NAC-USA
DEVELOPMENT
INSTITUTE

Spiritual Gifts Small Group Series

FACILITATOR NOTES

Dear facilitator,

Firstly, we would like to begin by saying thank you. Thank you for participating and volunteering to promote the discovery of spiritual gifts within your congregation. This important initiative has the potential of helping each member, and therefore the entire congregation, to grow in spiritual health. In turn, it provides all the opportunity to grow more fully into the image of our Lord Jesus Christ!

The Holy Spirit is the bearer of all gifts. Therefore, when we are sealed with the Holy Spirit, the potential is there for any or all of the spiritual gifts to emerge throughout our lives, as they are needed. For this reason, discovering and developing your spiritual gifts is an ongoing process that cannot be accomplished in one small group series over a short duration of time. Rather, it needs to be revisited and renewed on an ongoing basis.

This Spiritual Gifts small group series is designed to help members see their life of faith from a fresh and enlightened perspective. As spiritual gifts are engaged, the congregation may experience somewhat of a culture shift. This initiative is designed to help lay the groundwork to create the most inclusive culture. A shift in culture can be challenging and it may take some time to establish momentum, so don't be discouraged. As you engage in this journey, you will want to look for continual support from congregational leaders.

This small group series may require you, as a facilitator, to be involved in more of a teaching role than may usually be required during our "Midweek Experience" small groups. This material does require some additional study and development of thought. There are several assessments and exercises throughout, each designed to help us understand ourselves better. Introspection can be a new experience for some, and may even cause some discomfort. As a facilitator and a teacher, it is important to establish and maintain an environment that is safe and sensitive to these concerns.

Prior to scheduling or announcing a Spiritual Gifts small group, please read this facilitator guide and the small group introduction in their entirety. Please also familiarize yourself with the content that will be covered over the eight small group sessions. This guide contains objectives and suggestions that you may want to consider while formulating your small group plan. Key points are highlighted for each session; as teacher/facilitator, please also become well versed in these key points prior to hosting each session.

We would like to thank you again for your interest and willingness to lead this small group journey. Our goal is to more deeply understand and engage the spiritual gifts that God has given to edify the body of Christ! If you need further assistance, please do not hesitate to ask for support by contacting a member of the Work of Ministry work group. We are here to assist you.

With love in Christ!

Work of Ministry Work Group

CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Where possible, begin with a small group of teachers, facilitators, and leaders. Once this core group has gone through the Spiritual Gifts small group series, some can then become facilitators to present it to the rest of the congregation. If you have more than one facilitator available, it is suggested to have a few small groups happening at the same time. Here are some of the benefits to holding simultaneous small groups in your congregation:

- generating greater enthusiasm, energy, and excitement
- enjoying the oneness of shared experience and new understandings
- having a larger pool of members to support common interests

Small groups can ideally be from 6-10 participants per group (can be adjusted as necessary).

There are 8 sessions to plan for your small group. Please ask your participants to begin preparing for each session early, so that they have time to contemplate and reflect on the material prior to each meeting. Preparation is a key component for the success of this small group. Encourage members to watch the next session's video shortly after the current session is adjourned, so the members can more easily build upon the cumulative nature of this material and have time to more fully develop their thoughts.

- Sessions can be scheduled either weekly or every two weeks, which should be determined on how much time your group will need to prepare.

As you progress with your small groups, your congregation will benefit when leadership is aware of the importance of spiritual gifts and how they impact congregational life.

PRESENTING SPIRITUAL GIFTS WITHIN A SMALL GROUP

Please ensure that all participants have access to both video and script for study at home. Encourage participants to both watch the video and read the script, using a highlighter to mark any key points of interest. Their highlighted material can be discussed and even become teaching points. In addition, all of the workbook material should be completed at home, prior to each session. The assessments and exercises lay a cumulative foundation for the entire program.

Workbook Material

1. Session video and script, Groundwork, and Going Deeper
2. Discussion Questions
3. Spiritual Gift Worksheets

The suggested format is to divide each session into three equal segments:

Segment 1: 25 – 30 minutes

- You will want to play the video at the beginning of the first segment
- Discuss the material as well as Groundwork and Going Deeper exercises
- Take advantage of this segment as an ideal teaching opportunity

Segment 2: 25 – 30 minutes

- Review and discuss the Discussion Questions from the session
- In this segment, you will find facilitating works best – look to include each participant's thoughts
- For some discussions, it may be advantageous to divide a larger group into smaller ones, and then bring the group back together to share.
- Watch that no one dominates or provides information that intimidates other participants

Segment 3: 25 – 30 minutes

- Review and discuss the Spiritual Gift worksheets
- As facilitator, encourage participants in relating to or appreciating each gift
- When someone strongly relates to a gift, it is an ideal opportunity to encourage them to develop that gift

Introduction

Preparation will be the key to lively discussions and this small groups' success. If participants are not completing their assessments or not completing the reading / highlighting, it is important to meet with them separately to help them keep up with the group.

The introduction should be read and watched by each participant before the beginning of the small group sessions. Touch on a few of the points during your Session 1 review.

Session 1: What are Spiritual Gifts?

Please note that the parable of the talents is a key teaching element for this session. However, it is not included in the video/script. Please ask the participants to read the Bible verses (Matthew 25:14-30) at home in preparation for discussion in the first segment (this is reinforced in the workbook).

