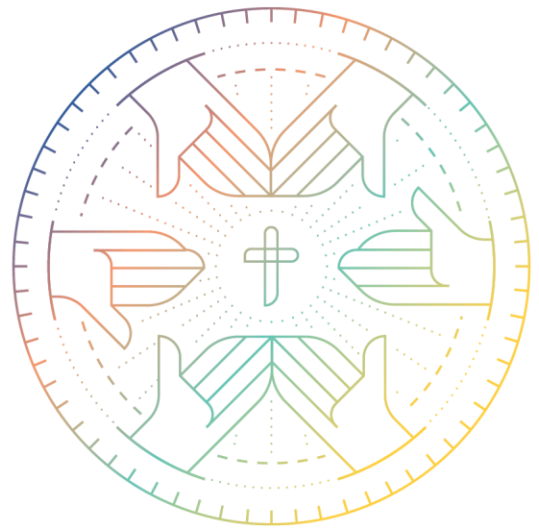


Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



MEETING AGENDA

As people are arriving, encourage new group members to fill out the Contact Information sheet and create a name tag. If your group chooses to have snacks have them sign up using the sheet provided. All materials provided in the H.O.S.T. kit.

WELCOME (10 MINUTES)

Introduce yourself. Share something you are looking forward to about this group experience. Distribute devotional guides to each group member encouraging them to use during the week as well as for sermon notes. If you are a new group that has not yet registered, please register your group using the link below by adding the day, time, and current group members.

<https://login.fairhaven.church/registration/2022SpringSmallGroupOpNewGroups>

ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

Take a few minutes to have each group member introduce themselves and answer the following question: If you were stranded on a deserted island and could only bring three items, what would they be and why?

INTRODUCTION (5-10 MINUTES)

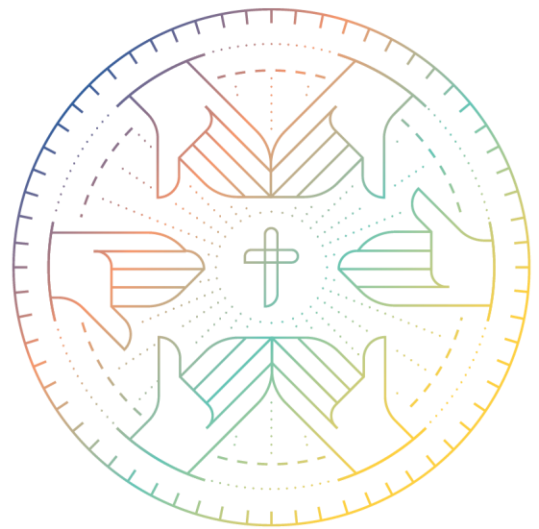
Ephesians was addressed to the churches in the surrounding area of the city of Ephesus. Ephesus served as the capital of the Roman province of Asia. The city was an important center for trade and commerce and was a melting pot for many cultures and religions. Paul penned this letter while imprisoned after his third missionary journey (A.D. 60-62). He reminds them of their blessing in Jesus Christ and to live in a manner worthy of those blessings.

INTO THE WORD (25 MINUTES)

1. **Read Ephesians 1:1. What sticks out to you about Paul's description of the audience of Ephesians? Why do you think he used that description based on the context of the city of Ephesus? [See Introduction]**

Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Paul refers to “Saints” and then goes on to add “and are faithful in Christ Jesus.” The NLT refers to them as faithful followers.

Similar to the culture we live in today, the pleasure-seeking nature of the city would have made being faithful to Christ difficult. The “faithful in Christ Jesus” are those who receive the blessings that are covered in verses 3-14. Emphasizes the importance of faithfulness.]

2. **Read Ephesians 1:3-14. We see five separate blessings for believers: *chosen (v4), adopted (v5), redeemed (v7), promised (v11), and sealed (v.13)*. Which one resonates with you the most? Why?**

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[This is a great opportunity to ask follow up questions. Ask questions like: Why did you choose that one? What about it stuck out to you? Can you tell me more?]

3. **Read Colossians 1:9-14. What comparisons do you see to Ephesians 1:3-14? How does that shape the way you view the beginning of Ephesians?**

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[We see in Colossians verse 9 Paul speaks to the **knowledge of his will** and find that same language in Ephesians verse 8-9. In Colossians verse 12 he speaks to the **inheritance** we have and is echoed in Ephesians verse 11. Finally in Colossians verse 14 he refers to, **redemption, the forgiveness of sins** which we find in Ephesians verse 7. The Colossians passage builds off the hope we have in Christ. This was not just a message for the Ephesians church but for all believers.]

APPLICATION (25 MINUTES)

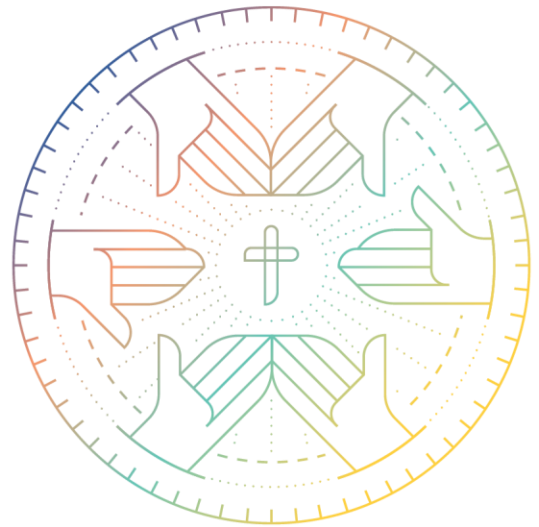
1. **In chapter one of Ephesians, we see the phrase “in Christ” eleven times in the course of the first fourteen verses. Read John 15:4-10. How does the idea of being in Christ change for you after reading John 15? What does it look like to be in Christ practically for you this week?**

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Jesus uses the illustration of a vine to show the importance of remaining or abiding. To abide means staying close over an extended period of time. The blessings we find in Ephesians 1 come out of abiding in Christ. Practically speaking, inviting Jesus into all areas of our life and letting the truth of scripture shape our daily decisions]

Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



2. Have the passages we read today changed your view of how salvation works? What is something you learned about God's work and our work in salvation?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Our salvation is not dependent on our works but through God. We see in verse 4 that we are chosen before the foundation of the world. Verse 5, We are adopted as sons(daughters) through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will. Verse 10 states that salvation is part of the plan to unite all things in him. Verse 11 God works all things, including salvation, according to the counsel of his will.]

3. What does the idea of being “sealed with the promised Holy Spirit”, change how you view sin in your life? Does it bring you hope?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Being sealed with the Holy Spirit means that once I have put my trust in Christ, I don't have to be scared that one bad decision will mean my salvation is gone. This should give us peace to not feel pressured to try and appease God. But on the other side, it doesn't give us a license to live our lives without regard of the consequences of sin.

Romans 6:1-4 states, “What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.”]

PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

Thank you, Heavenly Father, for blessing us in Christ with every spiritual blessing. Thank you for choosing us even before the foundation of the world. May we find rest in the knowledge that we are yours and have an inheritance of eternal life that is guaranteed with you. This week may we be grateful as we reflect on the goodness of you. Thank you that we find our identity not in our jobs, families or any earthly area but only in Christ. In your wonderful name we pray. Amen.