

For Immediate Release

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Benicia Writer's Book Embraces the Value of Small Group Communities

"In today's hectic and disconnected society, people long to be part of a caring community, especially if they don't have family close by. Successful small groups not only provide that loving community but also help members learn to apply Christ's principles to their everyday lives," says author Teena Stewart.

Stewart's new book, *Successful Small Groups: From Concept to Practice* (Beacon Hill, to be released December 2007) will help successfully launch small groups, provide insightful tips for managing them, and develop leaders. Even churches with few or no small groups will benefit from this book, because it explains how to prepare core leadership and congregations for launching small groups while selling them on the benefits.

Each chapter in *Successful Small Groups* includes a topical Points to Ponder section to help leaders access how well their small groups are doing and changes they might make to improve them. The book also has valuable questions and forms for evaluating group effectiveness, tips for mentoring leaders, a look at the many types of groups, and an appendix of resources.

Unique elements of the book include sample flyers small groups can use to promote their ministry and explain their purpose and core values. Other practical helps that set this book apart include examples of proven community service projects and social events.

Passionate about helping equip people for effective church ministry, Teena's experience includes launching, developing, and leading small groups; educating church members regarding spiritual gifts and helping connect them with volunteer ministry opportunities; developing ministry teams; and creating systems to improve ministry. She is co-leader of the Ministry Development Team at Northgate Christian Fellowship in Benicia, California, where her husband Jeff serves as pastor of Discipleship and Small Groups.

Teena's articles have appeared in secular and Christian publications including *Succeed Magazine*, *Leadership Journal*, *Clergy Journal*, *Ministry Magazine*, *Youth and CE Leadership*, *Church Educator*, *Church of God Evangel*, *Church Worship*, *Discipleship Journal* and many other publications. Book credits include co-authoring *The World's Easiest Pocket Guide to Money and Marriage* with her husband, and highly respected financial counselor and best-selling author Larry Burkett. Teena's work has also appeared in books such as *Soul Matters for Women*, *Soul Matters for Moms*, *God's Way Christmas*, *God's Way Graduate*, and *Stories for a Teen's Heart*.

In addition, Teena is marketing and product development specialist, book reviewer, and columnist for DreamBuilders Ministry in Motion's MIM Ezine (ministryinmotion.net). DreamBuilders focuses on church vision consulting, conflict management, and ministry leader equipping.

Teena and Jeff have over 26 years of experience in church ministry. In keeping with their special calling to develop small group ministry, the Stewarts will pursue launching a coffee shop ministry in Hickory, North Carolina in November of this year. The coffee shop will include a small group ministry venue.