

## **ANTHEM HOUSE CHURCH**

The purpose of this document is to facilitate a conversation about what an Anthem House Church is all about.

Take time with your House Church to discuss what healthy commitment should look like in today's culture. As you read through this, you may notice that we are calling people to a high level of commitment. We think this is a good and beautiful thing in light of today's noncommittal culture and the common trend of flaking out.

Your leader will have your group read parts of this document and then take some time to have a discussion on a few of the points throughout this document.

### **WHAT IS AN ANTHEM HOUSE CHURCH?**

House churches are gospel-centered families on a mission to grow as & make disciples of Jesus! To put it more specifically, house churches are a small group of people within the Anthem family who are committed to weekly home gatherings of fellowship with one another.

#### **HCs are Gospel-Centered**

We focus primarily on Jesus and what He did to save us, transform us, & give us a new identity. Everything we do as disciples flows from what Jesus has already done for us! We gather around Jesus and His Word, not our views on politics, parenting, medicine, fashion, music, business, personal finance, or food. We can lovingly disagree about many things because we only need to agree on who Jesus is, what he came to do, and what that means for our lives as his people.

#### **HCs are learning to live as Family**

In light of what Jesus has done for us in the Gospel, we have been given a new identity; we are God's adopted sons and daughters, which means we are brothers and sisters learning to live as a family! We gather around Jesus, not our socio-economic status, sexual orientation, race, gender, or marital status.

#### **HCs are on Mission**

As members of God's family because of Jesus, we are on a mission to help others enter his family and extend his Kingdom. We live to make much of Jesus, not ourselves, which impacts our decisions, where we live, whom we marry, what we spend money on, and what we spend our time doing. It affects where and how we work and how we see our neighborhood. It shapes what we do and what we value.

### **WHAT ARE THE RHYTHMS OF A HOUSE CHURCH?**

As we look at the life of Jesus, we see how He invested His time. He invested "UP" into his relationship with the Father, invested "IN" into his relationships with his believing community (the disciples), and "OUT" into a lost and hurting world. Each house church will practice these elements together as we gather weekly.

## UP

We will seek to grow closer to the Lord through studying the Bible during our House Church gathering. HCs will discuss a passage of Scripture together with the following format:

### What is true?

Together we will look closely at Scripture to understand what is true of God, ourselves, and the world around us.

### What will I do?

Together we will commit to doing something about what we learned. We want to let the truth of scripture change how we think, feel, and act in every area of our lives.

We value the authority of Scripture in our lives and the correct interpretation of it as we seek to live it out. Because of that, HCs will be a place of open conversation and sometimes correction when the Word is being misused or misunderstood. This is part of growing together in our submission to the truth as we discover it.

## IN

Every week HCs will share a meal. This is a time to engage with one another and grow deeper in fellowship together. The goal isn't just to fill our bellies but to encourage, challenge, listen to, laugh with, and (when necessary) cry with one another.

## OUT

We want to be zealous about others coming to faith in Jesus. Each HC should work to plan a missional event from time to time instead of the regular gathering to make this outward investment. Whether it's a consistent outreach (such as Laundry Love) or a monthly social event, each HC should be committed to engaging the people God has placed around them.

### IN+UP+OUT

Prayer will be given a legitimate place in our HC gatherings. Rather than use prayer as a transition to end the night, we want to learn to value prayer together by allocating at least 15 minutes of HC to it. As we pray together, we will aim for the following postures:

- **Gospel-Centered** - we want to point each other to Jesus. (Eph. 3:14-21)
- **Vulnerable** – we want to be honest about our sins and brokenness so we can pray effectively for one another and find healing. (Jam. 5:16)
- **Character Focused** – we want to pray that we'd persevere through trials and become more like Jesus. (Jam. 1:1-4)
- **Spirit-led** – we want to listen to what the Spirit might want to say to encourage us. (1 Cor. 14:1-3)

## HOUSE CHURCH LOGISTICS 1. Dates:

We will meet starting on the week of Jan 22 through the week of May 27. We will break for the Summer and then return in August to regular meetings. In the Fall Season, there are "HC meeting breaks." These breaks are the weeks of Thanksgiving 21 and all throughout the month of December.

