

Is House Church for Me?



Thanks so much opening our information package. Our desire is to help you understand the essential components of our Network of House Churches – including our values, model, structure, and also the process from this point forward.

There is LOTS of information in this package. We want to orient you to what you will find in the coming pages:

1. Chilliwack House Churches at a Glance – this section covers many of the basics of our Church in a summarized fashion. In this section are
 - A. This is probably for....
 - B. This is probably not for....
 - C. 9 Key questions about the church plant

1. Chilliwack House Churches at a Glance

A. This is probably for....

1. Those who have a strong desire to live missionally. The word “Missional” simply means “sent”. Living missionally means being on the very forefront of helping those in our community to know Christ through developing relationships. Some of these people may have the gift of evangelism, others may have a deep heart for it. There will be very little room to rely on programs in this church plant.
2. Those who are willing to try a model of church that is radically different from the norm in Chilliwack. Also, those who are willing to commit to trying this new form of church for 1 year (although the commitment is not asked for on Day 1).
3. Those who are willing to develop deep relationships with others in a house church setting. Those who are willing to share the honest reality of their life with others, and are comfortable with others doing the same. The reality is that life is messy, and so are the lives of God’s followers.
4. Those who are willing to take a high degree of ownership for their spiritual lives and are willing to be in an environment where this will be expected. Also, those who are willing to know and use their spiritual gifts in a house church setting.
5. Those who would like to be a part of an organization that has low structure and will not be pastor driven. Also, those who see a more communal approach to leadership and decision making.
6. Those who are ok with loose ends. Being a church family is not like starting a franchise for McDonalds where everything is laid out for you neat and tidy. There are lots of decisions to make, and lots of growing pains to be had. If being involved in the creation of something through these more unsettled times interests you, this might be a good fit.
7. Those who are ok being held accountable with your house church to live out the mission and values of the church plant.

8. We place a high value on children being involved in the life of the church. If you have kids, you are ok with them being very involved in your house church in an appropriate way. If you don't have kids and you are in a house church with kids, you are ok with kids being kids. In addition, you see the value of the intergenerational approach that includes kids in the very fabric of the structure.

B. This probably isn't for....

1. Those who are content with church as it exists. That is great! Please continue to pour your effort and prayers behind a church that models a more traditional style. We celebrate that you have found a place that is working well for you!
2. Those who believe that meeting in a house church is not "real church".
3. Those who believe that evangelism is the church's responsibility, or the pastor's responsibility, or the responsibility of a program.
4. Those who are dissatisfied in an unhealthy way with the current form of church. If that is where you are at, you need to come to a place of health before you begin to participate in our Network.
5. Those who need a church that is defined by its music style.
6. Those who do not want to be pushed out of their comfort zone and held accountable to develop meaningful relationships with the unbelieving world around them.

C. Top 9 Questions:

Below we will answer the top questions we believe people will have. Each question will be answered in 3 or 4 lines, and some will reference attached material.

1. What do we do?

Briefly, we are a house church movement that will have frequent (every 4-6 weeks) large group meetings. Our house churches are different in philosophy from care groups on a variety of levels. We are also a movement that is seeking to be highly missional (proactively connected with the non-believing world).

Please see the attached "Chilliwack House Church Principles" for a much more detailed understanding.

2. What is the difference between House Church and Care Group?

We believe there are large differences between these two models. Briefly, the key differences are in function and accountability. Our house churches will have a facilitator who is responsible to bring out the spiritual gifting of each participant, facilitating a strong group dynamic of ownership and participation. Also, our house churches will be held responsible by other house churches to be missionally engaged within Chilliwack, and the world.

3. Where do you meet?

As this network is primarily driven by house churches, meetings occur all over town. In addition, certain house churches may decide to meet in an alternative location such as a coffee shop, restaurant, sports facility, or else where. As we will only meet as a large

group on a monthly basis, we will find suitable rental facilities for those times. Our large group meetings are held rented facilities around town. We will not be pursuing our own building in the foreseeable future. It is possible we will never pursue our own building.

4. What style of music will you play?

It was not until our Leadership Team had been meeting for 17 months that we even discussed music and how it would be incorporated into our network – and the discussion was not about “style”. We believe music is an important part of the life of God’s people, but are unwilling to allow style to drive this church plant.

5. Are you “emergent”?

We adhere fully to the statement of faith of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. Please do not confuse an alternative approach to or model of church as being emergent. We are also fully approved and endorsed by the Elders Board of Chilliwack Alliance Church and by the Central Pacific District of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. Finally, Scott is an ordained minister of the Christian and Missionary Alliance

6. What programs do you offer?

Our network, by its very design, is not programmatically driven. This is not to say that we do not see the need for some well placed and timely programs to enhance the communal life of the church plant, but the church plant will be primarily relationally driven.

7. Kids

A common question is “What are you going to do with the kids?” That question by its very design suggests that kids are something to be dealt with, and that they do not fully belong with the adults are doing. We believe that children should be deeply and appropriately incorporated within our house churches and large group gatherings. We realize that this is much different view than the majority of churches adhere to, and that it will have inherent complications. We also believe the probable outcomes outweigh the potential problems. We will also have more information on involving children in the Church Plant available in the next while, likely through our training meetings.

8. What are you giving up to come to House Church?

There are a few things you are giving up to join our network. First, you are giving up a weekly meeting with a large group of people. Second, you are giving up an environment where it is not advisable, but possible for you to simply sit in the pew and remain unengaged in the life of the church. Third, you are giving up the ability to remain unconnected from the world around you that needs Christ as we try to incorporate a healthy sense of accountability into our house church relationships. Fourth, you are giving up being part of an organization that is primarily driven programmatically and as we will be primarily driven by relationships.

9. Many churches are music style based and take those who are dissatisfied in an unhealthy way from other churches. Is that what you are doing?

We are not music style based, and we are not interested in taking those who are dissatisfied in an unhealthy way from other churches. First, we will have a transfer growth plan in place to help us proactively screen potential newcomers to our network. Secondly, we are interested in growing through growth from people who do not currently attend another church, and ideally are not followers of Christ. Third, we recognize music plays an important role in the life of a believer, and so our gatherings will not be void of music.