

5 Small Group Landmines

by Winfield Bevins

If you are like me, you have probably had a bad small group experience at least once in your life. You know the kind, where some weirdo takes over the discussion, or where the leader allows too much time of awkward silence. There is nothing worse than a bad small group experience. In fact, this is the reason why so many people are reluctant to be a part of a small group. As group leaders, our job is to protect our small groups and make them a safe place where people can share, grow, and learn together. We train our small group leaders to watch out for the following five landmines, which can destroy a good small group.

1. They become a gossip group.

Small groups are not a place to talk about others; rather they should be a safe place that is free from gossip and condemnation. People who attend a small group should feel free to come as they are and share openly and honestly. If we are not careful, small groups can degenerate into a gossip group that will tear down instead of build up.

2. They become a one-man show.

The leader should not do all the talking. Encourage others to participate and share in the group discussions. I have been to some small groups where only one person does all the talking. When this happens no one wants to share, much less attend. An effective small group leader encourages everyone to participate in the times of discussion.

3. They become a place to complain about the church.

Small groups can become a sounding board for disgruntled people to complain about the church. This is not a place to complain and slander the church. If people have a problem with the church, they need to share it with the church's leadership, which is biblical. Train your leaders to protect the unity of the church by not allowing upset people to use the small group as a place to complain about their problems.

4. They become a place for crazy people to take over.

Small groups can attract crazy people who will hijack the group if you let them. Do not allow people to get off the subject by chasing rabbit trails. Whenever people start getting off track in the discussions, bring them back quickly. This requires a lot of discernment and grace. A good leader can keep people on track and the discussion moving.

5. They become an end in themselves.

Sometimes small groups become merely a meeting place or a social club; rather small groups should reach out to new people in the community. Small groups can also serve the community. Encourage your people to reach out to others. Begin thinking of creative ways that you can serve together as a small group.

This post is adapted from a forthcoming ebook by Winfield Bevins.

From smallgrouptrader.com



Life group prayer and praise

- Please pray for my family in New Orleans, my daughter **Emily** needs her eyes opened to the truth and in the meantime, needs God's surrounding protection. We praise God for the successful surgery for my **Great Uncle Rev. Jeff Day**, who has just undergone heart surgery. ~ **Kelly Brock**
- Please pray for **Patrick Means**, he is going to have a pacemaker put in.
- I have cancer and would like prayer for a cure. Thanks, **Annette Kerby**
- **Mark Deiner** needs a dryer.
- Please pray for my grandson, **Vance, Lenny's** son, (5 yr.) His appendix started to rupture in the operating room and the doctors nicked his small intestines. ~ **Bobby Backstrom**
- Please pray for my son, **Nathan**, he is reverting back to the world of drugs. ~ **Roy McCowan**
- Update on **Dixie's mother**: she is doing better after 2nd colon surgery, Dixie flew over to be with here and it sounds like she is doing much better. Please pray for **Barbara Alber** for quick recovery and safe travel for Dixie. ~ **Jim Burgess**
- Pray for my **daughter and son-in-law** for a safe trip to and from Jamaica. ~ **Carole Petersen**
- As I was sending out the praise for **Gretchen Cooper**, whose tests came back negative for leukima, I received this prayer request from **Rich Carroll**, pastor at Lake Shore Community Church in Vancouver, Washington. Younger people with other health issues are especially vulnerable to



H1N1 flue. They need our prayers: Our son **Adam**, who recently had major surgery, has now contracted the H1N1 flu and is in ICU at OHSU hospital in Portland. Our daughter **Kaylhee**, who also resides at home, is now showing the same symptoms. We would appreciate prayers for Adam and Kaylhee, who both have disabilities related to their cerebral palsy. We would also appreciate prayers for **Launda** and myself, as we tend to their needs during this time.

- **Heidi, my daughter**, needs to find a job soon. Please pray for her and my mom, **Bettie Aitkin's** who is suffering a great deal of pain following her stroke in June, which hinders her recovery. ~ **Kim Edwards**
- Please pray for my oldest daughter and her little girl, they are being mentally and physically abused by a boyfriend. Please give her the courage to leave this abusive relationship. ~ **Barb Lillard**
- Pray for me, I set up a Bible study and prayer group in the apartment where God has put me. ~ **Milored Byrnes**
- Please pray for our son, **Zack**, who is 20 months old and is under weight, we would like prayer for a healthy appetite and that he would begin to gain weight. ~ **The Rodriguez family**
- Please pray for **Virginia Smith, Karl's mom**, she is having headaches and they don't know why. ~ **Sheri Wiederspohn**
- Please pray for our **son, Jake**, he has a staph infection and is on his 3rd medication, but it doesn't seem to be working. He has had this before and needed a PIC line into his chest (for 2 months last time) and now it's worse because he is now diabetic. ~ **John and Midge Ellis**

Thank's so much for your WMO offering!



