

# Tips on Weekly Group Communication & Attendance

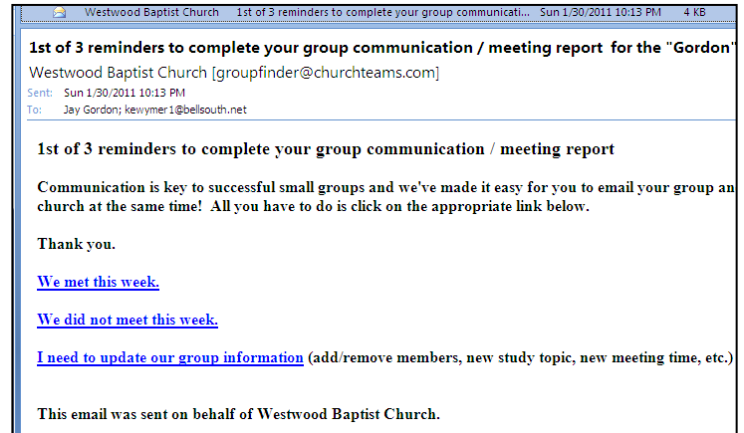
in Westwood's *Group Link* (formerly the "Home Group Organizer", now used for more than just Home Groups)

## 1. Seek a "group secretary" or two who interact with a computer often and eagerly.

The weekly report is initiated by a reminder email from the church. The email contains a link that takes you directly to your group report page where you can use a check box to indicate everyone's attendance, then include group prayer requests, study notes, plans for next week, etc.

## 2. Have a primary and an assistant secretary.

The primary secretary completes the report every week. The assistant receives, but should ignore the email reminder if the primary secretary attended the group meeting. If nothing is reported following the meeting, both will receive a second and then a third and final reminder email from the church. After the third reminder is sent, the assistant should complete the report.



## 3. The Small Groups Office appreciates timely reporting.

If you do not have all the information (i.e. prayer requests, next week's plans), please go ahead and complete the attendance portion of the report and send prayer requests later. You are welcome to use the same report form.

Your timely reporting helps us have an accurate idea of the health of each group and the small groups ministry as a whole. We try to measure how many people are actively involved in groups because we believe it is vital to being a growing disciple.

## 4. Including prayer requests, notes, and next week's plans help members of the group stay involved.

People who use the system say that it's really easy once you get going. People who missed the meeting appreciate being updated on what's going on.

## 5. Indicate who completed the report.

The bottom of the form automatically enters the email address of the Group Leader as the person completing the report. So that we may contact the person completing the report if we have a question, please replace that with *your* email address.

## 6. Your coach and the church receive a copy of the report.

Please be careful about reporting prayer requests that may be confidential. Feel free to speak in general terms. Also know that the church receives so many of these that we may not see some important prayer needs. If the church staff needs to know about a critical need or hospitalization, please call or email us separately about that.

A screenshot of the Group Link report form. It features a list of members with checkboxes for attendance: Fudge, Audie (Family) [checked], Fudge, Kristi (Family) [checked], Gibbs, Holly (Family) [checked], Gibbs, Mitchell (Family) [unchecked], Glaze, Ashley (Family) [unchecked], Smitherman, Glenda (Family) [checked], Smitherman, Tom (Family) [checked], Wymer, Geoff (Family) [checked], and Wymer, Kim (Family) [checked]. Below the list, there is a note: "\* indicates 'Home Group Leader'". There is an "Add new member" link, a field for "# of Guests (visitors in addition to members listed above):" with the value "0", and fields for "Member Attendance Count: 9" and "Total attendance (with guests): 9". There are also text areas for "Meeting Notes:" and "Prayer Requests:".

## 6. Update your group information the first week of each month.

This is important as your study topic changes, your group description may change, etc. It is the third link available on the reminder email.