



The Episcopal Diocese of Newark
Congregational Life

Faith Groups

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The Four Elements



The Four Elements of a Small Faith Group

- Gathering
- Sharing
- Reading Scripture and Reflecting
- Praying

Gathering

- Begin with prayer and breaking of bread
 - Ask God to be with your group
 - Alternate person leading the opening prayer
- Today: Zoom
 - Meal at your laptop
- Future: At home or elsewhere
 - Prepare the meal together; order pizza
- Get to know each other, and why they have joined
- Set group norms
 - Remind of all norms at subsequent meetings

Sharing

- Each person shares where God is in their lives in the preceding week
- Where has God's grace been found?
- Where have you and God struggled this week?
- Additional reflection from last time together

Reading Scripture and Reflecting

- Sets Faith Groups apart from other groups
- Intentional time to read scripture and connect it with our daily lives
 - Daily Office Lectionary
 - Other Bible passages
- Breaks life open over the word of God
- Options
 - Dwelling in the Word
 - African Bible Study
 - Reflect on scripture in other ways, (e.g., through art)
- Discuss how the reading intersects with your life

Praying

- Close time together in prayer and thanksgiving
 - Alternate leader each meeting
 - In word, song, silence - or combination
- Offer thanks, hopes, prayers for each in group and others
 - The Book of COmmon Prayer and other options
 - No wrong way to pray

Resources

- *Field Guide for Small Group Leaders*
- *Building an Intentional Small Group Ministry* (TEC)
- *SmallGroups.com*
- Prayer
 - *Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals*
 - *Hip Hop Prayer Book*
 - *Daily Prayers for All Seasons*
 - Etc.

What does this look like?



What does this look like?

- Size and Composition of small faith group
- Regular meeting schedule
- Location
- Include the Four Elements



Size and Composition of a Faith Group

- Group of 8-10 (6--12)
 - From your congregation
 - Others
- Mixture of ages
- Rule of 2 -- make sure everyone has a buddy

Regular Meeting Schedule

- Weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly
- Specific time and day
- Length of meetings
- How long the group will meet
 - Can tie to liturgical season (Lent, Advent, other)
- Importance of commitment to attend

Location

- Now: ZOOM
- Later:
 - Homes
 - Coffee Shop
 - Park
 - Church

Include the Four Elements

- Importance of routine structure of meetings
- Importance of Scripture