



Raising a family can get so busy that it leaves little time for parents with young children to engage in community. It is for this reason that Parent Group has been created. Parent groups are uniquely designed to create space for parents with little children to connect with other parents through meals and conversation. In sharing of our lives, we do not only want to develop friendships, but be good shepherds to one another, learning to care for each other in the way that Jesus modeled for us.

We accomplish this through a schedule that considers a young family and an agenda that seeks to shape parents as caring listeners.

#### The Schedule

- First Sunday of month: Families meet together with children to share a meal and fellowship
- Second Sunday of month: Moms connect and dads watch the children together
- Third Sunday of month: Dads connect and moms watch the children together
- Fourth Sunday of month: Parents chip in for some babysitters and the group spends an evening together
- Fifth Sunday (if there is one): Night off

#### The Agenda

Parent Group draws from the Quaker tradition known as a "clearness meeting." In short, when a parent shares, the other parents seek to understand through asking questions instead of giving answers. Our hope is that the Lord will use this tool to foster growth in our ability to authentically share, intentionally listen, and deeply care for one another.

Guidelines to a clearness meeting:

1. We accept one another as we are.
2. We share our struggles, successes, joy and pains.
3. We are honest. We set free the "true self" or real me, hidden behind the false self.
4. We listen with every ounce of energy we have whenever someone else is speaking.
5. We never criticize or condemn what others share.
6. We gather to care, not to cure or remove the crisis or pain. God does the healing.
7. We share in our own words. We share experiences from our own lives not abstract ideas.
8. We never give advice.
9. We are always free to remain silent if we wish.

10. We hold the content of personal sharing as sacred and absolutely confidential. Always trust one another completely.
11. We share speaking time so that one person does not monopolize the allotted time.

We ask everyone who signs-up to commit to the following:

- 1) We ask you to commit to a Parent Group for the full term (September through May - taking part of December and January off), and make attending Sunday services and participating in Parent Group a priority for the duration of the term.
- 2) We ask that you participate in the life of the group, not only by contributing to the discussion and prayer, but also in hospitality and service (e.g. hosting, providing snacks, helping clean up, helping with transportation etc) according to your ability.

If you have any questions, please contact Mike Roth at [miker@pearlchurch.com](mailto:miker@pearlchurch.com)