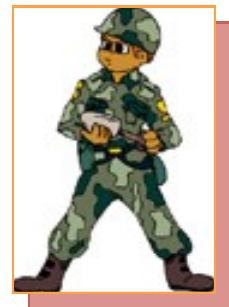
We need 100 shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child!

Regular sized shoe boxes are best. Please bring empty, unwrapped shoeboxes to FBC.

If you have questions, please contact Beverly DeCelles.

Pray for our Military

- *Jonathan Michaels Estrella— son of Sharon Boswell.*
- *Jason Bjazevich—Megan Owenby's husband—Army Special Forces— Stationed in N. Carolina.*
- *Joel Ellis—son of John & Midge — Serving in Iraq.*
- *Scott Harpell—son of Brian & Lynne— Stationed at Fort Bragg.*
- *Aaron Weston—nephew of Ken and Kathy—Stationed in San Diego.*
- *Eric Schmidt — son of Gene and Pat Schmidt — Camp Fallujah, Iraq.*
- *Benjamin Lagonia—dear friend of the Naylor family—stationed in Manitoba.*
- *David Coyle—son of Karen Mark— residing in Seattle, member of the National Guard.*
- *Adam Flynn—a young Marine safely home and out of military.*
- *Brett Love—grandson of Wilma— Army National Guard—Serving at home.*
- *Robin Swartz - Serving in the military - currently home in Everett.*
- *Christian Chmielewski—nephew of JoAnn Couturie' - in the Marines.*
- *ENS Andrew E. Timpner (fiancé to Christin Suthard) on deployment with USS Momsen.*
- *Devin Abbitt—nephew of Paul Abbitt - Marine, stateside.*
- *Doug Baer—a teacher at Kamiak HS heading to Iraq in the Army Reserves—thru Sept. 09.*
- *Duane Neyens—brother to Kathy Chapman—Nat. Grd. Afghanistan.*
- *Philip Ankney-LCPL Afghanistan Cousin of MaryAnn Peterson.*
- *Jeffrey Lillard—son of Barbara Lillard — Srg. In Army, Stationed in Afghanistan.*
- *Aaron Chmielewski—joined the Marines. Nephew of JoAnn Couturie.*



Life Group Happenings

All in the Family



by *florence miller*

The good news is that **Mabel Elder** is back home; the "not-so-good" news is that she still needs lots of care. Prayers will help!

Florence had dinner with **Lois Hudspeth** and daughter **Loye** Tuesday evening. **Lois and Loye** had spent a long day in the ER with **Cliff** and at evening time, a hospital room still had not been found for Cliff who has fluid in his lungs

A notice was sent to the office by **Ruelyn Nelson** about a former attender of our church. Perhaps some of you may remember **Elaine Davis**? She now lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma. While she lived in our area she was working on a book. It is now finished and published. The title is "Looking Inside Out" and it won a Spring 2009 Christian Choice Book Award. If you go to her website, www.lookinginsideout.com, you can read an excerpt from her book. You can also order the book

Chris Frizell is our dedicated person in charge of the Friday Night Ministries. You have read of the large number of hungry ones Chris and her crew feed each week. How does she do it? First of all she is devoted to Christ's admonition to do it to the least of these. She has compassion for those who attend; she is a very good organizer and she has a devoted crew. Chris has worked to get free foods from various establishments, obtained grants, and now a new project which Chris and her crew just started in September raises money for the many costs associated with that ministry. Ten Friday Night workers now work in Ivar's or Kidd Valley booths during sports games at Husky, Quest Field or SafeCo arenas. They have taken training with Ivar's and have met the food handlers requirements. They choose which games they wish to work; carpool to the game two and a half hours ahead of game time, don their shirts and serve the food, including garlic fries! They do no cooking but serve and man the cash register. In return they get a meal and \$75 for each person working there. With that money they may use it to buy kitchen "stuff", buy a car seat for a young family or for many other needs. The group says it is fun and they will be going to Seattle two or three times a month. What spirit and ingenuity!

Has it been a year already?! The Everett Community Church pastored by **Peter Gatata** in our FBC Community Center is

celebrating its first anniversary as a Church on Sunday October 25th, 10:30 a.m. An invitation has been given to celebrate and enjoy fellowship with other believers with great music, worship time and some ethnic food. There will be special music by the **Miracle of God Singers** from Boise, Idaho, They are truly a miracle themselves. They survived the genocide in the Congo and relocated here in the United States as Refugees. Their story is remarkable of how God saved them from the throes of death and they live to tell of God's miracles through their music. and a special message brought by **Dr. Damian Emetuche**, Dr. Emetuche is founding pastor of Agape Community Center in Mountlake Terrace, WA . Contact Peter Gatata: (206) 239-8947.

