

From Our Members...

The Awakening of Small Group Ministry at UUCDC

by Joyce McKee, Jean Shatoff, and Marilyn Huff

The UU Church of Delaware County "re-launched" its SGM program this year. The Program started about 6 years ago, but remained stagnant with essentially the same 35 members and four groups during that time. After a rather tumultuous time of change in ministry, UUCDC now had a settled minister, the Rev. Peter Friedrichs, eager and willing to lend his full support to SGM. The time was ripe to enhance SGM at UUCDC. Three of us agreed to coordinate a new beginning for Small Group Ministry at UUCDC, and we named our endeavor, "Awaken Your Spirit."

We started our effort last Fall by recruiting and training new facilitators. Our goal was to be able to offer as many groups at as many times as possible. Susan Hollister at Main Line Unitarian Church led a training session in December that resulted in 12 newly trained (or re-trained) facilitators.

To excite the congregation, we planned:

- A great sermon, during which time people would be able to sign up on the spot for the group(s) meeting their schedule.
- Loads of publicity leading up to and during the three week window we allowed for sign-ups. We created a new logo and pamphlets, "business" cards, posters, signs and mobiles throughout the church, and notices in the newsletter, Order of Service, and weekly Email Digest.
- Testimonials by current SGM members each Sunday morning during the sign-up period.

We were successful beyond our wildest dreams! Over 80 people signed up. Eight groups were formed, five evening groups and three daytime groups. We celebrated with a "Launch Lunch," after everyone had been assigned to a group. People met the fellow members of their new groups and enjoyed the fellowship of all those who had joined SGM at UUCDC. The minister, who was instrumental in making this program a success, welcomed everyone present and explained what a vital part of church life Small Group Ministry is. We had, indeed, "awakened our spirit."

Joyce, Jean, and Marilyn coordinate the SGM program at UU Church of Delaware County in Media, Pennsylvania.

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