

LEADER'S GUIDE



faith  
in ACTION  
BE THE CHURCH

PUTYOURFAITHINACTION.ORG



faith  
in ACTION  
BE THE CHURCH



# faith in Action

## LEADER'S GUIDE

Printed by Outreach Inc. in partnership with World Vision and the Zondervan Corporation

Various elements of this material remain the property of the following copyright owners: © 2006 Outreach Inc., © 2006 World Vision Inc., © 2006 Zondervan Corporation

All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible: New International Version® NIV®, Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. These Scripture quotations along with annotated notes and charts are reprinted from the Faith in Action Study Bible: Living God's Word in a Changing World © 2005 by the Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved.

The Leader's Guide includes excerpts drawn from "Leading Life-Changing Small Groups" by Bill Donahue, © 2002 by the Willow Creek Association, published by the Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved.

The Web sites, organizations and other resources referenced and recommended in this guide are offered as a support to your Faith in Action campaign. No endorsement is implied.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication or other campaign materials can be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other—except for brief quotations with attribution in printed reviews, without prior permission of the copyright owners, unless otherwise indicated in the body of the text.

Cover Design: Keith Locke, The Inreach Group

Interior Design: Ingrid Tomassoni, Outreach Inc.

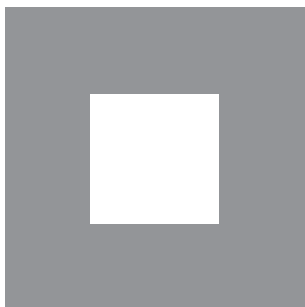
Church Tools Development: Heidi Unruh, consultant, World Vision

Curriculum and Devotional Development: Nathalie Moberg, World Vision

faith in ACT!ON

---

LEADER'S GUIDE





# SmallGroup

## LEADER'S GUIDE

Welcome to the Faith in Action small group study, a tool designed to help Christians examine their lives and faith in relation to the Gospel, and encourage and equip individuals to live out God's will through social action. The call to put our faith in action resonates throughout scripture, most vividly in the example and teachings of Christ. The second of Jesus' two greatest commandments identifies the core of faith in action: Love your neighbor.

Thank you for providing leadership for this four-session study, which is designed to be highly practical, not just theoretical. In other words, be prepared to act on what you learn! From the first session on, participants will be challenged to look beyond their own schedules and priorities to activate their faith in their everyday lives. The fourth week culminates in an all-church outreach, where your congregation will gather to reflect Christ by caring for those in need in your community or around the world. Beyond the church-wide outreach, each small group will be encouraged to engage in its own service project. This study aims to prepare small group members not only for these ministry experiences, but for an ongoing journey into a faith-in-action lifestyle.

As the small group leader, you have the opportunity to guide your group members through what will be a life-changing study. Because your time together will be highly interactive, consider sharing these simple "ground rules" at each session so all participants gain the most from the study. Bill Donahue and the Willow Creek Small Groups Team suggest that small groups operate with these key values:

### Affirmation

It is important to create an atmosphere where group members affirm and encourage one another, build each other up in Christ and help each other grow.

### Availability

Group members and their resources should be available to each other. People's time, attention and insight, as well as material resources, must be made available to each other in order to meet needs and serve one another.

### Prayer

Prayer is valued in group life. The group comes together before God to praise, ask, confess and thank him for all he has done. Prayer encourages group members to be humble, knowing that all comes from God. In prayer, they also feel valued and come to understand their own worth. As you see God move to answer the prayer concerns of your members, the whole group will be very encouraged. *(continue)*

## Openness

Openness in the relationships within the group promotes honesty and an ease of sharing feelings, struggles, joys and hurts. Reaching the goal of authentic relationships begins with being open with each other and by opening the group to new members.

## Honesty

The desire to be honest with each other is critical to authentic relationships. In order for trust to be built among the group members, they must speak the truth in love, so that “we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ” (Eph. 4:15).

## Safety

Honest, open relationships must be guarded with an agreement of safety—that what is said in the group will remain confidential, that opinions will be respected and differences will be allowed.

## Confidentiality

As part of the concept of safety, confidentiality promotes openness by promising that whatever is shared within the confines of the group will not be repeated elsewhere.

## Sensitivity

A commitment to sensitivity to the needs, feelings, backgrounds and current situations of other group members will help build relationships in the group.

