



## Guidelines for the Small Group Facilitator and A Suggested Prayer Before Each Session

*(A handout for Small Group Facilitators only)*

### Guidelines for Small Group Facilitator(s)/Alternates

The Facilitator should:

- Be a catalyst for the Small Group establishing a warm and welcoming atmosphere.
- Be respectful and patient - never harsh or abrupt
- Protect members from ridicule or negative remarks
- Explain your role as timekeeper to keep the group moving through the session
- Keep members focused and encourage participation
- Strive to elicit answers from each member and also be willing to occasionally share from your lesson. You will be facilitating - not dominating
- Maintain the format and process set for the Small Group Facilitator
- Instill a sense of group by using the members' names, humor and maintaining eye contact; encourage nametag use to facilitate this
- Enjoy your group – have fun and laugh with them
- Encourage members with positive statements avoiding negative comments; never force participation
- Foster community through group prayer and draw in members that seem to be segregated from the rest. Remove empty chairs from your circle
- Remember to facilitate – not teach, preach or counsel
- Ask for additional responses when a member's answer is obviously "wrong." This should be done very diplomatically to prevent any embarrassment
- Weave your way around topics of politics, controversy, moral debates or anti-church doctrine
- Foster an environment of trust in your group by stressing confidentiality within the group. This includes the Small Group prayers
- Stress to the members that answering the Connection Questions is voluntary
- Elicit additional responses on Connection Questions from others who might want to share
- Be tolerant, non-judgmental and patient. This may be the lesson we are to learn from the group
- Be inclusive; no member should ever be left standing or sitting alone
- Keep members from dominating the group

### Suggested prayers for Small Group Facilitator(s)/Alternates before each session of The Cornerstone

Pray that God would:

- Help members of the Small Group create a quiet time to complete their lessons.
- Remove any barriers that might impede attendance at the weekly session
- Enable members to hear the words He wants to share with them during the week's lesson
- Hear the intentions and bless each member of the group

Include a prayer of thanksgiving for the members of your group and for the opportunity to learn and hear His words through them. Remember that it is God's work that brings us together and helps us to grow more like Christ in the Small Groups