You can find more information about Health, Growth, and Completion on www.nac-usa.org under the WELCOME menu item – Vision and Mission and the Strategic Planning Overview.

Have copies of the ***Spiritual Gift Assessment*** available in case someone would like a larger copy than what is provided in the book.

Key Points: Spiritual health; helping others; spiritual gifts increase our joy; self-responsibility

Session 2: A Calling to use our Gifts

You may want to begin this session by sharing each person's Spiritual Gift Assessment results – their most predominant gifts. Members' most predominant spiritual gifts are an important piece of this small group series. Please spend time on both sharing each member's findings and their reactions (surprise, concern, etc.). One way to open this conversation and help the small group to know each other's spiritual gifts is to create "Spiritual Gift Name Tags" to complete at the beginning and wear throughout this session (see below):

Hello! My Spiritual Gifts Are:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Have at least 3 copies of the ***Peer Observation Assessment*** available per participant.

Key Points: God's call and our response; God's love; Body of Christ; stewardship; our purpose

Session 3: Growing in our Spiritual Gifts

It may be difficult for some to analyze the growth and development of their spiritual gifts. Some members may have difficulty getting past the stage of identifying their spiritual gifts.

Help with GOING DEEPER – Growing in our Spiritual Gifts:
To help others meet the challenge of developing their gifts, they must first see a vision of what a 'full expression' of what their gift can look like, so that goals for growth can be established. Envisioning specific examples for each stage of development may be difficult, but is the key to understanding the growth process. Additional time may be needed to cast this vision. Meeting with members individually may also help.

Have copies of the ***Personal Approach Assessment*** available in case someone would like a larger copy than what is provided in the book.

Key Points: Growing spiritual gifts; measurements of growth; conditions for growth

Session 4: Our personal approach and passions

After the Personal Approach Assessment has been completed, a graph is introduced to help members visualize their results. Some members may have difficulty with this step. Assistance from someone with strong math skills may be helpful.

Passion can be very difficult for some to discover and/or identify. For this reason, we will be using both sessions 4 and 5 to cover passion more thoroughly.

Key Points: Orientations of people vs project, adaptable vs structured; passions motivate us

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The DISC assessment is a second personality assessment, which is available as an option to use after this small group series. DISC is for groups that may want to focus on working together with more effective communication. It is designed to help us interact as a team. DISC is an acronym that stands for the four core personality traits that it tests: Driving, Influential, Steady, and Conscientious.

Session 5: Understanding and achoring our passions

We can benefit from the use of passion categories in three ways:

1. They provide a simple way of defining passions; helping some to identify their passion
2. They help us to categorize our passions in a faith-based way
3. They also allow us to identify common motivations within the congregation

Be sure to emphasize that passions might be found outside of what happens in the church. Be sure that your participants don't limit themselves to only what is usually done with the congregation.

Have copies of the ***Equipping and Serving Assessment*** available, as well as the ***Christ-like Love Assessment***, in case someone would like a larger copy than what is provided in the book.

Key Points: Intentional discipleship; God's promises; passions anchored in Christ

Session 6: Building up the Body of Christ

Equipping is neither greater than nor less than serving – both are equal in the eyes of God.

The purpose of this GOING DEEPER - Christ-like Love exercise is to encourage love as the primary motivation of our serving. More and more, we want to engage motivated out of love for God and love for others.

Have copies of the ***Personal Action Statements*** available in case someone would like a larger copy than what is provided in the book.

Key Points: Edifying and building up others; love motivates engagement; equipping and serving

Session 7: A mission with purpose

The purpose of this session is to ensure that our activity within the congregation is spiritually meaningful by being aligned with our mission statement.

GOING DEEPER – Living by God's Design: Some individual assistance may be needed in helping members brainstorm possibilities based upon their results from "God's Design, My Stewardship".

GROUNDWORK - Personal Action Statements: These statements help us begin the process of brainstorming on individual's cumulative assessments and discover creative outlets for the expression of their gifts.

They also encourage us in our self-responsibility. They were designed to help members see fresh perspectives and provide possible future direction relative to each person's specific interests and abilities.

A spreadsheet may be created incorporating God's design for all the members within the congregation. This spreadsheet would include members' names, top three gifts, personal approach, passion, and equipping/serving.

Key Points: Mission with purpose; Gospel, Ministry, Mission, Worship

Session 8: The bigger picture

As we venture into new areas, we want to be careful that our activity does not become solely based on personal needs. Serving and maturing in Christ is bigger than simply addressing personal growth. We can grow personally in our serving when we focus on our spiritual gifts and their development, but the focus on our gifts is ultimately the use of them for the benefit of others, in the church and outside the church. Please reinforce these concepts to keep them in the forefront.

Review the idea of a "sweet spot." Remember that the questions in this section are meant to inspire conversation – don't get bogged down in answering every single one!

Note that congregational leaders (your rector and/or shared leadership team) are encouraged to participate in Session 8. Be sure to invite them with enough notice ahead of time. Work with leadership to determine what activities should become ongoing for the congregation and what activities may be more effective outside the church. Work on developing some structure for these activities.

Ideas may include:

- establishing a WOM leader to facilitate the WOM cycle (consider opportunities for re-evaluation)
- creating teams / groups based on passion
- selecting team / group leaders
- establishing meeting dates / times
- determining best modes of communication

Key Points: Gifts are what we contribute, passions are where we serve, needs make us aware of opportunities