides of the *WIN! Wellness* chapter on “Hope” or “Forgiveness”.

Sabbath School

III. More Foundation Topics

- a. Development of Care Group Ministry in SSD
- b. Defining the SSD IEL Care Group/CG Experience Components

IV. Success Stories: Testimonies

- a. Churches that adopted Care Group ministry;
- b. Members blessed by CG ministry
- c. Conversions through CG

VI. Workshop: Care Group Experience # 2 (SS Lesson Time)

- a. WIN! Wellness lecture by the speaker (15 min) – (Level II – “I do it and you are with me” [demonstration]).
- b. Care Group Discussion (15 min) based on questions raised by speaker

VII. Personal Ministries Time – Pastor or Elder reveal Church IEL plan; the IEL Committee

VIII. Divine Service: Evangelism or Revival Sermon (See Appendix A)

Sabbath Afternoon

IX. Workshop: Care Group Experience # 3:

- a. Groups choose leader; present Group Name (include brief explanation why); sing part of



TRAINING STRATEGIES TO EMPOWER CG LEADERS

AN EFFECTIVE TRAINING SEMINAR
MUST INCLUDE THESE LEARNING
OPPORTUNITIES:

- I. I do it. (Trainer shows competence on subject.)
- II. I do it and you are with me. (Trainer demonstrates skill; Trainees observe him do it.)
- III. You do it and I am with you. (Trainer coaches Trainee.)
- IV. You do it (Trainee does it).
- V. You do it and someone is with you (Trainee does it to other trainees.)

Cycle of training continues



Theme Song. Note: Give tips on choosing name, theme song: introduce sample names, recommended theme songs (10 minutes)

b. CG Leader leads as CG experience meeting; “coaches” sit in the meeting.

Topic: “Thankful Time.”

Ask members: “What is one meaningful/inspiring experience that happened lately, that you want to praise God for, and that is worth sharing?” (Giving a “testimony” might be too serious; member might be discouraged to share.) (5 minutes) (Level III – “You do it and I am with you” [coaching]).

Relational learning: WIN! short presentations by CG leaders/members with discussion questions. (Level IV: “You do it” [empowerment]).

VI. Topic: The Care Group Leader (10 minutes)

(Emphasis: Leading the Group in Discussions)

VII. Workshop: Care Group Experience # 4 (5 minutes)

- a. Facilitating discussion
- b. Role play problem situations

VIII. Workshop: Care Group Experience # 5 (8 minutes)

- a. Discuss different types of prayer
- b. The CG at prayer
 - i. Prayer requests from Care Group members
 - ii. Choose prayer format (ACTS, conversation prayer)
- c. The CG at meeting for ministry or evangelism: outreach project

IX. Q & A

X. Commitment Program

- a. Opening Song: “Here Am I, Lord Send Me”; “Here I am, Lord” (I, the Lord, of sea and sky...) (Google and YouTube).
- b. Challenge: The IEL VISION - Every Church Engaged; Every Believer Renewed
- c. Song before prayer: “Lord, Lead a Soul Upon My Heart”; with TMI Card filled up
- d. Commitment Prayer

Theme Songs:

- Here Am I, Lord (I, the Lord of Sea and Sky)
- Each One, Reach One
- Lord, Lead a Soul Upon My Heart
- Pass It On
- Carry Your Candle

Church in Mission Songs: *

- Bringing in the Sheaves - CH # 369
- Far and Near the Fields are Teeming - CH # 358
- Hark! the Voice of Jesus Calling CH # 359
- Hark! Tis the Shepherd’s Voice I Hear CH # 361
- Where are the Reapers CH # 366
- Rescue the Perishing CH # 367
- Watchman Blow the Gospel Trumpet CH # 368
- Work for the Night is Coming CH # 375

* To be sung every Sabbath School Closing Song



Appendix E

Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches

Does being a healthy church mean that it is “successful,” growing by leaps and bounds? Maybe...

Is a healthy church simply a place where people come to meet God and neighbor, as small as 2 or 3 people gathered together? Perhaps...

What then are some of the key elements that will help ensure a congregation’s optimum health?

Christian Schwarz studied 1000 congregations in terms of both quantity and quality standards and identified 8 essential elements in healthy churches. He recognized that God’s church will grow naturally if it’s functioning in a healthy manner. The job of the church staff and vestries then, is to be aware of the important areas, which if not functioning well, will tend to block healthy church development.

