



## Small Groups

*HCC Mission: Setting an atmosphere for people to choose to follow Jesus Christ wholeheartedly, as Disciples.*

*Two Goals of a Small Group: Relationship and Discipleship*

### I. Relationship

The Christian Life is not solitary. God calls us to live out our lives with him in the context of relationships. One of the primary purposes of the Small Group structure is to provide a context where we can establish real and lasting relationships. Relationally, Small Groups provide a context for:

1. Developing friendships.
2. Caring for one another with practical help and personal encouragement.
3. Celebrating joyful occasions and having fun together.
4. Serving side by side with group members as we seek to serve others.
5. Encouraging outreach.

### II. Discipleship

A disciple is a fully devoted follower of Christ who finds his/her identity in Christ and expresses that identity through loving God, loving others, and obeying the commands of Christ. The Small Group should be a place which encourages our growth in Christian discipleship. We are called to be disciples and to make disciples. In our meetings, we should strive to encourage each other through Scripture, praying together, and challenging one another toward growth in Christlikeness.



## FAQ'S

Why small groups?

*People will come to church because of an invitation or because of good preaching or good music, but people STAY in church because of good relationships. Small groups are for building Godly, Bible centered relationships.*

How does one get into a group?

*Via sign ups – this way people have the choice of who they group together with instead of being pushed in a certain direction. We strongly encourage people to join a group with people they are already in a relationship with.*

*We are also encouraging leaders to prayerfully consider and invite people they think God would be directing to join their group.*

Where will groups meet?

*Homes are best for this, as the living room encourages comfort, openness and belonging.*

For how many weeks do the groups meet?

*Three sessions of 9 weeks in length per year with a few week break in between each one. The first to start in October, the second to start in January, and the third to start in April. No official small group meetings from July to September.*

Why run 3 different sessions of small group meetings each year?

*By having multiple sessions each year, we provide 3 natural places for*



*people to join or leave a group. This is perfect for the newcomer. It is also perfect for those who have busier seasons where participation would be impossible.*

How many people are in a group?

*Ideal group size is around 12 people. Instead of dividing when the group gets too large, we simply start new groups.*

What will the groups study?

*Questions launched from the sermon prepared in advance by the main speaker. Not simply a regurgitation of the message, but rather an expansion using parallel passages and a deliberate focus on the application (which is often not a strength of the sermon itself).*

*Other benefits of the sermon based model:*

- It is simple for any newcomer or young Christian to get involved, only prerequisite is having listened to the sermon*
- It provides a significant increase in purpose for the average person and the Sunday morning worship service (as well as a greater interest in listening to the sermon if church is missed)*
- It limits the amount of training needed by those facilitating*
- It limits the amount of prep time required to facilitate*

What does the typical small group meeting look like?

*Its best if the group can meet in a home (more intimate which will facilitate deeper relationships).*



*Each meeting should take about 90 minutes and start a time of refreshments and sharing with one another. This would be followed by the study time and then concluded with a time of prayer (some groups may wish to separate men and women for the prayer time).*

*This is a template that should be followed to start, but there is obviously room for deviation. One group may have people who enjoy singing and wish to spend some time in worship that way.*

*Special circumstances may call for a change (a crisis or a big life event) and groups are encouraged to use one of their 9 sessions to go and serve in the community.*

Who will lead these small groups?

*People who have spiritual warmth. By this we do not necessarily mean a long time Christian or deep studied theologian, though that may be present, rather we mean someone who is demonstrating a clearly growing relationship with Jesus.*

*People who have relational warmth. Leaders need to have good social skills and emotional intelligence. Leaders must also be teachable/willing to learn and must adhere to the HCC SOF.*

What do we do with our kids?

*Each group will be responsible for this for themselves.*

Who will oversee these small groups?

*Pastor Matt will be starting out, but long term we would like for another individual or couple to take on this important task.*