

ANTHEM HOUSE CHURCH

Before committing to joining a House Church, we ask that you would read and pray through this document. It outlines our vision for what House Churches would be here at Anthem and what we ask of everyone who joins one. We have an additional Leader Commitment document we ask the leaders to commit to so that we can engage in healthy relationships as we disciple one another and spur one another on in following Jesus.

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, what scripture says about him 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, 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. Consider how you can pray into, raise funds, or practically serve the city and the world. We also desire that each House Church is growing together in sharing the good news of Jesus with people in their lives. May we pray for one another and encourage one another as we seek to live on mission and live authentically as Christians in every area of our lives.

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 Aug 26th through the week of Nov 18th. We will break for the holidays and then return the week of Jan 20th through the week of April 28th, with a break the week prior to Easter.

Signing up for a House Church is a commitment for that semester, with opportunities to step out of HC or change HCs the following semester if there is a desire or need to do so. We hope that groups stay as consistent as possible throughout the entire “school year” of fall and spring.

2. Time:

Please take note of the time and meeting day of your group. We ask that you arrive promptly so that the rhythms of eating a meal, catching up, discussion, and prayer can all fit into the 2 hours of House Church. When we make a habit of arriving late or leaving early these rhythms are disrupted for the group and we believe them all to be very valuable.

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! Each group will choose someone or a group of people to coordinate meals

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.

5. Childcare:

In our House Churches here at Anthem, we treat caring for the children in our house church like a family would. We share the cost and see the value in being present together while creating a safe, fun place for children. To the best of our ability, House Churches coordinate babysitters when there are children present. We love children, but believe there is also a depth, focus, and vulnerability that is not easily achieved with children present during times of adult discussion. We ask that children over the age of 1 would be with babysitters in the group whenever possible. We also ask that groups come together to cover the cost of babysitters when it makes sense to do so. If you are financially able to have your own babysitter at home or if bedtimes make coming to group difficult, having a babysitter at home is always a great alternative. Kids are not always predictable, interruptions happen and we want to be flexible and kind, but also aim for fruitful groups in this area.

HOUSE CHURCH COMMITMENT

- **Church Participation:** House Church is for people who call Anthem their home church and are committed to coming on Sundays in addition to their House Church mid week commitment. 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. House Church leaders and Elders are appointed leaders within our church body. If you are a member of Anthem or a member of a House Church, that means
- **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