

**DIVIDED**



**BECOMING UNITED**

**IN A DIVIDED WORLD**

**SMALL GROUP GUIDE**

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# TIPS TO A SUCCESSFUL GROUP

- 1. WELCOME NEW PEOPLE.** Take time to introduce new people.
- 2. START & FINISH ON TIME.** Doing this will show your small group you value their time.
- 3. BE REAL, AUTHENTIC & TRANSPARENT ABOUT WEAKNESSES & STRUGGLES.** Some people in your group may be new to faith or new to small group often think there's a *right* way to answer discussion questions—or at least a few *wrong* things to say. So, they show up and listen in, but don't feel permission to say what's really on their minds. Set examples by sharing honest vulnerable answers. Sharing with a level of vulnerability sets the tone and gives permission for everyone—regardless of spiritual maturity—to respond authentically.
- 4. PLAN SOMETHING FUN.** Due to our current COVID-19 social distancing recommendation from the local government and CDC, we ask that any special and fun gatherings in person be postponed until further notice in order to safeguard the health and safety of everyone.
- 5. NO GUILT, NO SHAME.** This series is not meant to guilt or shame anyone into doing anything.

# TIPS TO A SUCCESSFUL GROUP

**6. SILENCE CELL PHONES.** As a courtesy to those who are sharing in your group, please try to stay off your phones unless for emergencies. It is okay with the exception of the use of your smartphone device for online meeting (Zoom).

**7. BE COMFORTABLE WITH SILENCE.** Uncomfortable silences are bound to happen. It's okay! A long pause during a group discussion can be powerful. A *pause* gives space for quieter people to break into the conversation; silence allows people to figure out exactly what they would like to say.

**8. MAKE GROUP A PRIORITY.** Communicate in advance when you will be unable to attend by calling and/or texting your host.

**9. CONFIDENTIALITY IS IMPORTANT.** Confidentiality is the key to building trust in relationships. Here are a few mottos to remember to be confidential: "What is said in small group, stays in small group." Nothing, nobody, never...Share *nothing, to nobody, never*" outside of the group.

**10. TECHNOLOGY CAN BUILD REAL RELATIONSHIPS.** Using a group texting app like GroupMe or WhatsApp makes it easier than ever to send quick logistical updates, share prayer requests, or just check in with someone mid-week. Connecting beyond your once weekly meeting communicates to your group member that *I see you and I'm thinking about you.*

**11. AVOID TALKING or TEACHING TOO MUCH.** Small groups are designed for everyone to share and grow together.

# TIPS FOR ONLINE SMALL GROUP

- 1. SEND OUT AN EMAIL INVITE.** Ensure to send out a calendar invite with the meeting details and how to connect to the meeting platform (NHWW Small Group meets through Zoom.)
- 2. SEND OUT A REMINDER DURING THE WEEK.** Keep everyone in your group connected by sending a reminder during the week of your upcoming small group meeting. You can do this by using text message and/or email.
- 3. ONCE ON THE CALL, START ON TIME.** For your scheduled meetings, it's recommended to get started within 5 minutes of your scheduled start time.
- 4. MUTING OF MICROPHONES.** Get familiar with the Zoom features on your electronic device. It is helpful for everyone to know where the mute button is located. Ask the attendees to self-mute to avoid outside noise when someone else is talking & sharing. Doing this will help with the flow of your SG discussion time.
- 5. STICK TO YOUR TIME SCHEDULE.** Most small group meetings are held for about 60 minutes.
- 6. DOWNLOAD ZOOM APP.** In order to participate in the Online Small Group, download the Zoom App from your iPhone or Android. You may also download the Zoom App from your lap top PC or iPad device.
- 7. HOSTING AN SG MEETING ON ZOOM.** If you are interested in hosting a small group on zoom through New Hope Windward, let us know. NHWW small group team will help you get started. Zoom training is available weekly.
- 8. BREAK INTO SMALLER GROUPS.** For larger online groups on Zoom, it is best to break up into groups of 3-4 people during the discussion segment. Zoom has a feature that allows individuals to be grouped together in smaller clusters. This can increase more transparent conversations and provide more time for each person to join the conversation.



## **4. HOW TO AVOID ELECTION INFECTION**

# ICEBREAKER

If this is a new group or there are new people, please take a moment to **introduce yourselves**.



*To start off your small group, briefly share your response to the following question:*

**If you could learn any language, which one would it be and why?**

**Share with your group.**

## WHAT TO EXPECT

***Let's get a big picture of what we'll be learning today...***



During this political season we are seeing the news filled with debates, divisiveness and dissension. Anger is so contagious. So how do we avoid getting the election infection. In this session, we will learn how to be united even when we feel like being divided.

# TIPS TO A SUCCESSFUL SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

**Tip: SILENCE CELL PHONES.** As a courtesy to those who are sharing in your group, please try to stay off your phones unless for emergencies. It is okay with the exception of the use of your smartphone device for online meeting (Zoom).

**Tip: MAKE GROUP A PRIORITY.** Communicate in advance when you will be unable to attend by calling and/or texting your host.

**ONLINE Tip: ONCE ON THE CALL, START ON TIME.** For your scheduled meetings, it's recommended to get started within 5 minutes of your scheduled start time.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**1.)** It seems that any election year is an opportunity to disagree. In fact, all of us here in this group may have very different opinions when it comes to the ballot. Some of us may not even vote at all! But no matter the outcome, we are still part of the same church. What made that first church unique? It was unity.