Essential Quality Characteristics for Churches:

- 1. Empowering leadership.** Leaders empower others for ministry. Leaders let go of responsibility and let God’s energy be seen in other members. Pastors need to be both goal and relationship oriented.
- 2. Gift-oriented ministry.** People are able to recognize and use their God-given talents and Spiritual gifts for ministry both inside the church and in the local community.
- 3. Passionate spirituality.** Christians in these congregations are “on fire” (Spirit filled). They have a genuine relationship with God. People’s lives are committed to their faith. They are enthusiastic and joyful.
- 4. Functional structures.** The structure in a healthy church promotes growth rather than hinders it. This book suggests that department heads may work best, recommending that a co-leader (or a person in training) also be an automatic part of the structure. The right person for each job is one who has the appropriate Spiritual gift.
- 5. Inspiring worship service.** Spirit-filled worship with the people thoroughly involved in the services.
- 6. Holistic small groups.** Groups are to go beyond study and discussion to applying God’s message to daily life. Small groups are the place where Christianity can really be practiced. Groups multiply by having the co-leaders form two separate groups after a time. Each new group invites new participants and selects an additional co-leader.
- 7. Need-oriented evangelism.** The pastor knows which 10% of the congregation have the gift of evangelism and encourage them to make use of it. She/he also encourages all members to individually share Christ with those they do know. Evangelism efforts should be focused on the person’s questions and needs. Congregation wide efforts would take the energy of the people’s interests and the community’s needs and redirect them to God’s ways.
- 8. Loving relationships.** This is the experience of Christian love, not just talking about it. Examples include spending time together, compliments, being aware of personal problems, and laughter.

Based on Christian A. Schwarz’s book: *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches*, 4th ed. St. Charles, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2000. Nancy McLaughlin, D.Min.



Appendix F

Ministry Ideas: Projects Of Kindness

by Pastor Robert Costa

Growing churches have a variety of programs that meet the needs of different groups of people. Just like Jesus, who met the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual needs, His people, full of love, do the same. Below are some practical examples of projects of kindness. Almost every profession could be turned into a missionary project on vacation, selected days of the year, or week-ends.

1. Single mom's free oil change. Most single moms have car problems regularly.
2. Neighborhood windshield washing. Going door to door washing windshields in driveways.
3. Mother's Day roses/flower giveaways. Set up outside grocery stores.
4. Carry a meal to a sick or an elderly person.
5. Empty garbage can returned from street. Bring cans back to people's houses garage.
6. Free bottled water in a busy street, park, square, mall, bus or train station, or business district. Add a label with a promise from God
7. Go on an errand for a neighbor.
8. Kitchen clean up. Humbling but powerful service, especially for older people.
9. Be sympathetic and help neighbors during bereavement.
10. Assist handicapped individuals.
11. Invite neighbors to your home for a social gathering.
12. Bring a souvenir from a trip to your neighbor.
13. Outdoor window washing. Wash first floor windows.
14. Yard clean up. Look for messy yards.
15. Invite neighbors and relatives to dinner.
16. Share a small gift with those who are sick.
17. Share information that may be helpful.
18. Invite friends and neighbors to church services and special church events.
19. Offer to watch your neighbor's house when they are away.
20. Help sponsor a child to a youth camp or other special event.
21. Christmas gift wrap. Everyone needs their Christmas gifts wrapped. Do it at the mall for free.
22. Juice giveaway. On a hot day, nothing refresh like a cold drink in Jesus' name.
23. Free hot chocolate. Set up tables at store exits, bus/train stations, or sporting events and serve hot chocolate on cold days.
24. Water stations at marathons and running events.
25. Offer to repair a broken object if you are able to do it.
26. Give neighbors refreshments on the day they are moving.
27. Windshield washing. Hit every car in the lot at stores and shopping centers. Leave a note: "While you were away from your car, people from the Manila SDA Church washed your windshield".
28. Language classes for immigrants.
29. Balloon giveaway. Go to a park and give balloons and cards to children with parents.
30. Free community dinner. Throw a party for a neighborhood or for children.
31. Shoe shining service. Free shoe shining at stores, malls, other public places.
32. Surprise an out of town student with a care package.
33. Remember birthdays and anniversaries of neighbors and relatives.
34. Give an appropriate book or booklet to a bereaved family.
35. Conduct a neighborhood children's story hour
36. Blood pressure screening. Check people blood pressure at public places.
37. Invite neighbors to a family outing.
38. Greeting cards to sick and shut-ins.
39. Polaroid pictures. Find lonely people or couples at parks or malls and "shoot" them, and give them the picture. Add a sticker with a Bible promise.
40. Read the Bible, sing and pray with the sick and elderly.
41. House/apartment repair. Fix broken things. Limit repairs to your capabilities.
42. Offer to keep children or keep house during a funeral.
43. Be especially kind to the lonely.
44. Write or send literature to those in jail or prison.
45. Carry "Free Hug" signs with a group, and offer free hugs in a public street or city park or square.
46. Carry "Free Prayer" signs at highways rest areas. Pray and distribute literature.
47. Free summer car wash. Signs, "Free car wash — No kidding"
48. Free full breakfast once a month at church or Community Services Center to Police personnel, and free car wash while they eat.
49. Free haircut.
50. Operation Balm. With the official permit from the Cemetery, leave a flower with a card and a message of hope in every grave early in the morning on "All Saints Day".



