

What is Small Group Ministry?

We come for spiritual growth and personal connection. It always a challenge to know one another and to make a deeper connection with each other. Small Group Ministry (SGM) helps us build stronger relationships and strengthen the fabric of our congregation.

In groups of six to ten people, we meet regularly to explore our individual stories of faith and spiritual topics of interest. Each group follows a format that begins with a chalice lighting and an uplifting reading followed by personal check-in time. The group then discusses a topic that encourages us to relate our personal experience and to grow spiritually. The discussion is followed by a time for feedback and a closing reading.

This year the topics include subjects ranging from our Unitarian Universalist faith, to human nature, from sin to forgiveness. There will be time to share your life story and to meet others at a deeper level.

At the second meeting of the year, members are asked to make a covenant and agree to abide by it for the coming year. Covenants deal with meeting format, how members treat each other, and how to welcome newcomers. The group also agrees to engage in acts of service of the group's choosing within and outside Mission Peak. A sample covenant is on the other side of this brochure.

Groups are led by leaders who are trained by and meet regularly with the minister.

You can join a group at any time during the year, whether you are a member or friend of Mission Peak. Contact either Doug Rodgers or a group leader directly.



A New Year of SGM Programs

Our Small Group Ministry program year begins in February and runs through mid-November. Each group leader has a book of topics to be used for each meeting, with some allowance for group preference.

If the group grows beyond 10 people, the assistant leader will be asked to form a new group. In December, we will evaluate the year and prepare to renew the program in February the following year.

Meetings – When? Where? How Long?

Meetings are held at the leader's home or a member's home, or the Church office, or may rotate among several members' homes. To ease the burden on hosts, refreshments are not provided.

You need not be able to host a meeting to join a group. Groups meet twice a month. Meetings last two hours.



How to Sign Up

You can fill out the registration below. More copies of this brochure are available on the Welcome Table or at www.mpuuc.org.

Small Group Ministry Registration

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Check the group times that work for you:

___ 1st and 3rd Sun. evenings, 7-9 in the church office

___ 1st and 3rd Mon. evenings, 7-9 at Michealle Havenhill's home (childcare is provided upon request)

List other times that work (in case we add more groups)

___ I have allergies to pets or _____

Please give the completed form to Doug Rodgers.

Sample Covenant Agreement

We commit to attend each meeting. If we're unable to attend we will let the group leader know in advance.

We agree to always have one empty chair in our circle as a reminder that our group is open to others who need what we have found.

Although we are not expecting or promising confidentiality within this group, we agree that when we speak about what is said here we will be respectful of our fellow group members and their interests.

Each year we will commit as a group to at least one project of service to the congregation and one project of service to the community.

Within Our Meetings

We understand that we are here to listen deeply and agree to be present with open hearts and open minds.

We agree to refrain from commenting on what people say during check-in until everyone has had the chance to check-in.

We covenant to recognize and honor both the equitable sharing of time for verbal reflection and the right to "pass" when one wishes to be silent.

We covenant to speak in this group from our own experiences and resist the temptation to advise, lecture or preach.

We covenant to empower the group leader (and assistant leader) to remind us or call us back to these covenants of mutual respect and considerate behavior.

What people say about Small Group Ministry:

"It helps me build personal relationships."

"I feel more connected to my church community."

"This is the spiritual development group I've been looking for."

"This is a chance to talk with others about what is of greatest value in life."

"When a small group of Unitarian Universalists meets together regularly with a leader and a format that encourages listening and sharing of feelings and ideas, they will deepen their commitment to each other, to their church, and to Unitarian Universalism; they will be more likely to become effective workers for change in their larger communities; and they will get more from being part of their church than they ever have before." (Robert Hill, *The Complete Guide to Small Group Ministry: Saving the World Ten At a Time*, p. 95)



***Building Connections
Creating Community***

**Small Group Ministry
at
Mission Peak
UU Congregation**

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February 2010