

## **Home Groups in St Matthew's**

Home groups are usually made up of around 10-12 people who meet together in homes during the week. Each group has a designated leader or leaders. Occasional meals and social provide relaxing settings for strengthening friendships and fellowship.

Members of each group provide support to one another practically and prayerfully throughout the week. In this respect, house groups contribute significantly to the church's ministry of pastoral care.

We deliberately aim to have house groups meeting on different days and in different parts of Oxford. Some groups meet every week whilst others meet fortnightly; most groups meet in the evening but at least one group meets in the afternoon for the convenience of its members.

### **Why are home groups important in the life of St Matthew's?**

Firstly, they help us to develop personal relationships. Although St Matthew's is not a large congregation, it still can be difficult to get to know one another simply by attending on Sunday mornings. Belonging to one of our home groups provides an opportunity to get to know a few people really well.

Secondly, they provide a meaningful context for praying and studying the bible together in an informal group. Belonging to a small group helps us to explore ways of applying the bible's teaching to every area of our lives.

Thirdly, they help us to consider how we can be involved in opening the doors of our church in welcome to our surrounding communities so that we can show the accepting, healing and resourcing love of God.

For these reasons, we encourage everyone in the church to join a home group, if at all possible.

For more information about our house groups and how you can be involved please contact:

Michael Rayner (our assistant curate).