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church

A SMALL GROUP NEWSLETTER

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Special points of interest:

- *DaVinci Code*
- *Small Group Pics*
- *5 M's*

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From the pen of Pastor Glen

Why Would I Be in a Small Group?

This is a good question. As I think back on my reasons for being in a small group, I realize that for all of my Christian life I have been involved in one small group or another. In every one of them the need I have to connect with God and with others has been fulfilled. Isn't God amazing? He has given each one of us a place to have our deepest needs fulfilled. Whether you call it community, connecting or coming together, the idea of interacting with others in a real way is important and necessary for each of us.



Think about this for a moment: we believe that our God is a Trinity – three co-equal, co-eternal persons who exist as Father, Son and Holy Spirit; one God but not each other. One purpose, one mind and yet separate in existence and person. Isn't this the supreme example of community? And God has made us in His image. He has created us with the need to be together.

In their book *Building a Church of Small Groups*, Donahue and Robinson say that "true community is born when we experience God and all of his fullness and his people in all of their fullness." I think this means that you and I will mature when we experience authentic relationships. I know that I have a need to be heard and to listen and also a need to give myself to others. Being in the body of Christ and intentionally connecting with others in a meaningful way I have the greatest possibility of fulfilling God's desire for me. I believe that can happen best in small groups.

It's interesting to me that the people in my small group are the people that I have contact with not only on the night of our meeting but we also do life together at other times: meals, work, recreation, crises, encouragement, sharing and even correcting. (I need that a lot!) My community is my small group because that is the place where God grows my sense of well being as one of His children. Why wouldn't I be in a small group? I can't think of any better reason than that. What is your reason?

"For where
two or three
come together
in My Name,
there I am with
them."

Matthew 18:20



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Richard Davis Ph.D.

Critic's Corner by Richard Davis Ph.D.

Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* has sold a whopping 40 million copies. Next month, the movie directed by Ron Howard and starring Tom Hanks, comes out in theatres. It is certain to be a blockbuster. If you are in an outreach oriented small group, you are sure to encounter some outrageous claim or another from the book or movie.

Have you heard, for example, that Jesus was married—and to Mary Magdalene no less? Thus sayeth Dan Brown's character, Sir Leigh Teabing, the British Royal Historian. According to Teabing, "the social decorum during that time virtually forbid a Jewish man to be unmarried... If Jesus were not married, at least one of the Bible's gospels would have mentioned it" (p. 245).

Does this show that Jesus was married? Obviously not. First, even if the culture of Jesus' day frowned upon unmarried men, it doesn't follow that every Jewish adult male of the time was married. John the Baptist wasn't. Neither was the Apostle Paul. And

according to the Jewish historian, Josephus, the Essenes, a Jewish religious sect of "about four thousand men," shunned marriage because it led to "domestic quarrels" which tended to impede one's dedication to God (*Antiquities* 18.1.5.21).

Secondly, in 1 Corinthians 9 Paul argues that although he is celibate, he certainly could have married as have "the other apostles and the Lord's brothers and Cephas" (v. 5). But surely if Jesus—the chief cornerstone of the Christian faith—had been married, Paul would have cited this fact first and foremost as establishing his own right to marry.

Finally, during his crucifixion, we see Jesus taking pains to ensure that his mother will be cared for after his death. He says to the apostle John, "Here is your mother" (John 19:27). But for Mary Magdalene, who is supposed to be his wife, Jesus does nothing at all. It doesn't make sense, does it?

The fact is there isn't a shred of historical evidence here or elsewhere that Jesus was ever married.

"THE 5 M'S"
To Magnify God's Name, bring people to Jesus and Membership in His family, develop them to Christ-like Maturity, and equip them for their Ministry in the Church and their life Mission in the world.

MAGNIFY "showing"

Clearly showing God in relationship to us and our response is worship through Membership, Maturity, Ministry and Mission

MEMBERSHIP "knowing"

Bringing people into our community of faith so they may know Jesus Christ

MATURITY "growing"

Process of helping people in community to deepen their knowledge and experience of God through His Word and His Spirit and grow in Christ-like character

MINISTRY "sowing"

Equipping people to serve and care for each other by discovering and developing spiritual gifts to do the work of God and build up the Body of Christ

MISSION "going"

Going outside the group and sharing Christ's love by serving as His hands, feet and mouth



"One must hear God before speaking for Him."

