

What are Small Groups at Gateway?

Small Groups are just that: small groups of people that meet regularly for Christ centered fellowship. Many of these groups function also as Bible studies and community service groups.

Each group is led by a “lay pastor” who is responsible for the group and the people in it. Gateway Small Groups are intended to go beyond simply studying the Bible. They also focus on community involvement, friendship, discipleship, mutual support, and outreach. The lay pastor is the front line of pastoral care at Gateway. Many times, before any staff member even knows about it, our lay pastors are aware of and meeting the needs of group members.

Many of the groups meet in the homes of church members throughout East County. Some groups meet on the church campus, and still others might meet at a local coffee shop, or restaurant. Some of our groups are tailored for specific age groups or stations in life, but most are open to all who would come.

Please take a moment to view a list of all the groups that are functioning at this time. Remember to check back once in a while as well, because things are always changing. If you would like to visit one of the groups, just give a call to the contact person to confirm the time and get directions. That it! It’s easy to get involved and it will enrich your life.

You may also want to check out “**The Biblical Basis for Small Groups**” (*below*). In this section you will discover both Theological and Sociological evidence for the benefits of small groups.

Lastly, if you have further questions, or are interested in becoming a lay pastor and leading your own small group you can contact the Gateway Church Office for more information. We can be reached at 619-440-1136 or by e-mail to info@gatewaychurchonline.com

The Basis for Small Groups

There is strong evidence, both theological and sociological, for churches and individuals to embrace small group ministries. The leadership at Gateway Church is committed to small groups as a way of life for its membership and we want you to understand why.

Theological Evidence

The Bible shows us a God who embraces community. First with Adam (Gen. 1:26) then with the people of Israel (Deut. 6:4) and finally in the Godhead itself (John 1:1-3). Knowing that we are made in the image of God, and that God himself lives and works in community, it is logical to assume that we will flourish when we are in community with God and each other.

Jesus and the disciples operated as the first Christian small group! Christ came to provide

community and live with us (Matt. 1:23). Then he called together a small group of men to be his disciples and to live and walk with Him (Mark 3:7-10, 13-14) Jesus was aware of the needs of the masses, but He chose to minister to the twelve. By walking with and training the few, he was ultimately able to touch many.

Sociological Evidence.

You are created in the image of God, and just as God seeks after a relationship with you, you in turn have been created to crave relationships with him and with other believers!

God wants people to seek a relationship with Him. Acts 17:24-27.

God wants us to have relationships with others. Gen. 2:18.

God intervenes when we can't communicate. Romans 8:26-27.

We are also blessed when we function in community.

Strength for the storms of life. Ecclesiastes 4:9-10.

Wisdom for making good decisions. Proverbs 15:22.

Spiritual health. Proverbs 27:17

Strength, reliability, and assurance. Proverbs 18:24.

As churches grow and expand, small groups become necessary to insure community. In this manor, everyone is cared for but no one cares for too many. The small group insures that nobody stands alone, struggles alone, serves alone, and develops alone. Small groups are a God ordained method of providing infrastructure, assuring that the workload is shared and that everyone receives care.

Finally, small groups provide a structure for mutual membership, and a sense of unity in the body. A place to grow, serve, and exercise our spiritual gifts.