Cornerstone
Neighbourhood Church

Home Group Structure

The purpose of a Home Group ("missional community") model is to facilitate the W.H.O.L.E. ministry of our church. Rather than one central meeting for the congregation, our church would be "decentralized" into a number of "lighthouses" throughout our neighbourhood. Rather than a departure from our goal of reaching Albion and area, it is another way to be "present" in our community. Also, these are not just "get-together-to-watch-the-sermon" groups. A larger strategy is in view. This includes shepherding of group members. It includes outreach through relationships group members have in our community. In this season of restrictions, Home Groups are strategic not only because a large group gathering space is unavailable. They challenge us to go beyond *attending* church with a mission to *being* the church that is on mission.

• Leadership

Leaders should maintain a vital relationship with Jesus and have a passion for His Church. Leaders must participate in personal intercession for the ministry of CNC. Also, leaders of Home Groups must complete the requirements of the *CNC Abuse Prevention Policy*. Leaders will facilitate time in God's Word by leading discussion that arises from the sermon video. They will ensure that there is worship, care, prayer, and outreach happening in the Home Group. Leaders will be resourced and equipped by Pastor Brent. The leader will seek to make the time together be interactive and meaningful. Leaders may also host the group. However, someone may wish to be a host by opening their home to provide a space for the Home Group to meet. Sanitizer will be provided as per the safety guidelines. Hosting is not about providing lots of snacks or meals. Essentially, it is providing the Home Group with a warm and welcoming environment.

• Format of the group

Each Home Group will meet once a week, ideally on Sunday morning. When the group gathers in a home, the weekly sermon and worship video will be viewed. This will include the discussion and action steps coming from the sermon. Groups are encouraged to be flexible but intentional. For example, they may choose to meet on Sunday evening to accommodate the work schedule of some members. Material will be provided for children who may be part of a Home Group. Rather than viewing children as an inconvenience to the group, it is an opportunity to integrate them into intergenerational Christian discipleship. Each group will be encouraged to celebrate communion each month.

• Creating the groups

An obvious question is, "how will groups be set up?" This will be the responsibility of the Leadership Team and Pastor Brent. There are already some existing home groups which can form the basis for our new Home Groups. Group size will vary but will likely be in the 15-20 range. Of course, we welcome your input. In fact, on August 23 there will be a Home Group Survey distributed. This will give opportunity to indicate if you are already part of a group, or have particular preferences. Each Sunday the same service presented at the Home Groups will be available online. Efforts will be made to create a "virtual home group" for those whose health does not permit them to meet in person.

• Resources

To explore the model of a church meeting in Home Groups, two video resources will help. To consider the vital aspect of evangelism through small groups watch **Disciple Making Movements**, featuring Dave Marttunen, who leads Fellowship International. To get a sense of the community life of a Home Group, please watch **What Does Missional Community Life Look Like** featuring Jeff Vanderstelt of the Soma Church in Tacoma, WA.

• Large gatherings

One practical benefit of a Home Group strategy is that it helps us maintain a "bubble" or "pod" as per the current health advice. In time, when COVID-19 restrictions are eased and we can rent Webster's Corners Elementary School, our Leadership Team will assess returning to weekly large group worship services. If we are experiencing spiritual growth through the Home Group model, we may choose to continue having our main "worship service" in Home Groups. However, we would also plan to gather as a large group, perhaps monthly, for a celebration service.