

## **Care Group Meeting** **May 19, 2002**

### **Logistics:**

Make every effort possible to hold the entire meeting around one table. This may require rearranging furniture, bringing in card tables and folding chairs, but the ideal is to have the entire group in one room sitting at one table. Children should sit with their parents and not be segregated to another room or a children's table. We will use this same basic format for the next several Care Groups.

If one table is not possible, the next best thing is to eat from one's lap or on the floor where everyone is in the same room. If you use this format and serve buffet style, insist that guests and more needy are served first.

### **Food:**

Ask everyone to bring something according to his ability. It is important that everyone contributes. Disperse the food on the table so you can eat family style. Be sure you have a supply of bread (common bread preferred) and pitchers of grape juice. I recommend grape juice and water as the only drink for the evening. The church will get a supply of large bottles of grape juice and have them on hand Sunday Morning for you to secure from David or get your stock at Sam's Club.

### **Plan:**

When the members arrive, put the food on the table and generally enjoy fellowship. When everyone arrives, sit at the table. There is no assigned order. Be sure that the seating reflects equality.

Your program for the evening will be to remember Jesus while eating.

- Begin with a prayer of praise and thanksgiving for the food.
- Have your song leader lead first verses of familiar hymns of praise while bowls are being passed and food served on plates.
- Steven Hopping has an instruction sheet concerning the Summer Mission which needs to be discussed and volunteers solicited at this meeting. There will be another Care Group before the Mission, so you don't need to have every slot filled tonight, but you will need to get folks thinking. The program will be distributed on Sunday morning.
- The congregation will be asked in advance to come prepared to share a favorite story of faith. We will pretend for the evening that the Bible has not been written or compiled as yet, so we must depend on the stories of Jesus and the Old Testament. While you are eating, have various members of your group share their story of faith. The leaders should start this process, so be prepared with your storytelling to set the model for others to follow.
- Involve the children in telling stories.
- Ask that only one person talk at a time. With long tables, it is easy to have secondary conversations, but those will destroy the purpose of the evening. Ask the group that if one person hears another telling their favorite story, they can kick

in as second eyewitness and elaborate or expand on the story as told by the first person.

- After 45 minutes or so of the meeting/meal (use your own judgment),
  - the leader should ask the members to fill their glass with grape juice and get a piece of bread.
  - The leader should make a 3-5 minute statement of thanksgiving for all Jesus has done. This could include items such as our salvation, the unity of our diverse group, the expectation of heaven, the provision of food.
  - Then together lift the bread and pray: *Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.* Eat it together.
  - Then lift your cups together and pray: *Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.* Drink together.
  - Close with the statement, *We look forward to eating and drinking together with the Lord at his table in the Kingdom of God.*
- Share your prayer requests and thanksgiving and pray for one another.
- Do whatever business is necessary for your next meeting.
- (Optional, but biblical) From the food that is left, make up lunches to take to absent members of the Care Group for the next day.