## Accountability

In authentic relationships, accountability is voluntary submission to another group member(s), encouragement and help in a particular area of your life, giving them some responsibility for assisting you in that area.

# Launching the Study

This study focuses on the *Book of Luke*, considered the most comprehensive of the four gospels. It underscores Jesus’ particular concern for people who are social outcasts, women or the poor, and stresses the ethical aspects of the Christian life. Each session features the same format that alternates Bible-based DVD lessons with group discussion, activities, reflection and prayer.

The study also includes a *FaithStep Devotional* for participants to use at home during your weeks of study. This devotional is designed to further support group members’ understanding of the biblical mandate to care for others, and to encourage further reflection on how God is calling them to put their faith in action. Please remind participants to set aside time daily for their FaithStep devotion.

## Before the Study

Pray that the members of your group will be ready to receive what God has for them through this study.

Make sure your group size is small enough to encourage interaction by all participants; if it is too large, consider breaking into multiple study groups.

Ensure a DVD player is available.

Set up a comfortable study area that allows participants to face one another and also see the TV monitor.

Limit distractions during the study—ringing phones, enthusiastic dogs, etc. Remind all members to silence cell phones during the study, and consider setting up a childcare option for participants with young children.

Review the study and the DVD in advance so you are ready to facilitate the group members in their discovery.

If anyone in your small group missed this week's church service, you may want to lead off your time together by showing the sermon DVD (introduction) for the week. This video is located at the bottom of your DVD main screen.

Review the list of options for small group projects found in the leader's guide, and begin making notes on which projects might work well with your group and community setting.

## During the Study

Each session includes time recommendations for each section. If followed, these allow the session to be completed in approximately one hour.

Keep the conversation in balance: If conversation wanders away from the goal of the study, steer participants back to the discussion questions at hand. On the other hand, leave room for dialogue that is relevant to the goals of the study but may not be strictly in line with the discussion questions.

Gently limit the comments of anyone who is monopolizing the discussion.

Be aware of those who are not sharing and create opportunities for them to join in.



# SessionNotes

FourSessions: Detour  
Lens  
Drop  
Party

## Notes for Session One: Detour

### Objective

To challenge participants to be attentive and ready to lean into God—directed opportunities to care for others.

### Optional

Before your group meets, consider doing an Internet image search to find various detour signs. Print one sign for each group member. Give these out at the end of this study for participants to display on a mirror or refrigerator to remind them of their challenge to take God-directed detours to help others.

### Assignment

Participants fill out the Ministry Opportunities Inventory found on p.64 of the Participant's Guide.

## Notes for SessionTwo: Lens

### Objective

To encourage participants to examine how they view others—through the world's lens or Christ's lens?

### Optional

Borrow or find in a thrift store a pair of eyeglasses that are very strong. Before the study begins, invite members of the group to try on these glasses and describe how the lens affects their vision. Use this “lens distortion” exercise to segue into the study.

### Assignment

Ask for volunteers to help the group learn more about local needs. As the leader, you can be instrumental in coordinating this assignment, which is found at the end of SessionTwo in the Participant's Guide.

## Notes for Session Three: Drop

### Objective

To inspire participants to make reaching out to others with God's love a life habit—even if our efforts begin small, as we trust God to use any “drop” of caring to change lives.

### Optional

Bake muffins, cupcakes or even frozen bread rolls for your group to provide an opening to this session's concept of “small-becomes-big.” In Luke 13:20, Jesus used the example of a woman baking with yeast to describe the kingdom of God: “It [God's kingdom] is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough.” Just a small amount of yeast leavened all the dough—small had a big impact!

### Assignment

This week, participants will be gearing up to participate in the church-wide outreach.

## Notes for Session Four: Party

### Objective

The objective of this last study is to encourage participants through the outreach they have accomplished, and inspire them to plan to continue this work together.

### Note

You will be guiding your group not only in a discussion of their church outreach experiences, but also in designing future outreaches for your group's participation. As the leader, it will be especially helpful for you to be prepared to guide the discussion regarding the group's future outreach, found in the small group session's third discussion section.

### Optional

Consider creating an atmosphere of celebration for your group as you come together to share your outreach experiences. You can begin with a dinner or snack time, play festive music—get other group members involved in the preparation, and have a mini-party before or after your study time!