The Listening Room

"Those like myself whose imagination far exceeds their obedience are subject to a just penalty: we easily imagine conditions far higher than any we have really reached. If we describe what we have imagined we may make others, and make ourselves, believe that we have really been there." ~ C.S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*, as quoted in "Where Do We Go From Here", R.W. Neighbour, Jr.

Neighbour goes on to say, "...the point is crucial: One must hear God before *speaking* for Him."

IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Get answers at Alpha!



Get 'fed' at Alpha!

1. What is Alpha? Alpha is a 15 session practical introduction to the Christian Faith. It addresses foundational questions through the use of videos and group discussion. Some topics of discussion include: Who is Jesus? Why did Jesus Die? How Can I Be Sure of My Faith? Why and How Should I Read My Bible? How Can I Be Filled With the Holy Spirit? How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?
2. Who is Alpha for? The Alpha course is for those who are seeking to know more about Christ or those who are seeking to be grounded in the basics of the Christian Faith.
3. Why should you attend Alpha? Alpha helps seekers to find answers to their most troubling questions about Christianity in a non-threatening and fun environment. It provides the opportunity for participants to enter into a personal relationship with Christ.

For more information about Alpha please contact Pastor Glen Meyer @ 905-841-8883 or gmeyer@auroracornerstone.ca.

Alpha ~ My Small Group

What has it given me?

A sense of community - attending the Alpha class one evening a week, gives me a night out for myself. A night to grow spiritually, within a warm, safe group of people (mentors). A very comfortable surrounding to ask my questions - and honestly, to express my fears. I have come to trust my mentors and truly believe they have my best interest in hand, where they only wish for my happiness and peace within myself.

During the last six months, I have built a stronger relationship with God. I've learned where I am willing to go within our relationship and also, where I'm not - well, just not, quite yet!

My journey with the lord has been an interesting road traveled, and I do feel this new path through Alpha and my small group is a very exciting road. A road with clear direction, concrete evidence, and lots and lots of LOVE.

Samantha Moore



“A very comfortable surrounding to ask my questions - and honestly, to express my fears.”



ACC SMALL GROUPS

Contact Sharon Bridge at 905-841-8883/admin@auroracornerstone.ca and/or
Pastor Glen Meyer at gmeyer@auroracornerstone.ca

Group	Leader	Day/time
Hospitality	Patti Bunston	Sundays/Other
Ladies Bible Study	Tan Yeo	Sunday 2:00pm
Growth Group	Graham Howell	Sunday 6:00pm
Source/Living Room [grades 7-12]	Tim Hartley	Sunday 6:00pm
Free Me To Live	Linda Simmen	Monday 9:00am
Share Jesus Without Fear	Anna-Marie Lise	Monday 7:15pm
Divorce Care	Bonnie Thamm	Monday 7:30pm
Alpha Course	Richard Davis	Monday 7:30pm
Ladies Bible Study	Joanne Jobbitt	Tuesday 9:30am
Growth Group	Glen Meyer	Tuesday 6:45pm
Chick Night Bible Study [grade 6,7,8]	Debbie Durst	Tuesday 7:00pm
Growth Group	Eleanor Coyle	Tuesday 7:30pm
Men's Group	Phil Randazzo	Tuesdays TBD
Precept Bible Study	Linda Simmen	Wednesday 6:30pm
Worship Team	John Simmen	Wednesday 7:00pm
Growth Group	Lynn Leighton	Wednesday 7:30pm
Growth Group	Rema Thompson	Wednesday 7:30pm
Ladies Prayer Meeting	Elaine Luery	Thursday 9:45am
Men's Growth Group	George Ellis	Thursday 7:30pm
Buddies in Prayer [ages 6-8]	Janice Steeles	Friday 6:30pm
Flipside Youth [grades 7-12]	Tim Hartley	Friday 7:00pm
G4 [grade 6,7,8]	Joe Puiras	Friday 7:00pm
Alpha Marriage Course	Edgar & Monique Chilviet	Friday 7:30pm

A TIP OR TWO!

Many people who visit new groups never return because they feel the group is a clique—the relationships are well established and the group isn't open to new people. You can change this tide by taking a moment to introduce each person who can then share one thing he or she loves about the group.

This makes for a comfortable welcome and allows new people to hear some great reasons to stay and join the group. Then you can ask the new people to share how they heard about the group and ask what they hope to get out of the evening or study.

