



kids

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Worship



THE WESLEYAN CHURCH

INTERNSHIP CRITERIA

Application Introduction



Thank you for your interest in applying for an internship with the Kids in Worship Initiative for the Wesleyan Church. We are so excited you are considering joining us as we invite church leaders and congregations to engage more deeply in intergenerational worship practices.

This initiative is funded through a \$1.25 million grant that the Next Gen Department of the Wesleyan Church was awarded in fall of 2024, through Lilly Endowment, Inc. The Kids in Worship Initiative is aimed at transforming how we engage children in corporate worship and prayer. This program will focus on training ministry leaders, equipping churches, and inspiring a movement toward worship services that fully include children, especially those in K-4th grades.

As part of this, one church from each of our districts will be chosen to participate in a 2.5-year journey of growth and exploration. These churches will commit to holding six intergenerational worship services and will receive financial and training support to enhance their worship spaces with sensory and visual components.

Selected churches will also receive a ministerial intern for up to 2.5 years to come alongside them in their work, and they will have access to resources and guidance to create worship services that reflect the beauty of multiple generations worshipping together.

We anticipate spiritual vitality in churches across our denomination will increase throughout this initiative. If you are selected as an intern for this program, you will play an integral role in our vision to foster worship practices that allow people of all ages to grow together in faith.

Our hope is that through this process you won't just get to serve in a church, but that the experiences you participate in will have a profound impact on you and shape your approach to ministry for years to come.

Peace,
Next Gen Ministries Team

What Is Intergenerational Worship?

Intergenerational worship is generations coming together to worship intentionally, relationally, and mutually – serving, sharing, and learning alongside one another and together as the body of Christ. It's about adults modeling and mentoring kids/teens and kids/teens modeling and mentoring adults as they participate in worship together. It's recognizing all generations have something to offer in the body of Christ.

Why Intergenerational Worship?

The Wesleyan Church has a long-standing tradition of valuing children as essential members of the faith community, following Jesus' teaching to welcome children into the Kingdom of God. We believe children are not only recipients of faith but vital contributors to the life and worship of the church. This understanding drives our commitment to fostering intergenerational worship, where people of all ages experience and share in God's love together.

Research and recent experiences affirm the importance of integrating children into corporate worship. During the pandemic, many of our congregations witnessed the profound ways in which children's sensory-rich worship practices, including movement, visual aids, and active participation, enriched the worship experiences of adults. These moments demonstrated the beauty of intergenerational worship and how childlike faith can deepen spiritual connections for all generations.

Creating intergenerational worship services not only honors the inclusive love modeled by Christ but also addresses growing concerns about disconnection among children in corporate worship settings. Studies show that when children are active participants in worship, they develop a deeper sense of belonging, spiritual growth, and meaningful connections with the church community. Simultaneously, congregations are revitalized as they witness the vibrancy and authenticity that children bring to worship.

This initiative also draws inspiration from leading voices in the field, including the work of Dr. Amanda Drury and Dr. David Csinos, who highlight the power of sensory engagement and storytelling in creating worship environments that resonate across generations. These insights, coupled with our shared experiences within the Wesleyan Church, underscore the need to nurture worship practices that transcend age-specific silos and foster a unified culture of faith.

By participating in the Kids in Worship initiative, churches will be stepping into a movement that seeks to embrace the fullness of God's Kingdom—where children and adults alike worship together, learn from one another, and grow deeper in faith as one body.

Internship Criteria

Intern Roles and Responsibilities

- **Duration:** Interns may serve for 2.5 years or part of the term (e.g., semester or summer) churches are participating in the grant. The duration of the internship will be determined by the local church offering the internship.
- **Time Frame:** Internships are available from January 2026 through June 2028
- **Compensation:** Interns are paid \$450/month by the grant for 8 hours of assistance per week. If churches would like to extend hours and responsibilities, additional compensation would be supplemented by the local church.
- **Assignments:** Participating churches will select and hire their candidate. Ministerial track students from a Wesleyan university or seminary are preferred. Anyone who has sensed a call to ministry, including a high school student, is also a viable candidate.
- **References:** Intern applicants will need two reference letters to submit with the application. One reference must be from your pastor and the other can be from anyone who has observed your life and/or call to ministry.

Selecting Candidates

- **Wesleyan university or seminary candidates:** The grant director will inform ministry departments at each Wesleyan affiliated university or seminary of available internships. Interested students will complete an online application form. Submitted forms will be made available to all participating churches. The local participating church will interview potential candidates and select the candidate that best fits the church's culture. If an intern candidate is interested in serving in a specific church, the candidate is encouraged to reach out to their top choice churches directly to let them know that their applications have been submitted.
- **Other candidates:** Anyone, including a high school student, who has sensed a call to ministry can apply. The online application form will be made available to them from their local church. The local church will interview and select the candidate that best fits the church's culture.

Qualifications

The intern should demonstrate the following:

- Faith in Jesus
- Can articulate a call to ministry
- Willingness to work with a team
- Eager to learn
- Demonstrates humility in ministry
- Background check

Internship Criteria

Intern Expectations

- Shadow worship and children's ministry leaders.
- Provide observations and recommendations for integrating worship and prayer practices.
- Participate in planning at least one intergenerational worship service.
- Preach at least one sermon (to children, adults, or an intergenerational audience).
- Collect and submit reflections from church members, including pastors, worship leaders, and children.
- Track engagement and collect surveys for grant evaluation purposes.
- Attend conferences and gatherings related to the initiative.
- Write reflections on personal experiences, noting successes and challenges.

Expected Outcomes

For Interns:

- Broader understanding of new ministry philosophies related to ministering to children.
- Better equipped as ministry leaders for future ministry contexts.

For Children:

- Greater engagement in worship and deeper faith connection.
- A stronger sense of belonging in the worship community.
- Spiritual growth through diverse, multi-sensory worship experiences.

For Congregations:

- A vibrant intergenerational worship culture.
- Increased community cohesion and shared identity.
- Renewed worship vitality, attracting diverse demographics.

How To Apply

If interested in applying to be an intern at a participating church, applicants must complete the following steps:

- Provide two references through the Reference Form link and request they submit a reference by November 30, 2025. One reference must be from your pastor and the other can be from anyone who has observed your life and/or call to ministry.
- Go to www.wesleyan.org/kids-worship-initiative.com to complete the online application and find the Reference Form link. Applications are open from September 8, 2025 to November 30, 2025.

Next Steps

- Your application will be shared with participating churches and interested churches will reach out to you for an interview and next steps.
- Interviews and hiring will be completed by December 15, 2025.
- If you are selected by a church, they will communicate with our grant team that you have been hired.

Contact Information

- Stephanie Rhyne, Program Director - kids@wesleyan.org
- Justine Tegen, Assistant to the Program Director – tegenj@wesleyan.org