

Berea Bible Church Small Group FAQs

What are small groups?

Small groups are multi-generational groups of 15-20 individuals that meet for Bible study, prayer, fellowship, and occasional special events. During this initial six-week mini-session, groups may be slightly larger. Small groups are intended to build community within the church body and should not be viewed as a replacement for attending the Sunday morning worship service. Small groups are overseen by the pastors and elders of the church and will be structured in their use of time, and the material covered.

What is the goal of small groups?

Using Acts 2:42 as our foundation, small groups allow for “koinonia,” (meaning fellowship or community) within the church body. Small groups not only share in Bible study and prayer together, but they are encouraged to “share life” together with those in their small groups. Think of small groups as a smaller family within the larger church body.

When do small groups meet?

For this initial mini-session, small groups will meet weekly for six weeks. The meeting day and time is set by the small group leader and host, but it should stay consistent for the entire six weeks (i.e., Every Thursday at 6:30 PM)

Once the regular small group ministry begins, the frequency of meetings will be determined by church leadership based on interest and feedback from the congregation.

Where do small groups meet?

Small groups meet in homes or other locations conducive to providing a comfortable setting. Hosts may change based on schedule availability and the size of the group. If you'd like to offer your home as a small group location for future sessions, please contact Pastor Mark.

What does a small group meeting look like?

Bible study and prayer will typically take about 45 minutes to an hour. Beyond that, it's up to the small group to decide if they'd like to gather longer for a meal, dessert, games, or simply a time of fellowship. Occasionally, small groups may decide to do a “service project,” “fellowship activity,” or “evangelistic activity” together as a group during one of their small group meeting days, or during a separate day. These special events/activities will be determined by the small group leader in consultation with the group.

Who leads the small group?

Berea's pastoral staff has provided small group leader training to elders and deacons who feel called to lead small groups. For this mini-session, only those individuals who have been trained will lead the small groups. Future training will be offered to anyone in the church family who would like to lead a small group. Small group leaders will also be identifying potential leaders within small groups and recommending those individuals for training. The training teaches leaders how to

prepare the Bible study, how to generate appropriate discussion questions, how to logistically set up a small group meeting, and requires that participants practice preparing.

What topics are studied during small groups?

During this six-week session, all small groups will study the “Fruit of the Spirit” as found in the book of Galatians. Future topics will be assigned by church leadership and might include studies on books of the Bible, topical studies on a relevant issue, or doctrinal studies. When the regular small group ministry begins, small groups may request to do a particular study based on group interest, but that study must be approved by Berea’s leadership (pastors and elders). Groups may not study topics or passages “on a whim.”

Can I invite friends or other family members?

Yes, small groups can often be a good way for those outside of Berea to begin to make connections and eventually come to a Sunday morning service. It is recommended that this first mini-session be reserved only for our church family.

What about kids? How do they fit in small groups?

The desire is that small groups include everyone for Bible study and prayer. It is important that our young children hear the insights of older participants, and older participants also benefit greatly from seeing our youngest study and worship the Lord. There may be times during a small group meeting where children are asked to go play or are provided with an alternative activity to allow for more in-depth discussion for adults. Because small groups meet in homes, there is great flexibility for groups to decide how to best accommodate families. Children are counted in group numbers to determine optimal group size. Small group leaders are prepared to have children be a part of the study.

I’m worried this will create “cliques” in the church family!

Any ministry has the potential to create unique groupings within the larger church body. Small groups are not designed to be a replacement for regular worship service attendance, and small groups will be regularly reminded of the importance of gathering with others in the larger church family. To avoid cliques from forming, small groups will occur in sessions for a determined length of time. After each session, participants will be given an opportunity and encouraged to “mix it up” to allow for new relationships to be built.

What if I cannot participate now, but want to jump in later?

This is one of the beauties of small groups! You can jump in at any time! There may be some “catch-up” required to learn where the group is in a particular study, but small group leaders will help you get up to speed quickly! We don’t want anyone who has time and a desire to participate to be left out!

How do I get involved?

Once the regular small group ministry begins, there will be a small group page on the church website. This page will list small group locations and meeting times, as well as the small group leader. A link to sign up for a small group will be present. Registration is not required but is

recommended to allow small group leaders to know how large their group will be. Based on the group's size and meeting location, some small groups may "close" to new participants during a particular session.

For this initial session, we will be sending an email with a registration link included.