



SMALL GROUP VISION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Small Group Ministry is to be a vessel, through community, for **discipleship**. Small Groups are meant to reinforce the principles set forth as the purpose of New Hope Church.

Purpose Statement of New Hope Church

*"The purpose of this church is to glorify God by producing maturing followers (disciples) of Jesus Christ through the four scriptural principles of **Learning, Loving, Worship and Prayer.**"*

Small Groups will seek to accomplish this through creating a safe and supportive atmosphere for people to wrestle with the truths of God as they mature in their faith. Growing love for God, and obedience to Him are expected norms. A balance of these elements within each group is important:

1. **Learning - Scripture is intentionally present at each Small Group meeting** - God has provided the Bible for our benefit. It is "profitable for teaching, reproof, correction and training in righteousness so that we will be complete and equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16). For example, re-reading a passage of Scripture mentioned in a sermon and discussing it, or using Bible verses (in context) for a topical study such as personal finances.
2. **Loving - The Small Group is to be a family where you can know and be known.** Members will be encouraged to love and serve one another, including people who are "unlovely" or challenging. Accountability and transparency are part of doing life together, and are ingredients to maturing in our relationship with Christ and others. Opening our lives to each other happens by spending time together - getting together for lunch, enjoying a hobby together, or helping with a tangible need are examples. This should not be "one more thing to do" but rather an invitation into "something we're already doing."
3. **Worship - Worship is a natural outflow of who you are in Christ.** The early disciples attended temple, took their meals, celebrated the Lord's Supper, and praised God together on a daily basis. They were filled with joy and gratefulness, and spent devoted time in prayer as an expression of their praise and adoration of God.
4. **Prayer - Prayer is the expression of dependence on God.** Small Group members will be encouraged to participate in prayer through sharing praise, thanksgiving, confession, and prayer requests with others. Small Group members also share one another's burdens as they bring needs to the Father in prayer.
5. **On Mission - Small Groups are to join God as He builds His Church.** Small Group Leaders will encourage members to initiate relational outreach to unbelievers in their sphere of influence. This is in obedience to Jesus' command to make disciples, teaching them to observe His commands (Matthew 28:18-20). For example, asking someone to a weekend service or small group, engaging someone in foundational faith questions or sharing the Gospel, and building relationships over coffee or dinner are all missional activities. The Small Group Leader will model, encourage and guide the group, giving an ongoing challenge to the members for outreach. The group will intentionally pray together to fill the "empty chair."
6. **Service - Service within the church or outside her walls is a mark of a growing disciple.** It is a way of expressing our love for God and others in a tangible way. Service can be within our Small Group through the use of the gifts God has given us, or as a means of rubbing shoulders with those we seek to share God's love and gospel.
7. **Replication - Small Groups will work toward replicating.** Our goal in Small Groups is to "make disciples who make disciples." Small Group Leaders intentionally equip and build into new leaders using an apprenticeship model. The Executive Pastor or Small Group Coach will walk Small Group Leaders through this process. We will intentionally work to make room for the people God brings to enjoy the blessing of being part of a small group.