Small Group Facilitator’s Guide

**Gather** (30 min)

(*people arrive and gather, get something to drink, introduce one another, until it is time to begin)*

**Begin Meeting** (5 min)

Opening Prayer

Welcome to tonight’s meeting of [*enter group name here*]. Would someone please read the opening prayer for [*insert season here]*?

(Seasonal prayer from *Daily Prayer for All Seasons* sheet)

Preamble

Each week we gather in fellowship to support one another on our lifelong spiritual journey. We focus on spirituality, discernment and sharing the joys and challenges of our lives. We commit to creating a brave space for discussion and sharing, using only “I” statements and not repeating what is shared outside the group. We commit to following a rule of life that we have found helps us grow in awareness of God’s movement in our lives.

**Our Rule of Life** (20 min)

Would someone please read the group Rule of Life?

*(Someone with the rule of life sheet reads the rule)*

We take time each week to check in with one another about our personal prayer practices and areas of discernment in our lives. Would anyone like to share about:

-their personal prayer practice

-an area of personal discernment about which you would like feedback from the group

**Read and Respond to Sacred Words** (20 min)

*(Bible Study, Book Study, Sermon Questions, etc.)*

**Individual Sharing** (25 min)

We now take time to share with one another times in the last week when we could feel God’s presence moving in our lives, which we call consolations, and times when it was challenging to see where God was moving, which we call desolations. Everyone is invited to share though no one is required. In the silence between sharing let us hold gently the stories we have heard and remain silent until someone else feels called to share. In this time, we listen deeply to one another but do not offer any response or advice during the time of sharing or in the time after our gathering has ended. We open our sharing by saying, “I have a consolation and/or desolation to share” and end by saying, “Thank you for listening.” Together we respond, “Thank you for sharing.” The space is now open for those who would like to share.

**Pray Together** (5 min)

As we finish our gathering let us pray for our own needs and the needs of others, as well as for those we hope to invite into this space with us in the future.

*Gather for Compline (or Another Form of Prayer)*

*or*

*Leader Opens Prayer*

Let us remember that we are in the presence of God…..

God, tonight/today, we pray for…..

For whom else shall we pray? (intercessions added)

God, we lift up all these prayers to you, both said and unsaid, and ask that you send us safely out into the world to do your work and bring us safely back together next week. In your name we pray.

Amen

**Invitations to Others** (5 min)

As our meeting comes to an end we take time to check in with one another about service opportunities and invitations we would like to extend to others, as well as any concerns we have about the life of the group, keeping in mind the potential for growing, branching and continuing to respond to the needs of those present. Would anyone like to share about:

-service opportunities

-invitations to others

-the life of the group, including our communication guidelines, group size, or any other joys and challenges in our group life

**Break Bread** (10+ min)

*(group gathers to share dessert/snacks and depart)*