

## Orwell Church Small Groups: FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)

### **Q. What is a Small Group?**

A. The purpose of Small Groups is to connect and grow authentic relationships with God, other Christians, and our neighbours. Small Groups function as the main way for the church body to become like family. In Small Groups, people talk through life issues, eat together, pray together, laugh together, serve others together, etc.

### **Q. Why are Small Groups so important to Orwell Church?**

A. We intentionally say that getting connected means participating in both the Sunday gatherings and a Small Group. Sundays are a time for celebrating in worship together, hearing the preaching of the Word, and sharing in Communion. Smaller Groups are preferred for building relationships with one another and living life together. Both types of gatherings meet different needs in the spiritual health of the Church as well as individually, which is why we emphasise both.

### **Q. Is a Small Group like a Bible Study?**

A. Small Groups are an environment for building relationships with one another which strongly emphasizes challenging one another to drive God's Word deeply into our lives. Some Groups follow the Sunday sermon series; some choose to work through another book of the Bible; some choose to study a topic. In all cases, Bible reading and discussion is geared toward personal life application and transformation rather than intensive Bible teaching.

### **Q. What does a typical Small Group meeting involve?**

A. Over a period of time a typical meeting may involve time for food, conversation, prayer, and discussion for applying the Bible to practical living. Many Small Groups have periodic special events such as barbeques, meals or parties.

### **Q. Do I have to be a member of Orwell Church to attend a Small Group?**

A. No. If you consider Orwell Church your church home, you are welcome to join a Small Group before becoming a member. However, we do stress the importance of completing your membership, since Small Groups are intended for those who call Orwell Church home and for the friends and neighbours. Small Groups are not intended for those who consider Orwell Church Group involvement a supplement to their attendance at other churches. Membership is required to be a Small Group Leader.

### **Q. I'm not/don't know if I'm a Christian. Can I attend a Small Group?**

A. Definitely. Joining a Small Group is a great way to find out more about Jesus and see what Christians are like. If you have questions, we can help you process through them. Also the Alpha Course is a great opportunity to explore Christianity further.

### **Q. Are my children welcome to attend the Group?**

A. We also run youth Small Groups during the week for teens. Plans for accommodating children vary from Group to Group. Feel free to either inquire with the Group directly, or email [office@Orwellchurch.co.uk](mailto:office@Orwellchurch.co.uk) for information.

### **Q. Are there various kinds of Small Group – prayer or bible-study focused, purpose focused, etc?**

A. Our vision is for each Group to be active in diverse ways, as an overall sign of Group health. God-given passions and areas of gifting are reflected through individual Group members. Here is how the Apostle Paul put the idea:

*If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. (1 Corinthians 12:17-20)*

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### **Q. How big is each Small Group?**

A. Small Groups are designed to be small enough for members to get to know each other well. When a Group grows to a size of approximately 12 people, they are strongly encouraged to focus on planting a new Group out of the original Group.

### **Q. What if I cannot attend a Group regularly?**

A. Consistent participation is very important for the stability of Groups, and not all Groups are equally able to accommodate irregular attendees. Due to the effect on the Group as a whole, a minimum expectation is that individuals should attend more than half of the meetings. Individuals with challenging schedules are encouraged to email [office@orwellchurch.co.uk](mailto:office@orwellchurch.co.uk) for assistance in looking for a Group that may be an appropriate fit.

### **Q. What if there isn't a Group that works with my schedule?**

A. Each Small Group meets at the time and location that works for the majority of people in the Group. In time, it is possible that a Group could form that would be a better match for those with less common schedules. We have daytime and evening Small Groups.

### **Q. What if I've tried a Small Group and it wasn't a good fit?**

A. We recognize that you may need to visit a few Small Groups before you find the right fit. Our goal is to help you minimize the number of Groups you might visit, and help you settle into a Group you can call home as quickly as possible. If you'd like help finding a good fit, please contact us for assistance by emailing [office@Orwellchurch.co.uk](mailto:office@Orwellchurch.co.uk)

### **Q. Why isn't there a Group located near me?**

A. Small Groups expand into new areas when and where we have an Orwell Church member who desires to host a Group. Our ability to plant Groups in new areas is influenced by the number of people in a given area who attend Orwell Church. If the next closest Group is too far away to attend, check back periodically to see if a Group has planted in an area closer to you. We recommend that you to join the nearest Group to you so that you can be plugged into the Community in the meantime.

### **Q. Do I have to attend the Small Group closest to where I live?**

A. Not necessarily, but location is a consideration if some of the activities of a Small Group take place informally in the neighbourhood of the Small Group.