

Visibility for Small Group Ministry

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Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry, UU Small Group Ministry Network, 2008

There are several distinct reasons for publicizing the Small Group Ministry Activities within a congregation. One, of course, is to recruit new members into the program. Calvin Dame in his article, "Recruiting New Members for Your Small Group Ministry Program," gave a number of ways of doing this. How a person becomes part of Small Group Ministry needs to be clear and simple giving contact information.

Another reason for publicity is to recruit people to the congregation. More and more, people looking for a church home are inquiring about Small Group Ministry or Covenant Groups. A friend of mine is moving to another location and went onto the web to search for UU congregations. He was concerned that the closest UU church to his new location did not show Small Group Ministry on its web site - and I know that they have an active program! Other places for such publicity is in the church notice in local newspapers.

A third reason for visibility is that Small Group Ministry is an integral part of the fiber of the congregation. The articles for the church newsletters and annual reports and other reports to the Board and congregation as opportunity arises make this connection clear.

A fourth reason is that Small Group Ministry has much to offer the total congregation. It is unlikely that everyone in the congregation is going to be part of a small group at the same time. However, the relational nature of the Small Group Ministry process has an impact beyond the groups themselves. The newsletters of the UU Community Church in Augusta note this impact: increased ability to listen, to dialogue, to pay closer attention to deeper issues with individuals and at congregational meetings; recognition and greater interest in diversity as a vitalizing force with UUism; and shared ministry.

If Small Group Ministry is to be an integral part of the congregation, it needs to be part of the publicity - and visibility – of congregation internally and externally, and continuously as well as on special occasions.