**WHO IS INVOLVED WITH SMALL GROUP MINISTRY?**

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network

From General Assembly Booth #227, June 2019, Spokane, WA

This has been asked since Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry emerged in the 1990's.

***How have you participated in Small Group Ministry?*** Small Group Ministry is the name of the model based on intimacy (relationships) and ultimacy (deeper meaning). Various names, such as Covenant Groups or Chalice Circles, may be used on the local level.

*Celebrating Congregations,* published by the Network in 2010, included information from 151 congregations. The Network names 430 congregations known to be involved with Small Group Ministry through congregational publicity, session plans, articles and publications, and conversation. The Network continues to name the well over half of UU congregations involved. *Statistics will always be incomplete: this movement relies on experiential sharing rather than statistical documentation to describe impact.*

***Have you been involved in writing session plans?*** Over 1000 session plans from congregations and individuals are on or linked to the Network website, and more are waiting to be added. (See the *UU Small Group Ministry Session Plan: A Unique type of UU Literature* , June 2019.)

***Are you one of over 200 people who have contributed over 400 articles about Small Group Ministry in Network or other publication?*** These appear in*CGN* (*Covenant Group News*, online) and the *SGM Journal*, in the UUA publications and website, and other publications.

***Have you shared your experience with Small Group Ministry?*** This can be through writing for your congregation’s newsletter, speaking in worship services or workshops, and encouraging someone to participate.

***Do you subscribe to CGN (Covenant Group News?)*:** 600 subscribers <http://www.smallgroupministry.net/cgnews/about.html>

***Are you on Small Group Ministry Network Face Book?*** 270 subscribers

***Have you attended workshops and conferences?***Attendance figures not readily available. Many of these workshops and conferences, district/regional events, and other workshop information is on the Network for publicity under Events.

***Are you now or have you been a member (individual or congregational) of the Network?***Over 175 congregations have been or are currently members of the Network. And there are additional individual members. Congregations represented by members are listed on the Network website at <http://www.smallgroupministry.net/membership.html>.

We frequently measure impact by the number of groups and number of participants in those groups. Counting the number of people who *engage with SGM* gives a limited picture of impact. *Everyone who comes in contact with SGM is part of the networking. Statistics help to define the scope of the program but do not do justice to the impact on individuals, the small groups, or the way we interact with intimacy and expand with the ultimacy of our spiritual journeys.*

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry *started within congregations* adding experience and understanding to the basic model and sharing successes and challenges of Small Group Ministry as part of Unitarian Universalist life. The congregational group provides basic experience in the model related to covenanting, listening and exploring meaning more deeply that is vital in Small Group Ministry in any setting.

The expanding resources shows the diversity of Small Group Ministry, such as:

* Multiple ages, branching from the adult focus to include children, youth, and young adults, the older populations, multiple age groups and families.
* Focus or affinity, such as spirituality for men and women, GLBTQ, [UUs of Color](https://www.uua.org/multiculturalism/286649.shtml), Earth-Based spirituality, or Social Justice.
* Resources designed for a specific group written so that it can be used by others, increasing engagement and awareness.

Resources for involvement in Small Group Ministry include:

*UUSGM Network website* [www.smallgroupministry.net](http://www.smallgroupministry.net)

Includes Covenant Group News (CGN), Session Plans, Online Resources (articles), Network publications, and links to various congregations, programs and other resources.

*The UUA website* <https://www.uua.org/small-group>

Includes general resources and items for some affinity populations; articles from *Interconnections* and the *UU World,* and resources available from inSpirit: The UUA Book and Gift Store.

*Remembrance of basic elements inherent in the Small Group Ministry model keeps the essence of relationships and deep spiritual growth while allowing flexibility of the many settings in which it is being used.*

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