*The group of believers was one in mind and heart.*

*Acts 4:32 (GNT)*

Unity of mind and heart involves both our thoughts and our feelings. Generally speaking, we think with our minds and feel with our hearts. They work together. We can't be led by one without the other. But how do we do that when we have differences of opinions? This quote derived from principles found in Paul's letter to the Corinthians, is a good way to think of it:

*"In essentials, unity. In non-essentials, liberty. In all things, love."*

The essentials are those parts of our Christian faith that are necessary for us to be believers.

New Hope Windward's mission and what we hold essential as a church 'Ohana come directly from scripture – *Matthew 22:36-40 & Matthew 28:19-20*:

### **Love God   Love People   Make Disciples**

The non-essentials are those things that aren't necessary to be part of the church, but may still be important to us, like speaking in tongues, belief about angels and demons, or who wrote a certain book of the Bible.

**What's a non-essential of faith that you learned to live with even though it wasn't your preference.**

**2.)** Showing the world unity is so important right now. In fact, it's always been important. Read this passage that is nearly 2,000 years old:

*I appeal to you, dear brothers and sisters, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, to **live in harmony with each other**. Let there be no divisions in the church. Rather, be of one mind, united in thought and purpose.*

*1 Corinthians 1:10 (NLT)*

We believers can have unity without having uniformity. We can be united even if we have very different views and opinions about things. We can agree to disagree without being disagreeable.

Take a look at each word and its definition below.

**Uniformity** - the state of being the same in every way.

**Unanimity** - being in complete agreement with every idea or opinion.

**Unity** - the result of diverse parts being combined into one whole.

God has called us to unity, not uniformity or unanimity. We aren't all the same, and we don't agree about everything. And that's okay. It's good! Because that's how God intended it to be.

**Name something you disagree with. How have you been able to remain close to them despite that disagreement?**

**3.)** That division that Paul was taking care of head on in 1 Corinthians was pretty bad. We'll read about it, and then apply some of those same principles to our own situation today.

The first thing Paul addressed was **Quarrels**.

*Some members of Chloe's household have told me about your quarrels, my dear brothers and sisters.*  
1 Corinthians 1:11 (NLT)

They were fighting with each other over their differences instead of uniting over their purpose. We don't know all the specifics, but it sounds like they might have even sued one another over their problems. Jesus shows us the pattern to taking care of these issues begins with going to the other person in private to deal with the matter (*Matthew 18:15*). Many times, we go to our friends and gossip about it or go on social media and gripe.

**What are some reasons that people are unwilling to confront privately those they have an issue with? (Examples, nervous about confrontation, hurt feelings they can't get over, etc.) Is there anyone you need to go to first instead of continuing to talk about them behind their back?**

Next, Paul says that they need to deal with their **Cliques**.

*Some of you are saying, "I am a follower of Paul." Others are saying, "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Peter," or "I follow only Christ."*

*1 Corinthians 1:12 (NLT)*

As you can see, people were taking sides and forming little groups. It's nice to be around people we like and who are just like us. But cliques are better at dividing us than uniting us.

**Tell about a time when you stepped out of your comfort zone and engaged with a stranger or someone you don't normally talk to. How did it go? How was your life better for doing it?**

Finally, the church in Corinth needed to tackle their **Distractions**.

*Christ didn't send me to baptize, but to preach the Good News.*

*1 Corinthians 1:17 (NLT)*

Paul saw some vision drift happening at this church. They were distracted by disagreements over non-essentials and hurt feelings. Then they got off track from their primary purpose, telling the world about Jesus! Here at New Hope, our goal is to help us all grow in loving God, loving people and making disciples. love God, love people, and make disciples.

**What's distractions do you sometimes experience in your journey to grow in loving God, loving people and making disciples?**

# WHAT WILL YOU DO?

As we get closer to the election, there is a great chance you and I could catch the division infection. Don't get it!

Let's stay aware of the quarrels, cliques, and distractions that lead to division. Because when we remain united, the world will see it and praise Jesus in heaven.



## CLOSE IN PRAYER

Take a few minutes to close your time together with prayer and to pray for each other's prayer requests. Below is a sample prayer to read if you choose to. You can also choose to write down each other's prayer requests to remember throughout the week.



### **Sample Prayer:**

*"Father in Heaven, we know that You are in control. You get the last say. No matter what happens in our country and our world, You are most concerned with what happens in our hearts. Help us to stay focused on Your calling. Give us minds that agree and hearts that love. In Jesus' mighty and powerful name we pray, AMEN!"*

### Group Prayer Requests:

Name

Request

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## DAILY DEVOTIONS: DAY 1

### SCRIPTURE...

*Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.  
1 Peter 3:8 (NIV)*

### OBSERVATION...

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### APPLICATION...

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### PRAYER...

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## DAILY DEVOTIONS: DAY 2

### SCRIPTURE...

*Make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose.  
Philippians 2:2 (NLT)*

### OBSERVATION...

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### APPLICATION...

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### PRAYER...

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**SCRIPTURE...**

*Love is more important than anything else. It is what ties everything completely together.  
Colossians 3:14 (CEV)*

**OBSERVATION...**

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**APPLICATION...**

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**PRAYER...**

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**SCRIPTURE...**

*How wonderful, how beautiful, when brothers and sisters get along! It's like costly anointing oil.  
Psalm 133:1-2 (MSG)*

**OBSERVATION...**

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**APPLICATION...**

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**PRAYER...**

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**SCRIPTURE...**

*Dear brothers and sisters, I close my Letter with these last words: Be joyful. Grow to maturity. Encourage each other. Live in harmony and peace. Then the God of love and peace will be with you.*  
2 Corinthians 13:11 (NLT)

**OBSERVATION...**

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**APPLICATION...**

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**PRAYER...**

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