

## **Hope Community Church 2020 fall program rollout**

As summer begins to wind down I am looking forward to the beginning of a new fall season of midweek ministry at Hope! For the past several years, we have had a two-pronged teaching approach by encouraging participation in our Refuel midweek Bible study and Community Groups (Referred to as CG going forward).

The purpose of the CG ministry is to provide a unique time to come together in private homes to study the Bible, pray, and experience community. Group participation is meant to enhance Bible learning & application, increase leadership development, add new leaders and groups, and strengthen meaningful relationships.

While there is no doubt spiritual growth has occurred, we were not developing new leaders or adding new groups. These are two established goals for this ministry (see *2 Timothy 2:1-2*). While we have some very capable leaders, many were being stretched thin because of other ministry obligations.

It is my sincere belief that offering both Refuel and Community Groups has become a detriment to the growth of both worthwhile teaching platforms. I am convinced it is time we place our focus on just one.

That is why, beginning in the fall of 2020, our Refuel Bible study will become the focal point of our Adult teaching efforts. Our goal will be to convert our midweek service into a hybrid ministry. One that allows for serious Bible study, but also adds the uniqueness a CG offers. While we are not officially ending CG ministry, we will not be promoting or pushing groups. Instead, we will be promoting and encouraging all adults to attend and participate in our revised midweek Refuel service.

### **Here is how I envision midweek Refuel working:**

All Refuel ministries will begin each Wednesday night at 7, except for the Centre (6-12 grades) which starts at 6:45 p.m. The adult study will begin with prayer and a song. I will teach a lesson lasting no more than 25 minutes. Then we will have breakout groups (BG) with an assigned leader for each group. A BG outline with questions/verses will be given to each participant. The BG leaders (elders, former community group leaders, etc) will be given the outline in advance. They will study it, add notes to it, and lead their BG, much like they would a CG. These groups will meet in the sanctuary, and foyer if necessary, and will last no more than 30 minutes. In the future, we may offer unique groups on Wednesday nights where various leaders would both teach and lead a BG.

If we stick to the allotted time breakdown, we will end by no later than 8:15 p.m.

**Due to the unique school year start up, we will wait to launch all of our midweek ministries until Wednesday, October 7th, 2020.**

**Will this help us reach our goal of developing more disciples and leaders?**

Yes, I believe it will for the following reasons:

**1. It frees up a night for many over committed people.** (Those attending Refuel and a CG.)

- This time can be used to relax, better invest in another ministry effort, or serve people in need outside of our community of believers.

**2. It unites the church around a common Biblical topic each week.**

- Currently each CG studies something unique. Everyone is learning something different. Our new format will allow us to collectively learn and engage the same topic/material.

**3. It resolves the CG childcare needs.**

- CG attendees sometimes scramble to find a sitter or attend a group where kids are present in the home. This sometimes leads to group interruptions. We offer unique programs for kids ages 6 weeks through 12th grade, thus resolving that issue.

**4. It provides a place for many to teach and serve.**

- Those with the gift to lead/teach can do so in a BG. People may also choose to serve, on a rotation basis, in one of the 3 ministries we have for kids/students on Wednesdays.

**5. It creates excitement as we come together and grow together.**

- Few things are more disheartening than a leader/host studying and preparing and then having no one show up. Our format should help to eliminate that scenario.

**6. It meets legitimate needs.**

- Our breakout groups will include time to fellowship, share prayer requests and ask questions. All very important needs growing Christians have.

**7. It is a less formal entry into church life for un-churched people.**

- Non church goers are often intimidated by the thought of attending a Sunday service. Our informal midweek format offers people a perfect way to learn about Christianity.

**I am asking everyone to pray and get behind this new direction. If we do both I am convinced the Lord will be honored.**

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Martin Woody