



Site Expectations:

The Office of Church Engagement (OCE) strives to make the Summer Fellowship Program a valuable experience for both sites and fellows. We have structures in place designed to prepare our students to serve well in their various contexts. First, we prayerfully select and place students in each ministry site. Second, we require each Fellow to participate in a training course designed to prepare them practically, theologically and vocationally for a summer of ministry. Third, throughout the spring we maintain regular communication with the student and their site in order to provide space for building relationships and clarifying expectations. Finally, we check in with students throughout the summer to provide them with space to process with pastoral care. We also provide materials and space for conversation between OCE, Fellows, and their sites to evaluate and celebrate how the summer is going.

We also want to make sure sites are prepared to host Fellows well. We endeavor to do this through regular communication, clearly articulated expectations and ongoing relationship. Through this partnership, we hope each site will strive to provide Fellows with a framework in which they can grow in leadership, gain ministry experience and ultimately grow in their love for Christ.

In an effort to engage in this work together, we have articulated the goals and expectations for each ministry site below.

Leadership

These Fellowships should challenge students and encourage them to think about ministry in new, creative, and unique ways. In addition to their daily assigned tasks, we ask each site to provide opportunities for Fellows to assume leadership – coupled with enough training and support to assume these responsibilities – that will challenge them to grow. This Fellowship is not designed to fill a volunteer slot in a ministry. It is meant to foster the development of a future spiritual leader. Possible examples of this include letting a fellow:

- Lead a small group or Sunday school group.
- Organize and lead an event.
- Lead during worship.
- Write an entry for a newsletter or email update.
- Curate social media posts and updates.
- Spearhead a new initiative in your organization.

Mentorship

The OCE expects mentorship within the ministry site to be an integral part of the Fellowship experience. Not only will this give each fellow a unique opportunity for guided vocational discernment, but it will further assimilate the Fellow into each ministry. It is important that each



Fellow receives guidance from staff members who are living out their ministry and are willing to offer wisdom and advice. The form of this mentorship is up to each host site, but needs to at least include the site supervisor meeting with the Fellow(s) weekly for reflection, guidance, study, etc. Possible examples of mentorship include:

- Reading and discussing a book together (we're happy to provide suggestions!).
- Practicing spiritual disciplines together.
- Shadowing ministry leaders and debriefing afterward.
- Assigning a member from the community to serve as a Fellow's mentor throughout the summer.
 - Connecting them to the community through meals, mentorship with someone in a vocationally similar field, or through exploring the community together.

Practical Ministry Experience

During the 10- to 12-week Fellowship, each Fellow should get a concrete sense of what ministry is like in their particular context. Fellows will receive practical job experience that will aid them in reflection pertaining to their gifts, skills, and calling throughout the summer. Possible examples of this practical experience include letting a Fellow:

- Shadow a pastor/staff supervisor one day each week.
- Take part in the whole arc of the summer's ministry opportunities. It is important for the fellow to not be peripheral, but to be invited into opportunities whether they have leadership responsibilities or not. This type of involvement is invaluable.
- Assist in worship by preaching, reading Scripture, praying or performing another task.
- Prepare for and/or help during VBS, mission trips, church camps or other events.
- Attend leadership meetings.

Embeddedness in Community

While this experience only lasts 10-12 weeks, Fellows who are really embedded in their ministry can have a transformational summer. The OCE hopes that each Fellow will not only become close with their supervisor and host family, but also with the broader community. Possible ideas for this include:

- Inviting a Fellow to eat meals with various families in the congregation.
- Creating a "bucket list" of activities the Fellow wants to do over the summer and allowing congregants to sign up to complete items with the Fellow.
- Staff members taking a Fellow to a favorite local restaurant or hang-out spot.
- Encouraging Fellows to become involved in a ministry program outside of their job description to get to know the ministry community more fully.
- Providing a homestay for each Fellow to be integrated into the "family life" of each ministry site.

These are possible ideas that sites may consider implementing, though exact details are subject to the site's context and needs, as well as each fellow's interests. For this reason, the application of these goals will likely differ from one site to the next. The basic framework of the fellowships, however, stays the same in all fellowships.



Logistics

Commissioning: On May 11 (date subject to change), we will hold a commissioning service for Fellows at Whitworth. If possible, we will also live-stream this service via Zoom. All site coordinators, Fellow supervisors, and homestay families are invited to attend.

