

Encountering God Groups should be places where we are expecting to meet with God through the Scriptures, through each other, through worship, through loving service.

HOUSEGROUPS THRIVE ON COMMITMENT AND FOOD

Coming to meetings should be a priority in our diaries, and caring and praying for one another outside group meetings is hugely important. Meanwhile we really recommend that groups eat together at least once a month prior to/in addition to their regular meetings – this is because eating together is a great way of deepening friendship and fellowship.

PRACTICALITIES

Size - Normally groups will be made up of up to 12 people

Length of meetings – groups should agree together how long they meet for – but a rough rule of thumb is between 1 ½ to 2 hours

How often – groups should meet at least every fortnight

Study Material - material will be provided, sometimes linked to our sermons. Groups can from time to time 'do their own thing'.

Confidentiality - Groups should be safe places where differences can be expressed, deep things can be shared and prayed for, and support received. They should also be safe places for new people to join.

HOW DO I JOIN A GROUP?

You can either join an existing group, or join one of the new groups that are starting. You can either speak to one of the clergy, email the church office office@bilton-cofe.org.uk, or speak to one of the existing housegroup leaders with a view to joining their group on a trial basis, to see if you think you fit in.

The leaders and days the groups meet are:

Ruth Yarborough —Thursday 7.30pm

Sheina Demain —Tuesday 2pm

Paul Tennyson (group has a focus on healing prayer) —Tuesday 7.30pm

Theva Thevarokiam/Pam Mills (focus on CMS) Sunday 7pm

Jonathan Elsworth —Monday 7.30pm

Katie Burke

Ruth Donegan-Cross —Monday 7.30pm (new)

Andy Patrick —Tuesday 7.30pm (new)



It is the experience of many Christians that housegroups are great places to grow in relationship with God, help them feel a greater sense of belonging to the body of Christ by getting to know others better, and equip them to live as disciples of Jesus.

Therefore we want to see as many people as we can at St John's and St Luke's be part of a housegroup. To this end, we thought it would be helpful to let you know a little more about our groups and how they operate.

To begin with, we follow what we call the **A, B, C, D, E** model (borrowed from Phil Potter in his book, 'The Challenge of Cell Church')

All involved - roles and responsibilities, including leadership and pastoral care, are shared out rather than being left to a few. This leads to shared ownership of the group and helps people to discern and use their ministries and gifts.

Becoming disciples Groups need to be places where people grow in understanding of what it means to be a fully devoted follower of Christ.

Creating community Groups should be places of belonging and of welcome, where people can find a way into the body of Christ and can receive a quality of love and care that sets us apart.

Demonstrating God's love in and to the world Groups can do this in a number of ways such as

- equipping members to live as disciples in their everyday lives
- working to see new people (perhaps from outside the church) join them
- supporting/being involved with /supporting / praying for:
 - a particular area such as the Coppice estate or the Woodfield Millennium Green Community Garden;
 - A particular event like Alpha, Little Fishes, Thirst or Blast Off
 - One or more of our mission partners
- having common interests that are shared with people beyond the group e.g. being part of a pub quiz team or a community group