

Focus on Small Group Retreats

“The goal of small groups is to connect people to Christ and connect people to each other,” Rev. Brad Kalajainen said. “You can’t grow larger as a church unless you grow smaller. Otherwise people feel just like a face in the crowd.”

We know this now. We have known this for a long time. There is plenty of evidence that the way people will grow in their faith usually involves a small faith group experience. Here are just a few recent quotes about the subject:

- Even at its earliest stages, “it was apparent that the spiritual vitality and sect-like quality of New York City Methodism and, for that matter, the entire denomination, were bound up closely with the Wesleyan class meeting, which was referred to by some 19th century Methodist writers as ‘the soul of Methodism,’” writes the Rev. Philip F. Hardt, a member of the United Methodist New York Annual (regional) Conference.
- Topical preaching, varied worship styles, effective lay leadership and small groups. These are the things ... congregations can do right now to become more vital...
- Several recent studies support the idea that growing congregations tend to offer more small groups than churches that are losing members. Small groups are an effective means of helping church members develop relationships with one another, which helps drive church growth.

And yet We know that this is a hard task with today’s busy church members. This is why at Lake Louise we are focusing our retreat ministry on providing space for small group ministry. We can be that place where small groups find Sabbath rest and renewal in order to connect people to Christ and connect people to each other. In fact, we have found that the small group retreat can do this much better than large group retreats. Your small group retreat can help people connect with one another – one small retreat after another. A pastor who invites and encourages people to take these opportunities can grow the church one small group at a time.

How do we do this?

- We encourage you to register groups of 8-10.
- We provide a retreat leader on a variety of topics. [Click here for list \(link\)](#)(or you can lead your own).
- We have beautiful spaces to gather, reflect and find Sabbath time.
- We provide a couple of different venues with different costs to fit your budget.