

Subi Church Small Group Survey 2023

NUMBER OF GROUPS/COMPLETED SURVEYS 30

My estimate of the total number of people meeting in groups is about 300-360. This is based on the number of groups meeting (30) multiplied by an average group size of 10-12.

SECTION B – BASIC DATA

SUBURBS (more than 30 due to some groups with multiple locations)

DATA

SUBURB	#	SUBURB	#	SUBURB	#
East Perth	2	Nedlands	2	Subiaco	6
Floreat	2	Salter Point	1	Wembley	2
Gwelup	2	Scarborough	3	Wembley Downs	2
Mosman Park	1	Shenton Park	2	Woodlands	2
Mount Claremont	1	South Perth	2	ONLINE	2

SUMMARY

The highest number of groups meet in Subiaco (20%), with about 15 other suburbs represented in a geographic pattern in all directions around Subiaco – mostly within a 10-15 minute driving range. Two groups meet online which started with Covid and continue to meet this way.

GROUP SIZE

DATA

GROUP SIZE	#	GROUP SIZE	#	GROUP SIZE	#
1-5	3	11-15	4	20 PLUS	5
6-10	14	16-20	4		

SUMMARY

About half of the groups fall into the 6-10 category with an even spread of other group sizes between 3 and 25 members.

MEETING DAYS/TIMES**DATA**

DAY	MORNING	AFTERNOON	EVENING
SUNDAY	1	4	
MONDAY			3
TUESDAY			
WEDNESDAY			8
THURSDAY	1		3
FRIDAY	1		7
SATURDAY		2	
TOTAL	3	6	21

SUMMARY

The majority of groups meet in the evenings (70%), with 20% meeting in the afternoons and 10% meeting in the mornings. The most popular times for meeting are Wednesday evening and Friday evening.

GROUP LONGEVITY**DATA**

Group started	#	Group started	#	Group started	#
Less than 2 years ago	2	2-4 years ago	8	5-6 years ago	6
7-8 years ago	3	9-10 years ago	2	More than 10 years ago	9

SUMMARY

Small groups are a very established and long term part of the structure of the community at Subi church. Almost half of the groups have been running for more than seven years. The other half of the groups have been newly established in the last six years. Only two new groups have been started in the last two years. Some comments throughout the survey indicated a strong need to start more new groups as soon as possible.

Leader intends to continue next year

DATA

Yes 22 No 2 Undecided 6

SUMMARY

Most group leaders intend to continue leading for at least the next year (73%) which indicates a high level of stability and commitment. However, that still leaves a significant number of groups vulnerable to closing down in the near future due to lack of leadership.

What food/drinks are shared? (more than 30 responses as multiple answers possible)

DATA

	Host provides	Share/BYO
Full meal	2	2
Snacks/nibbles	9	9
Drinks	11	3
Nothing	4	

SUMMARY

Sharing of food and drinks is a popular part of the small group experience with hosts doing most of the providing. However, groups reported a wide range of experiences of sharing - from nothing up to full meals and drinks. This seems to be based on the time groups members have, which may be mostly related to their stage of life. The general trend was that groups from older demographics tend to share more time together and more food/drinks.

Member demographic (more than 30 due to groups crossing into multiple age groups)**DATA**

	20s	30s	40s	50s	60 plus
Men	1	2	1	2	1
Women	1	2	1	2	2
Mixed	3	9	6	5	7

SUMMARY

Mixed groups make up about 65% of the total. Men's groups make up about 15% of the total. Women's groups make up about 20% of the total. There is a fairly even spread of age groups represented, with no age group particularly over or under represented.

What is being studied?**DATA**

Currently	Past	Future
John	Revelations	Judges
James	Hebrews	John
Judges	Corinthians	OT overview
Daniel	Esther	Romans
Revelations	Ecclesiastes	New Testament
Psalms	Thessalonians	Philippians
Hebrews	Genesis	Topic study/book
Parables of Jesus	OT characters	not sure yet
Exodus	Minor prophets	
Prayer	Colossians	
Topic study/book	Subi sermon notes	
Romans	Topic study/book	
Subi sermon notes		
Samuel		

SUMMARY

Most groups (80%) are directly studying books of the Bible with a fairly even weighting of old testament and new testament (this includes 4 groups who mostly study the sermons as preached each week). About 20% of groups (6 of 30) are regularly studying topics through the use of books with study notes, and occasionally directly studying a book of the Bible. Examples of topics include: becoming Godly women, spiritual warfare, etc...