### 2. Time:

We will meet on \_\_\_\_\_ and open the doors at \_\_\_\_\_ for a time of eating and informal catch-up. We will dismiss at \_\_\_\_\_.

### 3. Food:

We want to eat together weekly as an HC. There are lots of us in this HC, which means we will need to take turns with meals! Food will be coordinated by \_\_\_\_\_.

### 4. Attendance:

Sharing with vulnerability is only healthy in the context of regular fellowship. We understand that sickness can happen and that other unavoidable things periodically come up. To honor how we seek to invest in each other, joining an HC will require a commitment to attend each week and do the necessary prep work. We ask that you commit to being at House Church when possible. If you cannot attend a meeting, we ask that you text or call the HC leaders. If you know that you will miss more than 2-3 weeks in any given 10-week period, we ask that you choose not to participate in House Church for this round.

## HOUSE CHURCH COMMITMENT

- **Church Participation:** Being in an Anthem House Church means that you commit to being present and involved with life in Anthem Church. We know this is a big commitment and totally understand if some are unable to join this season. Please consider your travel and availability with being present for Sunday gatherings and House Church before renewing your spot in a House Church.
- **Acceptance:** We agree to accept one another as Jesus has accepted us, which means we will listen to each other and not be quick to offer answers or judgmental with our attitudes but will have patience with each other's process of becoming like Jesus.
- **Honesty and Vulnerability:** We agree to share the joys and pains in life. We agree to be honest about where there is sin and the need for change in our lives.
- **Safety:** We agree to keep confidential information within the group time. We agree to work through any actions or attitudes that may have hurt the safety of our HC.
- **Conflict:** When we feel someone has sinned, we agree to follow Jesus' teaching in Matthew 18:15-17 and talk with that person privately. We agree to involve others only if outside help can't reach a resolution. We also agree to follow Galatians 6:1 and be gentle in dealing with someone else's sin because we're fellow strugglers in need of grace.
- **Punctuality and Preparedness:** We agree to make our weekly HC meeting a high priority and to attend our HC meetings only if we are sick, at work, or out of town. We agree to come prepared if we have taken on responsibilities that require it (such as food, discussion

leading, and event prep). We agree to receive correction with humility if these reasons become excessive.

- **Submission:** We agree that when we disciple, teach, pray, help, correct, share wisdom, and advise one another, we will seek to be grounded in Scripture in a way that reflects the gospel (e.g., gracious, generous, kind, patient, etc.). We submit to the teachings of Jesus, not the ideology of this world, either liberal or conservative. We agree to submit to the authority of Jesus and His Word in all matters in HC and not our feelings or perspectives when they clash with His Word.
- **Pray:** We agree to pray with and for one another.
- **Grow:** We agree to open ourselves up to encouragement and challenge so that we can become like Jesus.
- **Study:** We agree to study the Scriptures or a resource rooted in the Scriptures together. And to receive correction when we are misinterpreting or misusing Scripture.
- **Obey:** We agree to attempt to put into practice what we learn. And not get upset when people ask to help us obey Jesus.
- **Confess:** We agree to confess when we fall short because we will.
- **Apologize:** We agree to own it when we hurt someone intentionally with our sin or unintentionally with our ignorance. ***Apologizing means not defending, downplaying, or blame-shifting.***
- **Serve:** We agree to bless one another in practical, sacrificial ways.
- **Celebrate:** We agree to have fun together, whatever that looks like in our life stage—celebrating birthdays, promotions, or births.
- **Grieve:** On the other hand; we agree to mourn together as we experience the pain and disappointment of this life. Gently and patiently pointing one another to the hope we have in Jesus.
- **Share:** We agree to seek to be a community that shows and shares who Jesus is with our non-believing friends.
- **Challenge:** We agree to confront one another when we see each other moving towards sin and away from the way of Jesus. We agree to do this gently and respectfully.

**Please consider whether you agree to commit to the things discussed in this document.**

**Every part of this document is crafted with the heart and purpose of love, grace, and safety for others in our House Churches.**

**Grace & Peace to you**

