Bible Fellowship Groups Charter

MAYFLOWER CHURCH

Bible Fellowship Groups Charter

Streamline System 06 — Team Charters

Approved by the Servants Council on July 11, 2026. Standing charter, reviewed at each August Leadership Summit and re-ratified on material change.

Governing Principle

The church grows in the Word together, in rooms small enough to be known.

Bible Fellowship Groups are where the gathered church becomes the knowing church. Here the Word is studied, prayer is shared, and members are cared for by name. The aim is believers who are both fed and held, not a count of groups on a chart.

1. Oversight (the home)

Overseeing board: Elders (Bylaws Art. II §B 1.c.2, Bible Fellowship Groups explicitly under the elders). Day-to-day point person: Senior Pastor. Every team has a home; this ministry works first with the elders.

2. Purpose

The Bible Fellowship Group ministry exists so that the church studies the Word and cares for one another in groups small enough for members to be known. It carries two of the church's callings at once: it forms believers in Scripture, and it is the first place much of the church's pastoral care happens. Its concern is not the number of groups but the health of them: that the Word is rightly handled, that members are known and prayed for, and that no one is left to grow alone.

3. Priority-ministry link

This ministry serves Disciple-Making Pathways and Membership and Shepherding Care (System 01). Groups are where ongoing formation in the Word and frontline pastoral care meet.

4. The Commission

The elders commission this ministry to maintain a healthy network of Bible Fellowship Groups that form believers in the Word and care for one another. This charters the ministry as a whole, not a single team: it is a network of ongoing groups, each meeting regularly under its own appointed leader who is accountable to the elders. The work has a steady scale. First, form: each group studies Scripture together on a regular rhythm using sound resources. Second, care: each group prays for and shepherds its members, carrying frontline pastoral care and surfacing needs to the elders. Third, sustain: the ministry as a whole keeps the network healthy, raising and supporting group leaders so the church is served by enough good groups without burning out a few. The measure is groups that feed and hold their people, not the size of the network.

5. In scope / Out of scope

In scope:

- Convening ongoing Bible Fellowship Groups that meet regularly for study of the Word.
- Frontline pastoral care within groups: praying for, knowing, and shepherding members, and surfacing needs to the elders.
- Group evangelism and the welcome of new believers and visitors into group life.
- Keeping the network of groups healthy: enough groups, well-led, so members have a place to be known.
- Communicating group needs and prayer requests to the elders.

Out of scope:

- Structured, time-bound discipleship cohorts with a set curriculum. That is EQUIP Discipleship's charge (see Coordination); BFGs are ongoing fellowship and study with no end date.
- The church's direct gospel witness and early follow-up of new believers. That belongs to the Evangelism Team; groups receive and assimilate new believers handed to them.
- Formal counseling and care needs that exceed what a group can carry. Those bridge to the Director of Biblical Counseling and the elders (see Coordination).
- Treating the count of groups or attendance as the measure. The measure is members fed in the Word and known in care.

6. Scale

Shape: this is a ministry-level charter for a network, not a single team. The ministry is the standing body of Bible Fellowship Groups taken together; each individual group is a small, ongoing fellowship led by one appointed Bible Fellowship Group Leader (System 07), accountable to the elders. The network expands by raising new leaders and starting new groups as the church grows, drawing commitment categories from the Volunteer Chapter (System 06). The aim is to multiply healthy groups, not to enlarge any one beyond knowing. This single ministry-level charter governs the Bible Fellowship Groups ministry as a whole; each group runs under it rather than under its own separate charter.

7. Key responsibilities

- Convene ongoing groups that study the Word regularly using sound resources.
- Pray for, know, and shepherd group members as frontline pastoral care.
- Welcome new believers and visitors into group life and assimilate them.
- Keep the network healthy: raise, support, and sustain group leaders.
- Surface care needs and prayer requests to the elders, and bridge needs that exceed a group to biblical counseling.
- Communicate plans, encouragements, and needs to the elders.

8. Coordination

- EQUIP Discipleship (Elders): clean boundary and a feed line. BFGs are ongoing fellowship and study; EQUIP runs structured cohorts with a curriculum. EQUIP develops the leader-track training that BFG leaders draw on; BFGs are where formed disciples keep growing in community. The two are complements, not competitors.
- Evangelism Team (Elders): groups carry group evangelism and receive new believers handed in for assimilation into group life.
- Director of Biblical Counseling (Elders): bridge for care. A group carries frontline care; when a member's need exceeds what a group can hold, the leader bridges it to the Director of Biblical Counseling and the elders.

9. Resources

Budget line: [no budget line is specifically named for this ministry in the source; confirm whether group resources draw on a discipleship line administered by the Elder Chair, or whether groups are self-resourced.] Facilities needs for groups that meet on church property are coordinated with the Trustees. Group scheduling and rosters run through Planning Center.

10. Health indicators

Faithfulness-shaped signs the network is alive, not a group count or attendance scoreboard. The year's specific targets live in the System 14 annual goals, set with the elders each August.

- Groups are handling the Word rightly and meeting on a steady rhythm.
- Members report being known, prayed for, and cared for in their group.
- New believers and visitors are landing in groups, not falling through.
- A bench of group leaders is being raised, so new groups can start as the church grows.
- Care needs beyond a group are bridged to counseling and the elders, not left to sit.

11. Review and approval

Standing charter, reviewed annually at the August Leadership Summit. Re-ratified by the Servants Council on material change. Escalation beyond the ministry's or elders' authority follows the Decision-Making Framework (System 09). Leadership succession follows the Leadership Handoff Guidelines (System 12). Review note: this is the single ministry-level charter for the Bible Fellowship Groups ministry as a whole, charters as a group-network rather than as a single team. Each individual group runs under this one charter and does not carry its own separate charter.

Commissioned by: Elder Chair _____ Date _____

Ratified into the operations documentation by: Servants Council _____ Date _____

Sources

- Mayflower Church Constitution and Bylaws, Art. II §B 1.c.2 (Bible Fellowship Groups under the elders); Art. II §B 4.c.7 (Servants Council receives and approves Ministry Team charters).
- Streamline System 01 — The Five Priority Ministries We Guard (Disciple-Making Pathways; Membership and Shepherding Care).
- Streamline System 06 — Team-to-Board Oversight Map; Volunteer Chapter.
- Streamline System 07 — Role Clarity, "17 — Bible Fellowship Group Leader."
- Streamline System 09 — Decision-Making Framework; System 14 — Annual Goals; System 12 — Leadership Handoff Guidelines.
- Director of Biblical Counseling position description ("16 — Director of Biblical Counseling," bridge between group care and formal counseling).
- EQUIP Discipleship Charter and Evangelism Team Charter (sibling forms for parallelism); Team Charter Standard, this folder.

Revision #3
Created 2026-06-17 12:39:57 UTC by Anton Brown
Updated 2026-07-23 11:14:13 UTC by Anton Brown