



OVERVIEW

All Souls exists to be a vibrant expression of who God is—gracious, present, hospitable.

In our shared life together we are seeking to know God more and become more:

- gracious in Grace Groups
- present in Prayer Triads
- hospitable in Home Groups.

A YEARNING HOST

The Bible has many different ways of explaining who God is.

Two are worth mentioning because of their relevance today. The first is 'God as a healer.' Today, do we not long for 'a mighty Counselor' to help us heal emotionally, relationally, psychologically?

Another biblical way to talk about God is as 'a righteous Judge' who will set our failing leaders straight and bring justice in our unjust world.

But behind God as healer and judge, and among other ways of understanding God in the Bible, there is an overarching image of God: A Yearning Host (Luke 14:15-24, Rev. 19:6-9).

This means that God heals not just for our own healing, but so that we can enjoy and extend the feast he is hosting. This means that God's justice will roll down so that we can enjoy and extend the peace possible only at God's table without evil hindering our joy. Above all, God is a yearning host! This is why God created and is re-creating; so that we would share in His delight.

DESIRED GUESTS

The world is a hungry place. Bruce Springsteen put it well, "Everybody has a hungry heart." God, seeking to meet us in our hunger, invites us as a desired guests to do life with him and one another as we enjoy and extend his hospitality towards us.

Welcome

Introduce any new friends to the group and leave space to share in their questions and hopes.

God: A Yearning Host all together before the meal (15 minutes)

Gather to sing—

Praise God from whom all blessings flow

Praise Him all creatures here below

Praise Him above ye heavenly host

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Read Isaiah 30:18—

"The LORD longs to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show you compassion."

Pray the Morning, Midday, or Evening Prayer together, using '[The Family Edition](#)' >



Serve Food + Eat Together

The World: Desired Guests adults or older kids (30 minutes)

Just like 'what the kids eat' is sometimes different than 'what the adults eat,' kids in the group can move to a different space in the house to learn about God in a way more suited to their palette by watching [the All Souls Kids videos](#). If older children are present, [The Bible Project videos](#) are a great resource. Kids are also welcome to participate in this second part of the Home Group gathering as able: the hope here is to have a time of focused sharing—

Take turns so that three people can each have 10 minutes to share any 'pressing hungers' or 'pressing needs' you are experiencing right now. Keep in mind, this is not an advice session, this is not 'a fix it' group to solve the circumstances, this is a Home Group where you make room for one another to experience God's hospitality as desired guests. Here are some questions you can ask or to serve as a prompt for sharing:

- What is something you would like for us to know about you?
- Can you describe a situation in which you feel stretched thin right now?
- What are you noticing about yourself in this situation?
- How is God meeting you in these circumstances? How would you like God to?

Your Home Group Leader can help watch the time or assign someone else to. Set up a rotation that allows for two people to know ahead of time it is their turn to share and leave the third spot open for someone to share anything that is a pressing issue that week. The person to the left of the person sharing can pray briefly or simply, "Lord, have mercy."

The Church: Gathering Servants *all together (1^o-2^o mins)*

In Jesus's *Parable of the Great Banquet* (Luke 14:15-24), a yearning host is described asking his servants to find more guests so that his table may be full. He says,

“Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.’

“Sir,’ the servant said, ‘what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.’

“Then the master told his servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes....’”

What is something you as a Home Group might do together in your neighborhood or in the life of our city to *enjoy* God's hospitality in new ways as you *extend* his hospitality? Use this time now as a group to discuss this question. If there are kids, what do they think? Is there a family in your neighborhood that would benefit from [a meal train](#)? As the weather permits, break up into pairs or small groups and walk through the neighborhood. Pray as you go. Take this spring to consider the options and try a few.

At the end of your time, pray together to close:

Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the Cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. Amen.



Next Time

Spring '22 schedule, meeting the week of:

February 27

March 13

March 27

April 10

April 24

May 8 (Mother's Day)

May 22

Host a 'Vespers on the Beach' one Wednesday this summer or another summer social (cook out, the 3v3 basketball tournament, etc.).

Please share your summer social plans by May 22.