Appendix G

Ice-Breaker Ideas for Building Your Group Relationally

Getting to Know You—Have everyone in the group fill out a paper with these questions on it: What is your favorite food, animal, TV show, hobby, color, place you've been on vacation, etc. Make sure names are on the papers and have them handed in to the leader. The leader then reads each paper to the entire group. The group members jot down who they think each paper belongs to. Once all have completed guessing, the leader reveals who's who. The one who guessed the most right wins.

Show and Tell—Have group members bring something for show and tell that has some spiritual significance to them... (perhaps a key holder which reminds them to think about Christ, or an object that represents a significant decision or time of spiritual growth, or a Bible or book given to them by a Christian friend, etc.).

Questions in a Hat—Make a list of questions. Cut them into individual questions and put them in a hat. Pass the hat and have people pick out a question. They can answer it or give it to another person in the group. Another way to do it is pass out a sheet with all the questions and pick corresponding numbers out of the hat. You could also have the option of referring that question to another group member. Give people the opportunity to pass if they truly do not want to address their question.

Timeline—Have group members draw a timeline of their life, recounting five major life events. Have each person share his or her timeline.

Three key material possessions—Explain to the group that they have just discovered a major fire in their home. Assuming that they have been able to get their family out safely, what three material possessions would they take with them from their burning home. Have them explain what and why.

Getting to Know You—Questions

PERSONAL

- What day of your life would you most like to re-live and why?
- In what area of your life would you like greater peace and why?
- What do you find yourself praying about recently?
- What is the most important decision facing you in the near future?

PARENTS AND SIBLINGS

- Where were you born?
- Where were you raised?
- How many brothers and sisters do you have?
- Tell a story from your childhood or adolescence that gives insight into your family.

SPOUSE AND CHILDREN

- How did you meet your spouse?
- How does your spouse "complete" you?
- How many children, if any, do you have and what are their names and ages?
- When your children are grown, what would make you think you were successful in raising them?
- If your spouse and children could write your epitaph, what would you want it to say?



- What creative things have you done to cultivate romance in your marriage?
- What creative ways have you created memories with your children?
- What dreams do you have for your future as a couple or as a family?

VOCATION AND EDUCATION

- Where did you go to school?
- What did you study or what do you now wish you had studied?
- If you could do anything but what you do now, what would it be?

HOBBIES AND INTERESTS

- What do you enjoy doing with your spare time?
- If rich Uncle Johnny died and left you \$50,000 that you had to spend and you had one month off, what would you do with the money and time?
- What have you never done that you wish you could do?

GOD AND CHURCH

- In what church/denomination, if any, were you raised?
- What were you taught about God as a child?
- What has been your most significant encounter with God?
- Describe the state of your relationship with God now.
- Tell us how you experienced conversion?
- What has helped you grow in your walk with God?
- Who has been the most significant influence in your relationship with God, and why?
- What would you like your relationship with God to be five years from now?
- When you die and stand before God, what would you like for his first words to you to be?
- How are you serving in the church? Is there another ministry in which you would like to be involved?

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

- What area of growth in your (or your spouse's) character (in the last 3-6 months) have you been most encourage about?
- How have you seen the Lord at work through you in the past several weeks?
- What things are you most thankful for in your (church, spouse, friends, workplace, family)?
- What have you been giving thanks for as you have walked with God this week?

