



EMMANUEL CROYDON

HOME GROUP LEADER'S MANUAL

V1.0

Vision for Emmanuel Home Groups:

We want our home groups to be places that teach people about Jesus and that help people to discover his calling for their lives; to be genuine and authentic communities where people know they are loved by Jesus and long to reveal that love to others; and to be places where members are equipped to live in the fullness of discipleship from all that the Bible has to teach.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF A HOME GROUP LEADER?

Emmanuel Home Group leaders have three areas to their role:

- 1)** They offer deep discipleship and seek to help their group members to grow spiritually.
- 2)** They provide a more personal welcome to a large church, using their group as a place of hospitality, friendship and community.
- 3)** They are the first port of call for ongoing prayer and pastoral support.

AIMS OF HOME GROUPS

- We want anyone who feels that Emmanuel is their spiritual home to be able to find a place in a home group
- We want our home groups to be a natural part of everyone's involvement in the church family
- We want home groups to be a place where people are able to grow in transformational faith

WHAT IS THE PLACE OF BIBLE STUDY AT EMMANUEL HOME GROUPS?

- Emmanuel Home Groups are centred on Bible study. Our primary aim is to grow in faith by reading and discussing God's word together.
- There is weekly sermon-based Bible study material provided for home groups so that they are able to talk about what has been preached at church.
- Part of our bi-monthly leader training will be helping us to prepare and lead our Bible studies well.

SUPPORT FOR HOME GROUP LEADERS

All home group leaders are part of a cluster (together with three or four other leaders) which operates to offer pastoral support, advice, and information. We strongly encourage any problems with your group to be talked through with your cluster leaders as your first port of call.

Home group members join the group as a place of friendship, growth, but also confidentiality and trust. In the same way, we ask our home group members to support their leader(s) to the best of their ability. Obviously there will be times when our leaders need added support in their role.

SEVEN INGREDIENTS OF A HEALTHY HOME GROUP

A warm welcome – this is one of the most important parts of your time together, particularly for new people or for those who feel on the fringes of the group or the church

Food – you don't of course have to provide a meal, but to offer a drink and maybe something small to eat will help your group to feel welcome. People are naturally put at ease in the casual conversation that happens around food and drink.

Start strong – An icebreaker or a way to get to know one another better if you are a new group is invaluable. Otherwise, the starter question on the study is intended to carry out this function.

Lift one another up in prayer – Beginning and ending the group in prayer will help to put the focus on God. A strong focus on praying for each other each week and through the week will remind everyone that this is the place where they can know the support and love of those who pray for them.

Connect the dots – One of the main aims of home group teaching is to bring the application from Sunday's sermon. This will also be a time when group members realise that God goes into their Monday-Saturday and for you to hear what is going on in their lives outside church.

Hold your plans loosely – It's so important for us as leaders to be flexible with the schedule, particularly if someone in the group is vulnerable or needs extra support. Of course, you won't do this every week, but it's good to be prepared to allow timing to be loosely held.

Save the date – Home groups work best when everyone is as committed as possible to meeting together. If someone in the group has not been for several weeks, do stay in touch with them. Another important 'save the date' for Emmanuel leaders is our bi-monthly small group leader training (the fourth Wednesday of every other month). Please do make this a priority even if your group meets on a Wednesday.