

INTERGENERATIONAL SMALL GROUPS INFO

This fall, during the Sunday School hour, starting September 6, Fernwood Baptist Church is launching Intergenerational Small Groups, a ten-week opportunity to build deeper relationships across our church family.

These groups are for everyone ages 14 to 120, whether you've been part of a Sunday School class for years or have never found the right place to connect.

When we come to church on Sunday mornings, one of the first things we do is separate into age-specific groups. There is great value in that. Children, youth, and adults often learn best alongside others in similar stages of life. But over time, it can also create generational silos.

We worship together, yet many of us only see one another for an hour each week. If we know someone, we probably know their name. If we know them well, we may know where they work or who is in their family. But we rarely know the stories that shaped them, the joys and difficulties they've experienced, the moments that changed them, or the faith that carried them through. If we want to develop empathy for one another, care for one another more deeply, and love one another as Jesus calls us to love, we have to truly know one another.

The inspiration for these groups comes from Exodus 12. As the Israelites prepared to leave Egypt, God told them to remember the Passover and tell the story of God's faithfulness from generation to generation. Even in the middle of preparing for a new chapter, God reminded them that faith is sustained through stories. We believe the same is true today. Every person at Fernwood has a story that can encourage someone else.

Each group will include three to five generations, creating opportunities for people of every age to learn from one another. Every week will begin with a fun icebreaker followed by conversation prompts to help get the discussion started. No preparation is required—just come ready to listen and share.

To help create a safe and welcoming environment, every group will follow three simple guidelines:

- **What is shared in the group stays in the group.** We respect one another's privacy by keeping personal stories confidential.
- **No advice is given.** Our role is to listen, not to solve one another's problems.
- **Share as much or as little as you choose.** No one will ever be pressured to share more than they are comfortable sharing.

If you choose to participate, we ask that you commit to attending at least six of the ten weeks. Consistent participation allows trust and relationships to grow. Groups with choir members may begin a few minutes early so everyone can participate fully before rehearsal.

A traditional Adult Bible Study class will continue to be available during these ten weeks for those who prefer that format and for guests.

Our prayer is that these groups will help us become more than people who simply attend the same church. We hope they will help us become a community where stories are shared, friendships are formed across generations, and God's faithfulness is passed from one generation to the next.

Registration is now open! If you'd like to participate in an Intergenerational Small Group this fall, please register by using the link below.

Hope you will join us!

<https://onrealm.org/FernwoodBaptist/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=YmI3ZmMwMTgtODVjNi00MjAwLTk1MTMtYjQ4ZjAwMTc0YTk3>