Getting to Know You—Group Ideas

- Start the group off by doing an activity together that will help break the ice. Having dinner together is always an easy way to start. Begin by telling your stories. You don't have to get to everyone the first week. You may want to ask two or three people to share about their lives. As the leader, you can set the tone and an example by sharing first.
- Have group members bring a few photos from their childhood and introduce us to their family members.
- Sit together at church.
- Ride together to special church events like conferences or retreats.
- Establish ways the group can be together outside of a meeting, like a supper (or dessert) club.
- Couples: Have group members bring photos of their weddings and tell the story of their courtship and engagement.
- Thanksgiving Dinner: Prepare a Thanksgiving dinner and then play a game after dinner.
- Semi-formal Dinner: The guys make an elegant dinner for the ladies. Then they honor each woman individually with each receiving flowers.
- Take a retreat together (or just as men or just as women) to seek God together.
- Spend an evening playing board games together.
- Small group Cook-Outs: Have cook-outs at different homes or parks. Play group games or just hang out and fellowship.
- Christmas Party: Exchange silly or old gifts, play games, sing carols, and worship.
- Go camping together.
- Go out for breakfast as a group, or as men or as women.
- Plan times to have the group together when their children are able to participate in the activities.
- Take a group photo and make sure everyone has a copy for their refrigerator.

- MODIFIED FROM EQUIPPED- SMALL GROUP LEADERSHIP TRAINING RESOURCE



Appendix H

Care Group Evaluation Form

GROUP NAME _____ CHURCH _____

CONFERENCE _____ DATE _____

PLEASE TAKE SOME TIME TO EVALUATE YOUR CARE GROUP EXPERIENCE. THE INTENT IS TO HIGHLIGHT THE STRENGTHS, AND ASSESS AND IMPROVE ON THE WEAKNESSES.

MY CARE GROUP SPENDS WELL SPENT TIME IN THE FOLLOWING:	YES	SOMETIMES	NO	COMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS
• Prayer				
• Christ-centered Study				
• Application to life learning				
• Fellowship				
• Worship (if applicable)				
• Ministry (service for church/group members)				
• Evangelism (outreach)				
• Socials				
MY LEADER DOES THESE:	YES	SOMETIMES	NO	COMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS
• Comes to the meetings prepared.				
• Has genuine concern for us.				
• Makes follow up when we are absent.				
• Involves everyone in the discussion.				
• Leads us in doing practical service to fellow CG members.				
• Listens well.				
• Encourages us to lead others to Jesus.				
• Manages difficult situations.				
MY PLANS AS CARE GROUP MEMBER:	YES	SOMETIMES	NO	COMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS
• Remain in the same group.				
• Try a new group.				
• Invite a friend(s) to the group				
• Spend more time in personal prayer and Bible study. .				
YOUR HOST DOES THE FOLLOWING:	YES	SOMETIMES	NO	COMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS
• Gives us the friendly welcome.				
• Prepares a comfortable venue.				
• Facilitates preparation of good refreshments.				
MY CHURCH SUPPORTS CARE GROUPS BY:	YES	SOMETIMES	NO	COMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS
• Involving our group in Church services.				
• Giving Care Groups time to meet.				
• Training and providing resources.				
• Providing funds.				

MY SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE MEETINGS: _____

CARE GROUP MEMBER'S NAME: _____ (NAME MAY BE WITHHELD)



Appendix I

Example Of A Relational Group Covenant

Our small group gives us the opportunity to develop the relationships and fellowship necessary within the Body of Christ. Genuine biblical fellowship is possible, with God's help, through our individual and mutual commitment. To assist us as group members in achieving the goals of identification, love, caring, and accountability to God, and to guide us in our mutual commitment to one another as brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, we agree to abide by the following covenants:

1. **THE COVENANT OF AFFIRMATION:** I pledge to accept you. I may not agree with your ideas or actions, but I will attempt to do all I can to express God's affirming love. I need you; we need each other.

2. **THE COVENANT OF COMMITMENT:** My resources - time, energy, insight, possessions - are at your disposal if you need them. I also pledge to meet with this group on a regular basis.

3. **THE COVENANT OF PRAYER:** I promise to pray regularly for the members of the group.