SECTION C - MORE DETAILED FEEDBACK

What kind of leadership model do you use? e.g. same leader each week, shared/rotating leadership, no leader, etc... How well is this working?

SUMMARY

Most leaders are happy with their current leadership style, have tried various methods and settled on what works well for them. A consistent message was the desire to see more group members mature over time and then step up into leadership roles.

Same leader each meeting	60%
Same 2 leaders alternating	20%
Many members rotating leadership	20%

SAMPLE OF COMMENTS

- Tried the rotating leadership but wasn't really working well.
- Same leader each week. It generally works well.
- Rotating leaders if possible. It works quite well, but the schedule sometimes has to be changed based on members' availability (often due to sickness of members or kids)
- I believe in the word of facilitator, not leader when it comes to leading the small group bible study. I usually set the guide for the study for the year. I encourage members to be facilitator for the study. I usually do most of the preparation, readings and facilitate the study. It is not common for members to volunteer to facilitate the bible study. There are few that are responsive to my invites, they step up. This has worked well so far though I prefer more members to come forward as facilitators in the bible study.
- We rotate between leaders every week (ie: fortnightly rotations). This helps with the workload but sometimes can break the continuity of discussed themes. It seems to be working well.

What is the format for the group? E.g. socialise/catch up, prayer for each other, prayer for Subi church leaders and activities, Bible study, share stories, mission focus, etc... (what order and approximate time spent on each?)

SUMMARY

There were 3 main formats for meetings, with small variations over timing of each segment:

1. Most common format - socialize for a while (10-20 minutes), do a Bible study for about 45-60 minutes), pray together (5-15 minutes).
2. Share a meal together then study and pray.
3. Hub format of large group meeting first, then breaking into smaller groups for study, discussion, then rejoining the larger group for teaching, then again into small groups.

Many of the groups also try to have social gatherings once or twice a year with no study just sharing time. Where applicable this may include families and children of group members.

SAMPLE OF COMMENTS

1. We usually start with a casual catch up over afternoon tea, then we will do a Bible Study and then we will pray for each other. After that, we will do more connecting over dinner. Some fortnights, we break it up and will do a social activity outside of our home.
2. Delving deep into Bible study is the main focus of the group – overall the group expressed that they desire more in-depth Bible study and discussion (a couple joined us because they felt the group had more “serious” bible study).
3. Mission support (e.g., financially) is also strongly advocated – over the years, the group has supported OMF and Power to Change for a number of times.
4. Praise & worship, opening prayer, ice-breaker/devotional, bible study with life application, closing group prayer & fellowship with refreshment.
5. Socialise/catch up around some snacks. Large Group—catch up on new-comers, serving opportunities, social activities. Small Groups—read and study the Word using COMA to ask questions and discuss. Large Group—Leader wraps up the study. Small Groups—accountability, sharing, prayer time.

What are the key goals of the group? E.g. increase biblical knowledge, grow in faith and love, share gospel, invite new group members, build friendships, share life's journey, other...

SUMMARY

- The group leaders all focussed on the idea of growing closer to God through studying the Bible and growing closer to each other and encouraging each other in discipleship with Christ.
- Another key point mentioned by about 50% of the leaders was the goal of inviting new members. They wanted the group to provide a place where others can be welcomed into church community.
- Prayer was a consistent theme (about 80% of leaders mentioned this) – prayer for group members, the church and its leaders, as well as missions, the government and the nation.
- Praise and worship was mentioned by about 10% of leaders.

SAMPLE OF COMMENTS

1. Read the bible together but also to share our lives, encourage each other and grow in faith together.
2. I think we aim and accomplish the following: build friendships, invite new members, and keep each other grounded in the faith.
3. The key goal is to make whole-hearted followers of Christ. As the group has been together for some time, we have a strong friendship network and share each other's life journey outside of small group meeting days. So when we meet on Fridays, our focus is to study the bible, so we can mature in our faith through the Word and apply what we learn in our everyday lives – evangelising, caring and loving one another and others
4. All of the above really. Friendship is key. To build a community of young adults that want to worship and contemplate God.
5. Encourage each other to walk in the way of the Lord. Know the bible better. Evangelism. Opportunities for leadership and sharing. Prayer. Support each other, especially in times of need.

