

Further, if alone, we will not make significant steps toward spiritual maturity simply because most of us will not push ourselves to grow beyond the limits of what's comfortable. However, in joining a small group, you are entering into relationships with a few other people. They will pray for you, love you, share life with you, celebrate when you celebrate, mourn when you mourn, and together you will challenge and encourage each other to live for Christ with all of your heart.

In a small group, you will find yourself on an adventure! You will find your spiritual roots sinking deeper, your heart of love for people expanding, and your spiritual maturity increasing! You will find yourself loving and caring for people in your group and you'll discover that these same people will love and care for you. And it just doesn't get much better than that!

SO HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

Through GroupConnect – a periodic event on a Sunday morning where you can talk to small group leaders and see what's available

-or-

By contacting the church office – contact us and let us know what you're looking for and we'll help you make a connection.

LIKE MORE INFORMATION?

Please Contact:

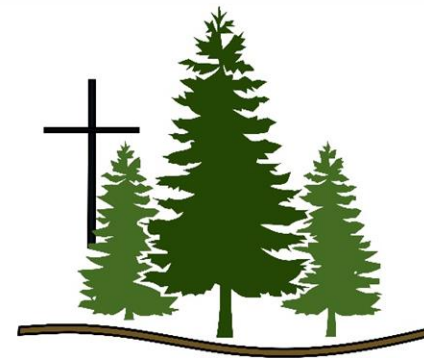
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Small Groups



Salem Church
of Ashland

PURSUING JESUS IN COMMUNITY

Salem's small groups are the place where the people whom God has entrusted to us as a church are nurtured and cared for. They are little churches within the greater church that seek to build relationships, offer spiritual guidance and partnership in following Christ, provide support and love, and uphold each other in prayer.

Salem Church of Ashland exists to bring glory to God by helping people become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ here in the northwoods of Wisconsin and to the ends of the earth.

WHAT TYPES OF SMALL GROUPS ARE THERE AT SALEM?

Salem has several varieties of small groups. Our main type are home groups. Home groups are weekly-biweekly gatherings of men and women in homes for the purpose of relationship building, bible study, and prayer. Salem also has bible studies for women and men which are more focused on bible exposition and prayer and less on community. Another type of group that Salem has available are missional communities which are groups with the purpose that is very similar to home groups with the added addition of a focus on reaching a certain community or neighborhood with the Gospel of Jesus Christ (our missional communities sometimes become core groups for church plants). Finally, we have groups that are geared towards meeting the needs of a certain age bracket or stage in life like our college ministry and young adult ministry.

WHAT ARE THE HALLMARKS OF SALEM'S SMALL GROUPS?

Ideally, every gathering of a Salem small group would include the following elements:

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| LOVE | A place of authentic, deep relationships; a welcoming atmosphere; a place of belonging; a feeling of time well spent; fellowship & food |
| LIFE | Participants openly and honestly share about their lives and help and challenge each other in living lives for Christ 24/7 - could include gender-specific accountability |
| WORD | The Word is studied together <i>specifically</i> for the <i>purpose</i> of <i>application</i> to real life |
| PRAYER | Time spent praying together for each other and for the furthering of God's Kingdom in the Ashland area and beyond |
| CARE | A small group's love and care of each other is not limited to the group's gathering times. As a "little church", they would continue to build relationships with each other (while not excluding others) outside of the context of small group and caring for one another as the need arises (visits, hospital visits, meals, other tangible care). |
| SERVING | Small groups also seek opportunities to get their hands dirty serving Christ together. |

WHY SHOULD I GET INVOLVED IN A SMALL GROUP?

First, for friendship. God does much of His work in our lives through other people. Here at Salem we believe that a person can only reach their full spiritual potential by being in close relationship with other committed believers. Small groups make this possible.

Second, for trust. Without trust, growth is impossible because openness, confidentiality, confrontation, vulnerability, and compassion are unattainable. But with trust, all of these ingredients are available. And with them comes real growth.

Third, for care. In a church our size, it has become increasingly difficult for the staff pastors to provide adequate pastoral care to everyone in the church. Beyond that, the Bible teaches in Ephesians that the pastors are to equip the members for the work of the ministry (4:12). In light of those two realities, small group leaders and members are encouraged and empowered to deliver God's grace to their group. So when people experience the painful bumps and bruises of lie in a sinful world it is their small group that gathers around them to pray, comfort, and meet their needs.

WHAT IF I'M STILL NOT CONVINCED?

Then we encourage you to think about this!

The real adventure of walking with Christ occurs in a small group setting. If a person only attends a weekend service, they can come and go for years and never develop any kind of connection to others within the church. The disappointment of loneliness can set in, and if that happens, it won't take long for thoughts to creep in like, "I don't matter to this church," "This church doesn't know me or understand me," or "What difference does it make if I keep coming?"

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