### Assignment

Guide your group in discussing ongoing service ministry. If possible, keep the momentum going by planning an activity to take place within the next two weeks. If your group needs help in identifying an outreach, suggested activities can be found on p.66 of the Participant's Guide.

may your group  
be **blessed** as you  
reflect **Christ** in your  
community, nation  
and the **world**.



# ServiceProjects

Ideas for SmallGroups

## Small Group Project Ideas

Small groups using the Faith in Action study are encouraged to engage in their own outreach. This project should not require much advance planning or expense, and can take place at a time and place of the group's own choosing. If the church has printed up cards with your Faith in Action logo, you can give these out to identify yourselves as you serve.

Here is a short list of activities designed for a solo small group that can be done in an hour or two. *(These can also be adapted for family/household service projects.)*

### 1. Prayerwalk & Trash Pick-Up

Walk together around a course of several blocks. Bring a trash bag and several pairs of gloves. Pray quietly for the community, while picking up any trash in your path. The more trash, the more prayers a particular spot will receive!

### 2. Blessing Box/Bag

Identify someone who you know is facing a challenge or life transition (moving, illness, new baby, job loss, etc.) and could use some TLC. Put your heads together to plan a list of items for a surprise blessing. Put the items in a nice box or gift bag, along with a card on which each group member has written a favorite verse of scripture and a personal note. Deliver in person, or leave the surprise package for the person to discover.

### 3. Food Collection

This is a good option if your church is holding a food drive in conjunction with its church-wide Faith in Action outreach; alternatively, you can choose a community food bank or another church's food pantry to support. Go door-to-door in the neighborhood where the small group meets. Tell people who you are and that you are collecting cans or boxes of food that will go to needy families in your city.

### 4. Serve a Meal

Connect with a community soup kitchen or church ministry that serves hot meals, and volunteer your services to help cook, serve or clean up. Try to make a point of visiting with guests so that your service makes a personal connection.



## 5. Habitat for Humanity Work Project

In many cities, Habitat for Humanity is building or repairing homes at multiple sites, and joining them for a Saturday requires little more preparation than a phone call to the local chapter office. This may appeal to your group, especially if it includes someone with construction skills, but note that many Habitat projects can also use unskilled labor.

## 6. Playground Buddies

This outreach will appeal to your kids—and to the kid in you! Check around for a playground, or public pool in the summertime, where lots of kids play unsupervised. Bring game equipment (basketball, frisbees, beach ball, etc.) and brush up on your playground or pool games such as Capture The Flag and Marco/Polo (ask your kids for pointers). Start up a game and invite kids to join you (have them ask their parents for permission if they are there). When everyone is tired out, share a juice drink and snack.

## 7. Sort and Package

Volunteer at a local sorting center for donated merchandise that will be given to those in need. If there is a World Vision Storehouse in your area, have the group participate in a sorting event there.

PUTYOURFAITHINACTION.ORG

 ZONDERVAN®

*OUTREACH*®

World Vision®



faith  
in ACTION  
BE THE CHURCH



# faith in Action

## LEADER'S GUIDE

Printed by Outreach Inc. in partnership with World Vision and the Zondervan Corporation

Various elements of this material remain the property of the following copyright owners: © 2006 Outreach Inc., © 2006 World Vision Inc., © 2006 Zondervan Corporation

All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible: New International Version® NIV®, Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. These Scripture quotations along with annotated notes and charts are reprinted from the Faith in Action Study Bible: Living God's Word in a Changing World © 2005 by the Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved.

The Leader's Guide includes excerpts drawn from "Leading Life-Changing Small Groups" by Bill Donahue, © 2002 by the Willow Creek Association, published by the Zondervan Corporation. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved.

The Web sites, organizations and other resources referenced and recommended in this guide are offered as a support to your Faith in Action campaign. No endorsement is implied.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication or other campaign materials can be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other—except for brief quotations with attribution in printed reviews, without prior permission of the copyright owners, unless otherwise indicated in the body of the text.

Cover Design: Keith Locke, The Inreach Group  
Interior Design: Ingrid Tomassoni, Outreach Inc.  
Church Tools Development: Heidi Unruh, consultant, World Vision  
Curriculum and Devotional Development: Nathalie Moberg, World Vision

faith in ACT!ON

---

LEADER'S GUIDE



# SmallGroup

## LEADER'S GUIDE

Welcome to the Faith in Action small group study, a tool designed to help Christians examine their lives and faith in relation to the Gospel, and encourage and equip individuals to live out God's will through social action. The call to put our faith in action resonates throughout scripture, most vividly in the example and teachings of Christ. The second of Jesus' two greatest commandments identifies the core of faith in action: Love your neighbor.

