

Guidelines to Engage “Odd” SG Interest Requests

Purpose: to give guidance for SG Leaders on how to engage small group interest requests that seem “outside” of the box or “odd” in nature.

Reason: We recently had a situation where someone submitted an odd small group interest request. In fact, this person submitted a request to 3 different small group leaders. He requested to know what time the group started so he could take the bus to the nearest bus stop and then requested to be picked up.

Guidelines to Engage:

First: it is recommended to consult with your care coach about the situation. Scripture teaches: “in an abundance of counselors there is safety” (Pr 11:14) and “in abundance of counselors there is victory” (Pr 24:6). It’s good to communicate up and down the “care chain of command” in these situations.

Second – Answer these questions:

1. How well do you know them already?
2. How many phone conversations and/or email exchanges have you had with them?
3. How long have they been coming to GFC? If unsure, call SG/Counseling Admin.
4. Have they visited other groups, if so which one(s)?
5. Are they trying to “establish” the terms of contact?

Third – if the answers to the above questions are minimal, negative or if you’re still unsure about the situation:

1. *Shoot straight with them:* just be honest. Explain you’re glad they reached out and that you want to help them get connected to your small group. The first step to do that is for you to get to know them a bit.
2. *Get to know them:* Suggest meeting with them at church during one of the services first and/ or for lunch in a public place. Invite someone else from your group.
3. Call the church and see if they are in our database and how “connected” they are to GFC – does anyone have any interaction or know them?
4. Never ride alone in a car with them until a relationship has been developed first.
5. You put together the plan and allow them to make a decision on if they want to follow or not. You just uphold what decision they make.

Be in prayer for God to protect His church and to continue to use us as salt & light. When Jesus sent out the 12 to proclaim the Kingdom of God, He said, “I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves” (Matt 10:16).