Amanda Harpell sends the following letter received from **Brian Stewart** and asks for prayer for Cuba and the missionaries:

Dear friends, Most of you are aware that the Cuban authorities did not authorize visas for me and Rex Carlaw to travel to Cuba. This was only the third time in over 25 trips that this has happened to me and no explanation was given...hearing from missionary colleagues this month, their visas were also denied....We are now assuming that the denials have to do with an outbreak of swine flu on the island. This news has not been in the international press, but I have been able to read about it through some Cuban blogs. One blogger writes, "the television announcers call on us to strengthen our hygiene because of the advance of H1N1. ...We lack face masks, running water in many houses, the possession of vitamin C and cleanliness in public places...The official media maintain their reserve and don't mention the closed schools, the quarantined sites and the full hospitals." Please pray for the visa of ACTION missionary, Wayne MacLeod who is to travel to Cuba next month to speak to over 800 college-age Christians. Also pray for visas for those who are planning to travel to Cuba in February for some large conferences we are organizing. Thank you and God Bless, Brian Stewart

Two of our active couples have left for sunnier climes this past week: **Fred and Anita Prinzing** and **Lowell and Dolene Posey**. They will be back when it gets too hot for them down in Arizona and So. Cal. In the meantime we will miss them but our prayers will go with them for a healthy winter.

Preschool ministry is in need of a radio/CD players to use on Sunday mornings with their curriculum. They also need a baby gate for a doorway. If you would like to donate, please contact Christen Weller.

There will be a wedding shower for Amanda and Drew on the 7th of November in the Pacific Room at 2:00 pm. They are registered at Target and Macy's. Please RSVP to/or any questions, please call Hyesook Johnson.

Lifegroup Contributing Opportunities

Update October 18th

Adult attendance: 237 Children: 9 am: 32+12 10:30 am: 40+16

Youth Small Group: Middle School 12+2

High School 10+1



October 23rd, Mark Deiner
October 24th, Tami Reisen
Paul Abbitt
Mabel Elder
Jane Stephenson
October 25th, Deanna Baird
October 27th, Katrina Washington

USHER CAPTAIN 2009:

October- Pete Sontra
Luckey Elkins
November- Ron & Kay Olson
Craig Reisen

COFFEE HOUR 2009

October 25th
Jesse Atcheson
College/Career
November 1st
Bryan Blair
Life Group
November 8th
Ruelyn Nelson
Women of Purpose
November 15th
Steve Dittoe
Marriage Builders

The weather has certainly turned this week. We are in great need of warm coats, sleeping bags, blankets and shoes. Please check your closets and see what you have that you can donate to those who are without. On Friday we had the privilege of having **Lauren Bethell** speak to our guests. As I introduced her as an international spokesperson for anti human trafficking and anti-slavery issues and spoke of her passion of helping women get out of prostitution, the room erupted in applause. Lauran told me later she was so moved by the clapping that she altered what she spoke about. She talked about how each of us is a gift from God and he has a purpose for each life he created. I don't think one person moved from their seats during her talk. It was a blessing to our guests and Lauran wrote to me later on Facebook and told me Friday Night was a highlight of her trip to the states.

I am so blessed each week to hear stories from our guests and want to include you on a couple - **M** was very troubled last week as she had given her roommate money for utilities and the roommate had moved out without paying the rent or utilities and now **M's** power was turned off. She and I prayed together and she was happy this week to report that the Red Cross and Salvation Army had partnered to pay the bill and get the power back on. She was so thankful for our prayer time. **S** told me he had finally gotten housing. He showed me how clean his hair was and how his skin was more the color it was supposed to be instead of the black it had become while living on the street. **J** thanked me profusely for the two men from our team who went to his home

and built a small deck with stairs so that he could quit using pallets as steps to get in his door. The sores from his fall a month ago where almost healed.

The list goes on each week in our downstairs. God is changing lives and we are so blessed to have a front row seat! Prayer requests are great this week—**J and N** - please pray for the complex we live in. There is drug traffic and witchcraft. **M** - pray for my family **L, S, T, D and H, K and J** - We are homeless and trying hard to change it. Please help me get some help for this month. I'm waiting of temporary housing and on the list for a vacancy . **L** - pray for my man **M** to get his stuff together to get his son a place to live. **CB** - for a path and direction and stability. **BP** - pray for power, wealth and a basically spoiled life, **FW** - to stay healthy, wise and alive. **DS** - for my ex wife and our little girl. My ex wife's mom is dying of cancer and it's looking real bad for them. **OG** - my 15 year old sister has bone cancer and is developing tumors. I would like to pray for her safe recovery. Her name is **C. G** - please pray for my van, that it won't need any more repairs that cost over \$100. Praise that I did have enough money to get it fixed. Also, please pray for my friend **A**, as she is having a lot of stress over her current job situation. Thank You. **CL** - pray for my dad. He's having a hard time with walking and a really large sore on his forehead. **K** - pray for my ankle (broken by a fall off a bicycle) Thank You very much and God Bless. Will you all pray for me please? **LN** - pray for **M & T** for housing and a baby on the way.

Have a great week - GO TEAM! Chris

Friday Nite Update