

## SMALL GROUP REPORT FOR 2008/9

1. Small Groups in Aldridge Parish Church are designed for those who have already found a faith in Jesus.
2. The number of Groups has increased from 13 to 17 during the last year, following the progress of Beta groups into the Small group system. There are now 190 people meeting regularly (and a further 12% irregularly), separate to those in Beta.
3. The groups are open to all adults with no lower or upper age limits, but members tend to start at around age 20 or so, and our oldest member of this congregation belongs to a group and he is in his 90s! Some groups have mixed age groups while others tend to serve one age group or another.
4. They meet on Tuesday or Thursdays apart from the new day time ladies group which is on Friday morning. Frequency is usually fortnightly although a few meet weekly. They meet in peoples homes all over Aldridge including Redhouse, and then also in Walsall, Four Oaks, Streetly, Pelsall and Stonnall. Group sizes vary, but average about a dozen. They usually meet between 8 and 10pm.
5. Meetings will include Bible study or discussion, sharing and prayer and coffee. In a typical 3 month session there will also be socials, which range from meals and walks, to theatre visits. Groups are encouraged to engage in some social action and a number have adopted missionary links to enable closer prayer support to APC overseas links..
6. It is explicit in the guidance to Small Groups (see web site) that members should care for one another, and share the load with their leaders of pastoral work within their Group and the studies week by week.
7. They are expected to be outward looking but normally evangelism occurs through the Alpha/Beta system rather than Small groups
8. The church provides guidance on the Study material, which usually links with the sermon topics, but Groups are not obliged to use this material. At any one time about 75% of the Groups will be following the set material
9. More interaction between the Groups has been encouraged this year, to help people to get to know a wider number of people in the congregation.
10. There were several presentations in the past year to communicate to the congregation what goes on in particular groups, and recently Alan and Gillian did a presentation to encourage particularly the 100 or so of those regular members of the congregation not in groups, to join. 6 people responded.
11. Photos of the Group Leaders are on the web site. We do try and identify Deputy Leaders or Assistants as support, and also to prepare the future leadership. This is not so successful as only 50% have the benefit of this.
12. Leaders meet together bi-monthly for study, sharing and prayer, a meeting which is well attended.
13. Please pray for these leaders. They are part of the backbone of the pastoral cover and Bible teaching within the church and though essential, their work is often unseen

Alan and Gillian Winser 2.4.09