

# LIFE GROUPS

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **How Important Are Life Groups?**

We consider Life Groups to be one of the primary ways for someone to grow in their faith. They are the place where the real ministry of the church takes place as we encourage, support, and challenge one another. God doesn't want any of us to be left to walk alone – we need each other. We want to be a church, not a crowd!

### **What Is a Life Group?**

A Life Group made up of 8-16 people who meet regularly to study, to share, and to support one another in their Christian lives. Each group is led by a trained leader and host couple. A typical meeting lasts for an hour and a half. Some groups choose to also spend some time in singing and worship.

### **How Long Does a Group Last?**

Each Life Group session lasts 8-12 weeks. Basically, we've broken the year into 3 seasons. At the end of each season, you have the choice of staying in the same group, trying a new group, or even taking a break. Most groups stay together throughout the entire year. However, groups do not meet mid-June through August, though some continue to meet informally or socially through the summer.

### **Which Group Should I Join?**

We suggest you join a group based on your "stage in life" rather than on geography or the most convenient night of the week. We've found that a group works best when you share common interests, backgrounds, marital status or similar aged children. Frankly, sometimes it might take two or three groups before you find the perfect fit. But don't worry, you'll find it!

### **What Is the Required Commitment?**

Joining a Life Group requires an 8 to 12-week commitment to attend the weekly meetings and to do the "homework" ahead of time. Obviously, allowances are made for sickness, vacation, work conflicts, and other special events...but not much more! We have found that this commitment is the key to strong relationships and healthy groups.

### **What About Childcare?**

Life Groups are for adults only. We leave it up to each family to work out their own childcare. Bayside will reimburse parents if needed for some of the cost incurred with hiring a babysitter. We value you being in a Life Group and don't want finances to be a hindrance. Other options that may work for families is to share a sitter or to swap childcare with another family whose group meets on a different evening or time.

**What Will We Study?**

Some studies are based on the previous weekend's sermon, some use the Bible Reading Plan. If there is "homework" to do, it will usually take 20 minutes to complete.

**How Do I Sign Up?** Church wide sign-ups begin at the start of each new session (in September, January, and March). You can also sign up before or after any weekend worship service or by calling the church office. Our pastors will be happy to help you find just the right group for you. Those who are new to the church (start attending in the middle of a session) can sign up and join any group that has openings without waiting for the start of a new session.

**When and Where Do These Groups Meet?**

Our Life Groups meet on various days and nights of the week in homes throughout the community. And a few of them actually meet at the church even though they are called "Life Groups!" This is particularly true of some "Special Interest" groups.

**What Is A "Special Interest" Growth Group?**

Some Special Interest groups use a different curriculum for their studies (their focus can include everything from marriage enrichment materials to Bible study methods, parenting issues or financial freedom to Christianity 101). Other Special Interest groups are bound together by a common station in life such as singles, young marrieds, parents of teens, seniors, young adults, and other groupings.