



In [Mark 3:13-19](#), Jesus is followed by a large crowd of people all vying for his attention. The Bible says that He healed many before eventually pushing away from the crowd. While heading up the mountain to get away, Jesus “called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him. He appointed twelve – designating them apostles – that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and have authority to cast out demons.” This is the point in Christ’s ministry where He separated the twelve from the rest of the crowd. He called them out to be His “small group.” They would spend concentrated time together training and preparing for ministry.

John Wesley, an 18<sup>th</sup> century Anglican clergyman who founded the Methodist movement, preached for conversion and he saw thousands come to faith in Christ. But he didn’t stop with conversion. He organized converts into small groups and stressed life-transforming discipleship. In his short history of the Methodist movement he writes, “Many ‘repented, and believed the Gospel;’ and some joined together, to strengthen each other’s hands in God, and to provoke one another to love and to good works.”

For these groups, Wesley composed what he called [The General Rules](#). Briefly stated, as Christians, we are to (1) do no harm by avoiding evil of every kind; (2) do good of every possible sort as far as possible to all people; and (3) attend upon all the ordinances of God like participating in worship, taking Communion, reading the Bible, praying, and more.

From the beginning of Christianity, small groups were formed to build disciples and nurture others. Even today, the church encourages the formation of small groups for these same reasons. In addition, small groups build love, trust, and mutual accountability between members of the congregation.



At Prospect we already have a number of small groups at work: the Crafters, the Quilters, the United Methodist Women, the United Methodist Men, Sunday School class, Wednesday evening Bible study, Friday morning Bible study, the Choir, and the Bell choir.

Pastor Ken is asking for your input on additional areas where small groups are needed, and also volunteers to help facilitate these groups. Please talk with Ken, or share your ideas in the suggestion box in the Fellowship Hall.