4. **THE COVENANT OF HONESTY:** I agree to strive to become a more open and honest person, to share my true opinions, feelings, struggles, joys, and hurts as well as I am able.

5. **THE COVENANT OF ACCOUNTABILITY:** I pledge to accept and give counsel if necessary for the growth of the group or individual members of it, realizing that it is in "speaking the truth in love, we are able grow up in all aspects unto Him, who is the head" (Ephesians 4:15). I also recognize that as a group we are accountable to the congregation of the church for what we do or fail to do.

6. **THE COVENANT OF SENSITIVITY:** Just as I want you to know and understand me, I pledge my sensitivity to you and your needs to the best of my ability. I want to hear you, see your point of view, and understand your feelings.

7. **THE COVENANT OF CONFIDENTIALITY:** I promise never to divulge anything shared within this group in confidence outside this group. I vow not to ask you to share things about yourself that you would prefer to keep undisclosed.

In full acceptance to these covenants, I affix my name to this document in recognition of my commitment to God and the members of this group. I shall keep this document as a reminder of this voluntary covenant I have entered into on this date.

Signature

Date



Appendix J

Proposed Format For Care Group Harvest/Celebration

Morning Service

- Parade or Seating of Care Groups – with group banner and wearing their uniform
- Praise Hymns
- Welcome Remarks
- Introduction of Care Groups
 - Groups go up the stage and sing their Theme Song (If not too many)
 - Gives short report of the highlights in their Care Group life
- Testimonies of Care Group Converts
- Divine Service – Review of Fundamental Beliefs/Reaping Message
- Altar Call
- Baptism

Noon Break

Afternoon Service

- More Testimonies
- Altar Call
- Commitment Service
- Baptism

Appendix K
Theme Songs

Winners' Circle

Score

(anonymous)

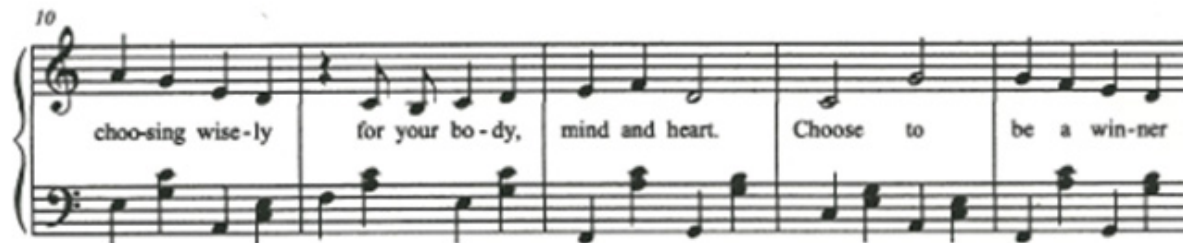
Arr:
E.S. Rojas



Step in - to the win - ners' cir - cle Make good choi - ces that will show.



Choose to be a win - ner and soon ev - ry - one will know. You are



choo - sing wise - ly for your bo - dy, mind and heart. Choose to be a win - ner



1. You're off to a great start. 2. a great start.

Lord, Lay Some Soul upon My Heart

Dr. LEON TUCKER

IRA D. SANKEY

The musical score is written in G major and 4/4 time. It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are: "Lord, lay some soul up - on my heart, And love that soul through me; And may I glad - ly do my part To win that soul for Thee." The score includes various chords such as D, A13, A7, G, G#0, Bm7, A7/C#, D/A, Bm, Gm7/B, G/A, and A13. A box at the end of the third system contains the instruction "Medley - D.S. al Fine" and "D Fine".

Here I Am, Lord

Verses



1. I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my
2. I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my
3. I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the



peo - ple cry. All who dwell in dark and sin
peo - ple's pain. I have wept for love of them.
poor and lame. I will set a feast for them.



My hand will save. I who made the
They turn a - way. I will break their
My hand will save. Fin - est bread I



stars of night, I will make their dark - ness bright.
hearts of stone, Give them hearts for love a - lone.
will pro - vide Till their hearts be sat - is - fied.



Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?

Refrain



Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you



call - ing in the night. I will go, Lord, if you



lead me. I will hold your peo - ple in my heart.

Text: Isaiah 6; Das Schiffe, 8.1947
Tune: Das Schiffe, 8.1947; arr. by Michael Pope, SE, and John Weisrock
© 1981, OCP Publications



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