

## Sermon-based Small Groups Frequently Asked Questions

### Why Small Groups at SBPC?

We believe a small group ministry is vital to build a community of fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ. God calls us to be in community and fellowship with other believers to encourage, support and challenge one another toward spiritual maturity. Sermon-based Small Groups are the primary vehicle for discipleship at SBPC, with an emphasis on leadership development.

### What is a Sermon-based Small Group?

A small group consists of 10-14 people who meet weekly in homes to study, to share, and to support one another in their Christian lives. The studies are based on the previous weekend's sermon text using a curriculum designed from the sermon outline with additional supporting passages. Each group is led by trained facilitators who are accountable to the Small Group Ministry. A typical meeting lasts two hours including light refreshments, discussion, spiritual practices and prayer. No homework is required. Groups can choose to be open to new people, or are considered full once they have enough people.

### Why Use the Sermon-based Model?

This model enhances the effectiveness of the large group worship experience by building a discussion around application of the weekly message. Imagine this as a "lecture-lab" style that encourages people to personalize their insights, get feedback from group members, discover how to apply scripture to real life, and experience a deeper relationship with God through spiritual practices. By making the sermon text the core content for spiritual growth, the discipleship of individuals is unified under a single theme, relationships become much more significant, and the group accountability promotes personal application.

### How Long Does a Group Last?

Each small group session lasts approximately 10 weeks. The year is divided into three sessions with a brief hiatus between sessions, then taking the summer off. At the end of each session, all participants have the choice of staying in the same group, trying a new group, or taking a break. During the summer, groups are encouraged to occasionally meet for informal gatherings.

### What is the Required Commitment?

Joining a small group requires a 10-week commitment to attend the weekly meetings. This commitment is the key to strong relationships and healthy groups.

### What about Childcare?

The church does not provide childcare, but may be able to help you organize your own. Each family is responsible for making childcare arrangements. Sometimes it works best for families to share a sitter or to swap childcare with another family whose group meets at a different time.

### When and Where Do Small Groups Meet?

Small Groups meet on various days and nights of the week in homes throughout the community. Some groups choose to rotate homes between members. If homes are not available, a room on the church campus may be requested if available.

### How Do I Sign Up?

Church-wide registration is in September and January. Sign-ups will also be taken through the church office or online. Those new to the church can sign up and join an open group without waiting for the start of a new session. Groups form around a variety of categories. Groups can form around special interests, by common life situations, by time or day of weekly meetings, or by geography. People will self-select according to their preference.

### How Can I Become a Small Group Leader or Host a Group at my Home?

Leadership is both a calling and a process. A person may be invited into leadership through another leader's recommendation or a personal sense of call. In order to begin the process you must be participating in a Sermon-based Small Group, be a member of SBPC, and have a personal conversation with the ministry leadership. To begin this process contact Paula Taylor (Paula@solanapres.org).