Small Group Ministry

Group Session Plan

**New Beginnings: Aspirations and Obstacles**

Note: Participants will need copies of this session.

**Opening Words**: Suggestion: Read responsively, or “read around” the group.

Beginnings are always with us, of our own making or thrust upon us.

*Each breath is the beginning, taken for granted and involuntary*.

Each day is a beginning, influenced by yesterday and ready to influence tomorrow.

*Birthdays remind us of our own beginnings, and candles record the number of beginnings*.

Celebrate a new year, honor new moons, note the awakening of the earth in Spring,

*Have beginnings in relationships, in jobs and retirement, in birth and death, and in life practices.*

Beginnings bring anticipation of change, of things made easier or more challenging.

*Beginnings signify endings that can be celebrated and grieved, but not ignored.*

Approach a beginning with all of the present, the promises and the obstacles.

*Life is a cycle, with beginnings coming from endings, and endings providing a basis for beginnings.*

Sometimes the beginnings are clear, sometimes they become clear in an ending –or in retrospect.

*Embrace the endings and the beginnings as they shape our lives.* Helen Zidowecki

**Check In**: How are things with you today?

**Topic/Activity:** Read the questions and take a few moments for reflection. Share your response to a question.

1. What new beginning rests on your heart and mind these days? What do you resist or welcome? What choices do you have about the new beginning? How shall you choose to go forward?
2. What story are you telling yourself about aspirations and obstacles in your life right now? Is it useful? How would you adjust, reframe or retell this story in a useful way?
3. We live in an over scheduled world of doing, becoming and belonging, always striving for something other than what we have or who we are. Is now the time to rest in the mantra, “I am enough?” What your life would be like if you lived closer to this idea.

**Check-out/Likes and Wishes:** How was this session for you?

**Closing Words:**  “Every Time” Suggest a reader with group response on “*we begin again*”.

Every time we forgive *we begin again*.

Every time we right a wrong *we begin again*.

Every time we stand up to power *we begin again*.

Every time we invite healing *we begin again*.

Every time we live the dream *we begin again*.

Every time we say Yes *we begin again*.

Every time we face a fear *we begin again*.

Every time we release worry *we begin again*. ~ Carie Johnsen

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Prepared from the Soul Matters Packet, New Beginnings: Aspirations and Obstructions.