

Building Better Homegroups

Top tips, Biblical insight and innovative ideas to make your home Bible-study group go with a zing!

Saturday 28th April, 2018

10am-1pm (coffee from 9:30am) at
St Nicholas Church, Rectory Lane, Stevenage, SG14DA

Speaker:
Tim Thornborough

Tim is the Creative Director at The Good Book Company. He is series editor of Explore Bible-reading notes, and has contributed to many books published by the Good Book Company and others. He has been a homegroup leaders for over 40 years. Tim is married to Kathy and has three daughters and a foster son.



The session will include...

- Why small groups are vital for discipleship
- Addressing some of the challenges small groups face
- Advice on how small group leaders can encourage and resource service and evangelism
- Tips and advice in pastoring individuals
- A time for questions

Tickets £5—including refreshments

Booking strongly encouraged but pay on the door
To book email: rector@saintnicholaschurch.org.uk
Or telephone: 01438 213587

Event Organised by



What exactly is a small group for?

by Tim Thornborough



When you ask a random selection of small group leaders, you get a huge range of responses:

- Reading and studying the Bible together
- Praying together
- Mutual support and encouragement
- Friendship/fellowship
- Worship
- Food

But when you quiz people to find out how they *actually* spend their time in the small group, you often discover that many groups are given over to what we might call the human needs of the group, rather than on listening to God's word together. They eat, they talk, they laugh (a lot!), they share needs, they enjoy each other's company, they feel supported, loved, affirmed, prayed for.

I try to point out (as gently as I'm able) that this surely has to be the tail wagging the dog. In Acts 2:42, we read a familiar description of what the first Christian community did when they met together:

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. (ESV)

They did a whole lot of stuff - but the first thing they did was devote themselves to the Apostles' teaching. All the other stuff they did sprang out of this fundamental activity - they listened to the authoritative word of God, delivered to them through his chosen representatives. And this is a pattern that persisted: In Colossians 3:16 we read:

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

The first Christians did many things when they met together, but the thing that was at the heart of each of them was that the Word of Christ was there - giving shape to their songs, their prayers - even the way they told each other off!

People come to homegroups for many reasons. They may be lonely and need company; they may be hungry and need feeding; they may be discouraged or struggling in their lives, and need support. But if you are the leader of a homegroup, you need to have firmly fixed in your mind that the way you will really meet their real needs is to let the Word of Christ from the Bible take centre stage in your time together.

Bacon sandwiches help with the physical hunger, but the hunger in our hearts will only be fed by allowing the words of Jesus, and the Bible's witness to Jesus, to be the menu for the evening.