

## **32 Ideas to Raise the Level of Our Small Group Ministry**

### **Deepening Our Friendships/Outreach to New Friends**

1. We have a calendar with monthly fellowships (cookout, canoe trip, picnic, game night, etc.)
2. There are 3 or 4 minutes every Sunday for people to have a conversation with others.
3. First-time guests are welcomed and briefly introduced to the class.
4. The next class fellowship date, time and place is announced every Sunday in class.
5. At least one person or one couple is looking for guests and sits beside them in class.
6. At least one friendly person is going to walk with every guest and sit with them in worship.
7. We surveyed the hobbies of class members and posted it or gave the list to the class.

### **Communications In and About Our Small Group Ministry**

8. The teacher/church office have an attendance chart that shows 1 year of attendance for each person in the class.
9. We have built an email, text and phone list for the regular attenders and the prospects and we use it to make contact every week with everyone about what happened and what is coming up next (and to read the Bible verses and pick out the ones that stood out to them.)
10. All prospects from worship, fellowships, website, and Facebook are automatically added to our prospect list for Sunday School.
11. We ask every prospect we meet if they would like to get email about parties coming up.
12. There is a table set up every Sunday outside the worship building to tell people about small groups and ask if they want to be on the email list. Someone will walk with them to a class.
13. There is small group contact information in the worship bulletin and church newsletter.
14. Our website and Facebook page gives news and updates about small groups.
15. The pastor talks about his own small group and the church's groups ministry in sermons.
16. Teachers are introduced and prayed for in the service and sometimes give testimonies.

### **Developing A Culture of Serving**

17. We calendar some service projects for our class to do together each year.
  - Service projects can be both inside (VBS) and outside the church (raking leaves)
18. A bulletin board & occasional testimonies highlight and celebrate what members do to serve in the community. (Tutoring, Boy Scouts, coach a team, Red Cross, disaster relief, etc.)

19. The next service project date, time and place is announced every month in our class.

### **Training More Leaders/Teachers**

20. We have selected 3 or more discussion group leaders and given them guidelines/training.

21. Every class has at least two lead teachers who rotate, and several discussion group leaders.

22. We know the next class we want to start and are praying for the right person to lead it.

### **Making Disciples/Teaching**

23. Our large group sits in a circle if possible. Our classroom is clean and clutter-free. We have empty chairs to accommodate 5 or 10 new guests. Our classroom is large enough so that our discussion groups have enough room to spread out.

24. We have learned to make a handout for Sunday that emphasizes a different way to learn.

25. The teacher (for today) is ready with a 5 or 10 minute introduction to what we will be studying today. He gives a biblical background for the verses and the importance for today.

26. The class members were reminded during the week what verses to read before they came to class today and asked to underline two of their favorite verses and be ready to tell why they liked them. Also, if they have a question about what they read, they are ready to ask it.

27. After the introduction, the class breaks up into small discussion groups of 3 to 6 people.

- Each group is led by a trained leader who facilitates and encourages discussion.
- The first thing we do is let people share what they read, liked and had questions about.

28. The teacher has given out a handout that has the scripture being studied and 5 to 10 discussion questions that are about the verses being studied.

- Some questions come from the quarterly/literature, some are written by the teacher

29. The discussion group leaders lead their small group through the 5-10 questions, encouraging everyone to speak, being patient to wait for answers, & asking follow-up questions. The discussion leader to careful to facilitate and not dominate discussion.

### **Prayer**

30. Ten minutes before class ends, we stop discussing (even if we didn't finish the questions), take prayer requests and pray for the 3-6 people in their small group.

### **Evangelism & Evangelism Training**

31. About once a month, a class member will volunteer to share their testimony in class. (They have 3-5 minutes and have a guideline like Before/How/After & close with a favorite verse.)

32. We have a class goal to memorize 5 or 8 verses on salvation this coming year. Every week or two we take a minute or so in class for members to pair off and either read or say the verses by memory. (Make a sheet of paper with the verses on it to help them practice.)