

## HOUSE GROUPS GUIDELINES

### Do

- **Do make people feel welcome** – Greet people with warmth and enthusiasm as they arrive. A friendly welcome sets a positive tone.
- **Do have a focal point for worship** – Set up a simple display with a candle, a Bible, and a cross. This creates a sacred, peaceful space for reflection.
- **Do prepare the space in advance** – Ensure the space is clean, organized, and set up before guests arrive. It creates a welcoming atmosphere.
- **Do provide comfortable seating** – Arrange seats in a way that fosters conversation and makes everyone feel included.
- **Do adapt the environment to make people comfortable** – Adjust the lighting, temperature, or seating arrangements if needed.
- **Do offer refreshments** – Provide tea, coffee, water, helping to make people feel relaxed and cared for.
- **Do be mindful of time** – Start and end at the agreed-upon time out of respect for everyone's schedule.
- **Do make time for fellowship** – Before or after the study, allow time for casual conversation to build community.
- **Do listen deeply** - Listen intently to what is said, listen to feelings beneath the words
- **Do be open** – Encourage the group to share what is in their heart, trusting that their voice will be heard and their contribution respected.
- **Do respect silence** - Silence is a rare gift in our busy world. After someone has spoken, take time to reflect without immediately filling the space with words.

## Don't

- **Don't have distractions in the space** – Turn off TVs, noisy appliances, or anything that might detract from the group's focus.
- **Don't wait until the last minute to prepare** – Avoid rushing right before people arrive. It can cause unnecessary stress and distract from creating a peaceful environment.
- **Don't let anyone feel unwelcome** – Avoid ignoring newcomers or forgetting to introduce them to others.
- **Don't dominate the conversation** – As the host, your role is to provide a space for fellowship, not to monopolize. Encourage others to share their thoughts.
- **Don't let the group go over time** – Respect everyone's schedule by keeping the gathering within the agreed-upon time frame.
- **Don't overcomplicate the meeting** – Keep things simple and focused on the house group materials
- **Don't ignore people's comfort needs** – If people are uncomfortable (seating, temperature, need the toilet etc.), address it promptly.
- **Don't neglect to thank people for coming** – A small gesture of gratitude goes a long way in building community and encouraging future participation.
- **Don't "Fix" others** - Each of us is here to discover our own truths, to listen to our own inner teacher. We are not here to set someone else straight, or to help right another's wrong.
- **Don't force people to share** – Each person can participate the extent that they wish and there is no obligation for anyone to speak.