Thank you for providing leadership for this four-session study, which is designed to be highly practical, not just theoretical. In other words, be prepared to act on what you learn! From the first session on, participants will be challenged to look beyond their own schedules and priorities to activate their faith in their everyday lives. The fourth week culminates in an all-church outreach, where your congregation will gather to reflect Christ by caring for those in need in your community or around the world. Beyond the church-wide outreach, each small group will be encouraged to engage in its own service project. This study aims to prepare small group members not only for these ministry experiences, but for an ongoing journey into a faith-in-action lifestyle.

As the small group leader, you have the opportunity to guide your group members through what will be a life-changing study. Because your time together will be highly interactive, consider sharing these simple "ground rules" at each session so all participants gain the most from the study. Bill Donahue and the Willow Creek Small Groups Team suggest that small groups operate with these key values:

### Affirmation

It is important to create an atmosphere where group members affirm and encourage one another, build each other up in Christ and help each other grow.

### Availability

Group members and their resources should be available to each other. People's time, attention and insight, as well as material resources, must be made available to each other in order to meet needs and serve one another.

### Prayer

Prayer is valued in group life. The group comes together before God to praise, ask, confess and thank him for all he has done. Prayer encourages group members to be humble, knowing that all comes from God. In prayer, they also feel valued and come to understand their own worth. As you see God move to answer the prayer concerns of your members, the whole group will be very encouraged. (*continue*)

## Openness

Openness in the relationships within the group promotes honesty and an ease of sharing feelings, struggles, joys and hurts. Reaching the goal of authentic relationships begins with being open with each other and by opening the group to new members.

## Honesty

The desire to be honest with each other is critical to authentic relationships. In order for trust to be built among the group members, they must speak the truth in love, so that “we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ” (Eph. 4:15).

## Safety

Honest, open relationships must be guarded with an agreement of safety—that what is said in the group will remain confidential, that opinions will be respected and differences will be allowed.

## Confidentiality

As part of the concept of safety, confidentiality promotes openness by promising that whatever is shared within the confines of the group will not be repeated elsewhere.

## Sensitivity

A commitment to sensitivity to the needs, feelings, backgrounds and current situations of other group members will help build relationships in the group.

## Accountability

In authentic relationships, accountability is voluntary submission to another group member(s), encouragement and help in a particular area of your life, giving them some responsibility for assisting you in that area.

# Launching the Study

This study focuses on the *Book of Luke*, considered the most comprehensive of the four gospels. It underscores Jesus’ particular concern for people who are social outcasts, women or poor, and stresses the ethical aspects of the Christian life. Each session features the same format that alternates Bible-based DVD lessons with group discussion, activities, reflection and prayer.

The study also includes a *FaithStep Devotional* for participants to use at home during your weeks of study. This devotional is designed to further support group members’ understanding of the biblical mandate to care for others, and to encourage further reflection on how God is calling them to put their faith in action. Please remind participants to set aside time daily for their FaithStep devotion.

## Before the Study

- Pray that the members of your group will be ready to receive what God has for them through this study.
- Make sure your group size is small enough to encourage interaction by all participants; if it is too large, consider breaking into multiple study groups.
- Ensure a DVD player is available.
- Set up a comfortable study area that allows participants to face one another and also see the TV monitor.
- Limit distractions during the study—ringing phones, enthusiastic dogs, etc. Remind all members to silence cell phones during the study, and consider setting up a childcare option for participants with young children.
- Review the study and the DVD in advance so you are ready to facilitate the group members in their discovery.
- If anyone in your small group missed this week's church service, you may want to lead off your time together by showing the sermon DVD (introduction) for the week. This video is located at the bottom of your DVD main screen.
- Review the list of options for small group projects found in the leader's guide, and begin making notes on which projects might work well with your group and community setting.

## During the Study

- Each session includes time recommendations for each section. If followed, these allow the session to be completed in approximately one hour.
- Keep the conversation in balance: If conversation wanders away from the goal of the study, steer participants back to the discussion questions at hand. On the other hand, leave room for dialogue that is relevant to the goals of the study but may not be strictly in line with the discussion questions.
- Gently limit the comments of anyone who is monopolizing the discussion.
- Be aware of those who are not sharing and create opportunities for them to join in.