Duration: Fellowships must last 10-12 weeks, though the exact start and end dates will be negotiated between the site and Fellow. It is common for fellowships to begin in early June and end mid-August. If the Fellow requests days off, the Fellow will work with their supervisor to determine if and how the time will be made up. Sites are required to communicate start and end dates for their fellow(s) to the OCE by **May 1, 2026**.

Hours: Fellows are expected to engage in full-time ministry and all it entails at their placement site. This usually equates to 30-40 hours per week. If part of their job entails relationship building, this may be included in the weekly hours. The OCE does not require a time card to be filled out, though the site may choose to use one. To allow for a healthy work-life balance, fellows should not exceed 40 hours of work per week or 10 hours of work per day. The only exception to this is when a Fellow is working in camp ministry. In this case, the site supervisor should ensure “flex time” where students can take adequate rest and time off before or after an intense week of camp service.

Payment: Students are paid a \$4,000 stipend. Your site is required to contribute the amount indicated when submitting your site application. This contribution will be due to Office of Church Engagement by **May 1, 2026**.

Travel/Gas Coverage: Sites are also required to fund travel costs for a fellow if the site is further than 5 hours drive time from Whitworth. This includes purchasing round-trip flights or reimbursing a Fellow’s gas costs. Additionally, if your Fellow is expected to use personal transportation for on-the-job tasks, sites are responsible to reimburse your fellow’s gas expenses.

Similarly, if a Fellow is given a site-provided homestay that is more than 10 miles from the site, the site agrees to help the Fellow cover gas expenses.

Communication: We try to maintain regular and open communication in the Fellowship Program. Quality communication is both a goal and an expectation. This happens in a variety of ways. First, all important dates and deadlines are clearly outlined on the calendar on our website. Second, as soon as students are selected and placed at their various sites, we connect each site and Fellow so that they can begin getting to know each other in early spring through the use of our Pre-Summer Interview guide.

Third, we require each site to facilitate an initial introduction between the homestay family and the Fellow so that each Fellow can begin to build relationships with their host families. Fourth, site supervisors and their Fellow are both required to participate in a Mid-Summer Interview facilitated by a member of Fellowship staff. Finally, we keep an open line of communication during the summer with each site while also checking in with each student every 2-3 weeks.

Homestay: Unless the student has made other arrangements, **each site is asked to provide a homestay in a relational context with someone proximate to the ministry with which the Fellow will work.** *Spokane sites only: if your site is unable to provide a homestay, you agree to pay an additional \$500 to help offset rent costs for each Fellow.* It is preferable that each student live with a family connected to the ministry or church, though house sitting or housing a student in a vacant house/apartment are also permissible if approved by OCE. The goal with each homestay is for the student to see how Christian faith is embedded not only in the direct ministry setting, but in all of life. The site is responsible for procuring a homestay, and the OCE will require sites to complete a Homestay Inspection Checklist with potential homestay families to confirm the placement (of which the OCE may choose to be present for), conduct a background check on everyone 18+ at the homestay, and view a homestay training video with the selected family. Homestays are required to provide adequate food for their fellow. If a homestay is not able to provide food for their fellow, it is important to let the OCE know, as the OCE may institute an additional food stipend for a fellow. Sites with multiple fellows may have the same homestay for multiple fellows or have each fellow in a different homestay. For further inquiries, details and questions regarding homestays, please contact the OCE and see the separate Homestay Expectations document. Contact information and details regarding homestay placements are due to the OCE by **March 1, 2026**.



Check-Ins: Throughout the summer, the OCE student leader chaplains will schedule a phone call check-in with each fellow every two or three weeks to talk about the Fellowship as well as engage in prayer. The OCE will send sites evaluative documents to help guide meaningful dialogue between you and your fellow before, during and at the end of the summer. At the midpoint of the summer, site supervisors will schedule a time to go through the Mid Summer Interview document on Zoom with the Fellow and with the Fellowship Director. Additionally, a final evaluation will be sent to both the ministry site and student to complete online and submit electronically to the OCE by September 5.

Mental Health/Concerns: If you are concerned about the well-being or mental health of your Fellow(s), reach out to the Fellowship Director as soon as possible to voice these concerns. Then, in collaboration and connection with each other, we will go over resources and a path forward.

Contact

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