

Guidelines for Leaders of Small Groups

Thank you for your willingness to serve God's people as a Faith Encouragement Ministries Leader for Small Groups! Your presence and love of Jesus is an important part of the weekend program.

You have three responsibilities: to **facilitate** small groups with love, to **listen** and to **pray**. Because you are not required to teach, preach or give advice to others, you are not required to have all the answers!

Facilitating

As a facilitator, listen to others, make sure everyone is comfortable and can hear everyone else, and open and close the session with prayer. The most difficult of course is to **listen**.

After the discussion question is read, allow at least 30 seconds (count them) for process time. Pray. Breathe in the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. If no one still says anything, read the question again, slowly. Wait. If no one responds – again after 30 seconds, you can ask them to pair up and answer the question or ask what they think about the question. Let the Holy Spirit guide you. Take your time and don't fear silence. The point is to avoid falling into the trap of filling silence with your own voice and thoughts. It is important to allow others the time they may need to process their own thoughts before they speak.

Facilitate the sessions with the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Facilitating – Keep in Mind

1. Remember it is your job as a facilitator to make people feel comfortable, loved, and accepted.
2. Respect the right of anyone to not speak or to say "pass."
3. If someone expresses a viewpoint in a small group that is questionable or wrong, gently steer back to the topic and discuss the issue with the senior pastor or your Coordinator later. (Don't teach!)
4. The topics for the group discussions elicit very personal responses. Begin each session reminding both team and church members to respect the confidentiality of the discussion.

Pray and Listen

Pray before the weekend, during the weekend, and after the weekend. Pray for the church, the lay leadership, the clergy, the visiting team, and yourself. Pray for the fruit of the Spirit for all. Pray for wisdom and discernment for the visiting team. Listen to the Holy Spirit. Ask God to give you boldness in proclaiming His love. Ask for guidance to be a servant of Jesus with an open heart to hear others and to speak the words others need to hear.

Relax and Enjoy!

Most importantly, relax and enjoy the people around you. Listen attentively in your small groups. Watch for what God is doing with you and for you and for others. Thank you again for serving God and His people!

Website: <http://www.faithencourage.org> Facebook: [facebook.com/faithencouragementministries](https://www.facebook.com/faithencouragementministries)