



## THE VISION FOR THE LIFE GROUPS AT HBC

It is our desire to see the Life Groups as a means in which the congregation at HBC is able to participate in mutual encouragement and spiritual nourishment to one another, within the bounds of pastoral oversight. These groups provide the opportunity for teaching, prayer and fellowship with the view of growing in Christ in a small group context.

### **WHAT ROLE DO THE LIFE GROUPS PLAY IN THE LIFE OF HBC?**

The most important gathered meeting at HBC is the weekly assembling together of the whole congregation on the Lord's Day (Heb. 10:24-25). This is important because it is the whole church gathered with its diversity of members reflecting the effects of the gospel.

The Life Groups at HBC will be an outflow of the corporate gathering of the church (Life Groups are not to be viewed as a substitute for the whole church gathered). They are compatible with the teaching and mission of HBC and these groups – though many in number – are one in focus by studying the same thing (there may be exceptions to this from time to time as provided by the Elders oversight). Though there will be unity in the teaching focus, each of these groups ought to naturally reflect their individuality. This is including various ways of the meeting's format, regularity of meeting times and the group dynamic.

Just as the Life Groups are an outflow of the corporate gathering of the church, an outflow of the Life Groups will be individuals meeting one to one in discipleship in other settings (2 Tim. 2:1-2).

### **WHO MAKES UP A LIFE GROUP?**

We recognize the importance of some groups having a specific gender focus (ladies study and men's meeting) being a defined group (cf. Titus 2:1-8). However, we believe it to be wise that all other Life Groups be open and encouraging of anyone attending. We believe this best reflects God's design of a church and provides the members the value of the diverse Body of Christ, teaching us grace, patience and maturity.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IN A LIFE GROUP?**

As each group gathers, in a variety of ways and approaches, each group will focus on a time of prayer, teaching and fellowship.

The Eldership will provide each group with teaching material and study questions to help guide discussion in line with the church's belief and mission (Eph. 4:11-13). This

teaching may vary by considering books from the Bible, key sections of Scripture, Scriptural themes/topics or a book on Christian living.

The normal practice will be for all the Life Groups to be working through the same study focus as the other groups. This is to help encourage unity across the whole church, and provide a common discussion point between members from other groups. There will be times in which groups may do a separate study, but this must be discussed in conjunction with the Eldership.

### **WHO LEADS A LIFE GROUP?**

Each Life Group will have a study leader, though there may be more than one leader in the group. Each leader is to be a member in good standing and committed to the belief and mission of HBC. The leader(s) will be approved by the Eldership. Each leader must study the material and be prepared for the Life Group meeting. Each leaders(s) ought to strive to foster fellowship within the group.

The Life Group leaders will meet on a number of times during the year with the Pastor. The purpose of these meetings is to be an encouragement to one another and to provide the teaching direction and focus for the next section of the year.

**- The Elders**

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