How would you rate the success of the group in meeting its goals? What improvements could be made?

SUMMARY

The overall theme was that the groups are successful yet with room for improvement. Most leaders reported that quality of Bible knowledge and quality of members walk with God were stronger because of the group. Many comments by leaders referred in some way to successful building of relationships and deeper fellowship in Christ. About 70% of leaders commented that numbers were steady or growing, which was a sign of success.

Areas identified for improvements included more equipping and training of leaders, more focus on reaching out and inviting others and finding more time for meeting in our busy lives.

SAMPLE OF COMMENTS

1. Success of the group in principle OK, but hard to keep consistency in meeting with everyone in attendance every fortnight. Quite some traveling (including overseas) by all group members.
2. 7/10, we could be more deeply engaged and have more fun together. On a positive note, it is encouraging to see members grow and serve God and others in practical ways.
3. We generally meet our goals of discipleship by being in the Word and a good amount of time for prayer. We also plan regular social activities, both just for the men and at times for the whole families.
4. I think that we are ok at meeting our goals, although it is probably difficult for us to grow as quickly as we used to, due to time constraints/availability in this particular stage of the lives of many of my group's members (i.e. many of the members are parents of very young children (under 3yo), so can't always make each session). I think as time goes on and it's a bit more predictable on when everyone is available, things will naturally improve.
5. Good. It would be nice if we could welcome some new members in future.

What would you like from the church in the way of future support?

For example: leadership training, bible study training, regular quarterly newsletter, leaders social dinner/lunch/get together, coffee catch-ups one-on-one with church pastor or elder?

SUMMARY

Most group leaders expressed a high level of satisfaction in the small group experience but had the following requests and suggestions:

1. Training and mentorship from elders and pastors
2. Sermons notes/materials provided by elders and pastors
3. A small group coordinator/pastor who can be contacted for support
4. Social get togethers every so often for group leaders organized by the church

SAMPLE OF COMMENTS

1. Training for small group leaders, big picture about where small groups is headed, how it fits into the bigger strategy of the wider church. Leaders need to know what small groups' purpose is and why we are doing what we are doing.
2. I think we also need to talk about succession planning within the small group. When a leader leaves, unfortunately the small group will disband unless there is another leader in place. But it needs to be part of a bigger conversation around the purpose of small groups and the role that it plays in the church.
3. The sermon based studies are really good, but they need to be clear and easy to follow as well as reliably available. A list of the library of materials the church has available might also be helpful.
4. Maybe better information about what pastoral support is available (and how to access it) if a group member needs it and we cannot provide enough ourselves.
5. Leaders social get together and share and pray would be good.
6. Quarterly small group reports from group leaders (with pre-determined questions) would "enhanced accountability".
7. Would be nice to have pastors / church leadership visit our group every now and again and to connect / socialise / lead the study. We had this once and it seemed to work pretty well.

OTHER FEEDBACK

SUMMARY

No particular theme emerged. Many leaders left this section blank as they had said what they wanted to say through the rest of the survey.

A couple of leaders provided helpful advice about improvements that could be made in future surveys.

SAMPLE OF COMMENTS

1. I think it is also important to bring in newcomers to Subi church. We've had 4 people join. I didn't prioritise this when we first started, but it has really helped keep the small group 'alive' and our group has really helped anchor the newcomers in my experience.
2. The biggest point I want to highlight is how important I think small groups are in spiritual formation and anchoring people in the faith.
3. I think people are hesitant to start a bible study groups but we need to encourage and enable more people to do so. I think people over complicate it and don't realise how simple and easy (and joyful) it can be.
4. What works is when Jesus is at the centre of the groups and group leaders keep in step with the Holy Spirit to become more Christ-like, care for and disciple fellow followers in love & truth (John 21:15-17, 2 Timothy 3:16-17). What works is when group leaders in view of God's mercy live an authentic & selfless life for Christ (not perfect lives as we are all wretched sinners) and putting Him first in everything they do, say and think. What works is when group leaders are intentional and willing to invest time and money in changing lives one person at a time for our Lord Jesus.
5. Have someone on staff for Young Adults pastoral care needs, particularly a female.