



4 easy steps to hosting a Cornerstone small group gathering

Cornerstone small group gatherings bring people together to connect and discover some of the unique ways Soapstone has added rich meaning to our lives. The focus is on fun and learning how this effort will position Soapstone to continue to touch the lives of people in our church family and community through the years. We'll cover the project information in just 15 minutes and guests will not be asked to contribute, so everyone can leave their checkbooks at home!

Here's how to get started:

1. Select a date, time, location and the maximum number of people you would like to host. Based on the theme of the gathering (ideas below), decide who is best suited to attend (adults only, families with young children, women, etc.) and what items you would like guests to bring.
2. We'll work with you to create an invitation that captures all of the info. Invitations will be posted to Sign-Up Genius and guests will be invited to sign up online until spaces are filled. You may also extend personal invitations.
3. Decide if you would like a member of the Cornerstone team to be present to share their 15-minute story and details of the project or if you feel comfortable doing so. Guests will not be asked for contributions at these gatherings. We'll provide handouts which will include a giving/pledge card, but there will not be an expectation to complete them at the gathering or for you to collect them.
4. Hosts should reach out afterwards to those who attended to thank them for coming and share links to additional information. This can be done via handwritten note cards (provided), phone calls or emails. A list of those who participated should also be shared with the Cornerstone team.

Need some ideas?

Select a theme that sounds fun to you, or come up with one of your own!

- **Game Night** – Break out the board games, settle in for some charades, or pop up the flip charts for some team Pictionary. Invite guests to bring a snack to share.
- **Soup and Salad Supper** – You stir up a pot of your favorite soup or chili and ask guests to bring a favorite salad or bread.
- **Mexican Fiesta** – You provide the taco shells and guests each bring a taco topping of choice. Let the crazy combinations begin!
- **Bonfire, Dogs and S'mores** – What could be better than roasting hot dogs over a crackling bonfire? Oh, adding s'mores to the mix! This is a fun one for families.
- **Ladies Coffee** – No baristas needed here, just a delicious pot of coffee and some tasty holiday stir-ins. Sip, chat, repeat.
- **Warmth for Wake** – Gatherings don't have to be held at home. Get together and chop wood for those in need this winter, then drop the tailgate and serve some hot cocoa and donuts.
- **Wine Tasting** – Ask each guest to bring a reasonably-priced bottle of wine in a brown paper or holiday bag. Design score cards that allow guests to sip and score their favorites.
- **Gingerbread House Party** – You provide the graham crackers and white icing "glue," guests bring fun candies to share and embellish their creations.
- **Caroling, Caroling** – Bring some Christmas cheer and carols to shut-ins or at a nursing home. Regroup at home afterwards for hot chocolate and holiday cookies.

Ready to host?

Contact the church office at office@soapstoneumc.org or 919-846-2212. They will put you in touch with a Cornerstone project team member who can help get things underway. Thank you!