



What are home groups?

They are small groups (ranging in size from about 5 to 15 people) that usually meet in the informal atmosphere of members' homes. They usually last about 90 mins and are structured around social time, discussion, Bible study, and prayer. We encourage everyone in the Church to join one.

Why join a home group?

Because we can best help each other to learn and live out our Christian lives by developing close relationships which foster a vibrant community in the church.

What do home groups do?

Each homegroup has its own special character but groups generally aim to do some if not all of the following:

- Affording a chance to get to know a smaller number of other people well
- Providing practical and emotional support for its members
- Offering a place to learn and grow by helping members to deepen their faith and walk with God
- Sharing experiences and faith journeys
- Inspiring members to pray for each other and for the Church and the wider world
- Studying the Bible and applying its message to our lives



Some groups use Bible study guides to learn about particular themes or books in the Bible; some worship God in song; involve members' children and families; lead worship in the Church; arrange socials and/ or reach out to the community around.

Welcome to a home group at St Stephens to suit you...

St Stephens has a number of home groups, meeting on various days of the week. There are daytime and evening groups, so whatever your preference or availability, there is likely to be a group at a time which suits you. Contact the convenor of a group to find out more...

During Covid 19 restrictions, these groups cannot meet as they normally would. But members of home groups are keeping in touch with each other by phone and social media.

- **The Wednesday Evening Home Group** meets in the playroom at St Stephens on the first Wednesday of the month from 7 until 8pm and is convened by Claire Lord and Sarah Hinge.
- **The Thursday Bible Fellowship** is a traditional Bible study and prayer time. It meets fortnightly in the Chapel at St Stephens. Members bring a packed lunch at about 12, the meeting starts at 12-30 and ends at about 2pm. The Bible studies are usually based upon study guides of a book of the Bible or a theme. It is convened by Beryl Hutley and Mary Bibby.
- **The Thursday Daytime Group** is convened by Louise Brown.
- **The Friday Night Home Group** is convened by Peter Butler and John Clifton. It is a very sociable group sometimes involving the children of members in activities. It meets fortnightly in members' homes (*at the time of writing, on Zoom*). Activities include Bible studies, discussions

and meditations led by members and the sharing of 'faith journeys'. There are regular socials. Members keep in regular touch via WhatsApp.

- **The Watkins and Kerins Homegroup** meets once a month on the third Saturday at 6pm in members' homes. All members get a turn at leading the group and have free rein as to how to use the session. We aim for a nice mix of spiritual investigation and growth and some equally important social evenings to help with relationship building. Lockdown has been a good opportunity to phone each other and get to know one another more. It is convened by Belinda Kerins.
- **The Christian Meditation Group** is not a home group as such. Its aim is to explore the tradition of silent prayer. It is open to anyone to come regularly or just drop in. Someone shares a thought to prepare us for 20-30 minutes of silent meditation based loosely upon World Community for Christian Meditation practices (see www.christianmeditation.org). It meets on the third Sunday of the month at 9am in the Chapel at St Stephens. The group is convened by Saulo de Barros and John Clifton
- **Students' & Young People's Home Group** is convened by Rev Lorraine and Kenichiro Seto.



If you would like any more information about any of these groups, please contact the office at office@ststephens-colchester.org.uk