



Small Group Ministry Institute

August 17 – August 22, 2008

The Mountain Retreat & Learning Center, Inc.

Highlands, North Carolina

An opportunity for teams and individuals from congregations of all sizes to learn and practice Small Group Ministry (SGM) with experienced practitioners and leaders. Sessions are designed for new and experienced program organizers, facilitators, ministers and congregational leaders. The week will include presentations, hands-on workshops, small group ministry experiences, sharing, networking, informal ‘porch chats, worship – and time to enjoy what The Mountain has to offer!

- ❑ **Explore the powerful impact that Small Group Ministry is having in congregations.**
- ❑ **Build the skills of new facilitators and enhance skills in problem resolution.**
- ❑ **Participate in Small Group Ministry as Spiritual Practice.**
- ❑ **Explore Small Group Ministry as related to Social Justice and Faith in Action**
- ❑ **Create and select effective sessions, including the use of art, music, and movement.**
- ❑ **Learn how to lead your church’s small group ministry program**
- ❑ **Take home a vision and plan to explore, begin, enhance or expand Small Group Ministry.**

The format will include presentations, discussion and workshops, and the **opportunity to meet daily in a small group**. Come yourself—and bring a group from your congregation! Participants will receive a packet of material and resources.

Leaders: (More information is on the reverse side.)

*Rev. Helen Zidowecki (Augusta, ME); Susan Hollister (Devon, PA); Diana Dorroh (Baton Rouge, LA);
Steve Becker (Seattle, WA); Walter LeFlore (Stow, MA)*

Comments from Participants of Previous Conferences:

"Thank you so much for all the great useful information. I enjoyed the variety of presenters and topics. I feel I have the tools I need to start SGM in my church. I also appreciated tips for how I might modify the approach to fit my home congregation."

"I will take back to my church tons of info and insights into how to be more effective. I have more confidence in my abilities and purpose."

"The experience filled my head with information and my heart with inspiration. I feel confident that I can now enhance the spiritual lives of members of my congregation."

Cost: The Mountain, shared occupancy, and Program Fee: \$492; after July 1, \$517
To Register, visit www.mountaincenters.org or call 828-526-5838

Sponsored by the **Small Group Ministry Network**, see www.smallgroupministry.net
For questions about conference content, contact Rev. Helen Zidowecki at hzmre@hzmre.com

CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Steve Becker has been involved with small group ministry since 2003 in the Seattle, Washington area, where he has offered facilitator training, served as a member of the Theme Team, and has facilitated a group for persons with special needs. His special interest is developing topics for covenant groups. He is the Vice-President for the Small Group Ministry Network Board of Directors. Steve lives in Seattle.

Diana Dorroh, Program Director, and Rev. Steve Crump have led the Baton Rouge program since its beginning in 1999. That program now has 200 participants. She participated in several workshops organized by Rev. Bob Hill, when he was District Executive of the Southwest District. Her special interest is in using small group ministry to strengthen and grow congregations. She currently serves as volunteer staff at the Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge. Diana is President for the Small Group Network Board.

Susan Hollister has been a Unitarian Universalist for 27 years and is a member of Main Line Unitarian Church in Devon, PA. She helped launch Small Group Ministry at MLUC and is past coordinator of the Program. She co-facilitates a group, assists the current coordinators, and serves on the session writing team. Susan promotes small group ministry as an ideal way for newcomers to meet people and make connections. Susan is the Treasurer for the Small Group Ministry Network Board.

Walter LeFlore is a third year seminary student at Andover Newton Theological School. He's focused on enhancing spiritual development and building authentic communities, using the SGM process. He has over twenty years experience using small group process as an organization consultant and as a facilitator in the SGM program at First Parish Stow/Acton, MA. Walter is on the Small Group Ministry Board.

Rev. Helen Zidowecki has been involved with Small Group Ministry for 10 years. She is a member of the Augusta congregation, where she is a facilitator and on the Topics Committee. Her special interest is Small Group Ministry in Lifespan Faith Development, and smaller congregations. She was the Program Consultant, Northeast District, until July 2007. She leads workshops and writes materials on Small Group Ministry. Helen resides in Litchfield, ME. She is secretary for the Small Group Ministry Network.

Other leaders may be added. Conference participants will be involved in the facilitation of the Small Group Ministry Sessions throughout the week.