

Trinity Presbyterian Church

BRIDGE NIGHTS



Welcoming 5th-grade
students to the
Trinity Presbyterian Youth Ministry

5

th Grade Parents - welcome to the wonderful, wild, and somewhat wacky world of youth ministry at Trinity Presbyterian Church. We're excited that you and your fifth grader will be moving up into the youth program and over the next few months you'll get a taste of what's in store next fall!

Some introductions first: your Director of Ministry to Youth and their Families is John Ryan. I have been at Trinity for almost five years. Originally from West Virginia, I went to Westminster College in PA, graduate school at the Presbyterian School of Christian Education, Richmond, VA, and am a doctoral candidate in the Doctor of Educational Ministry program at Columbia Theological Seminary, here in Atlanta. I have sixteen years of youth ministry experience and have served churches in Cincinnati and Dalton, Georgia.

My "partner in crime" is Wendy Cochran, Assistant Youth Director. She is married to Mike and the mother of Ethan, age 3 and Helen, 3 months. Wendy came on staff two years ago as a Youth Ministry Intern and moved into her current position last year. Wendy hails from Greensboro, NC, graduated from Appalachian State University with a degree in Outdoor Education and has a masters of divinity from Columbia Seminary.

Here is what you can expect this winter/spring: we will have a series of Friday night gatherings for fifth graders to introduce them to youth ministry at Trinity. These are fifth grade only events with the youth ministry staff. Those dates are:

- **February 26, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. at the church**
- **March 19, 6:00 - 9:30 p.m. Whirly Ball in Marietta**
- **April 16, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. at the church**
- **May 2 (Sunday afternoon) - we're planning on having the world's longest slip and slide on the front hill of the church.**

An overview of the youth program at Trinity: currently we have around 250 sixth - twelfth graders who attend 32 different schools. Our youth come from all four corners of the city of Atlanta and Cobb, Fulton, and DeKalb counties. While the majority of our youth attend private schools, we have a healthy mix of youth who attend Atlanta public schools, Fulton and Cobb county schools and City of Decatur schools. Because the majority of our youth do not go to school with each other, we work very hard in creating a welcoming environment within the youth program.

Your fifth graders entry into the youth program can seem daunting. There are a lot of us up in the Youth Lounge on the second floor of D building. But know that there is strength in numbers and there are a lot of fifth graders entering the youth program this year! Here is what you can expect:

Sunday Mornings - we gather at 9:45 a.m. in the Youth Lounge for doughnuts, hot chocolate, announcements and prayers. Your fifth grader will be dismissed to their classroom by 10:00 a.m. This gathering time is important! It is a way for us to connect to each other.

Sunday Evenings starts with **Youth Choir** at 5:00 p.m.

Youth Supper is in Williams Hall at 6:00 p.m. A hot, youth friendly supper is made by our church kitchen staff each week for the bargain price of \$5.00. Youth Supper lasts for 30 minutes.



Presbyterian Youth Connection or PYC is what we call our youth program on Sunday evenings. PYC starts at 6:30 p.m. and pick-up is at 7:30 p.m. The junior high home base is D-202 and pick-up is in front of D building. Your fifth grader will have a lot of fun, will be involved in mission activities, and will learn more about their faith. We have a great group of Youth Advisors actively engaged with the youth program and they want to get to know your child and will help them in their faith journey.

The youth program at Trinity is a well balanced youth program that will engage your youth in a variety of ways, physically, mentally, and spiritually. A monthly newsletter (via email only) and a weekly update (also via email) will keep you up to date with the weekly goings on of the youth program.

Here is what we need from you:

- **Prayers!** Please be in prayer for the youth and adults of our church.
- **Attendance** - we need you to get your youth to church on both Sunday mornings and night. I know this type of programming will be very different from what you've experienced before. Please encourage your child to be present. Because it takes a certain number of contact hours for a group to form, regular attendance is important.
- **Fun Trips** - mission trips, mystery trips, and youth conferences are trips your youth is eligible to attend in the fall. Mark your calendar now for the 6th grade fall mission trip - we don't know where we are going yet, but the trip will be the weekend of October 1-3, 2010.
- **Talk to us** - make sure we have your correct email by sending me an email at johnryan@trinityatlanta.org. You know who I am, so please take a second to tell me about your family and your rising sixth grader. If you have questions, are nervous or need to tell us something, let us know. We can only be as good as you help us to be!
- **Calendars** - mark your calendar for August 29. You and your family are invited to join the entire youth program for a luncheon following Youth Sunday. You'll hear in details about plans for the program year and have an opportunity to sign-up for trips.
- A **Medical Release Form** is included in this mailing. Please return it to the youth office before our first Bridge Night. You'll need to fill out this form once a year in the fall.

This has been a long introduction into the world of youth ministry. I hope we have answered many of your questions. I know you have many more. Please do not hesitate to track down me or Wendy, introduce your self (and your rising sixth grader) and let us know what's on your mind. Make sure you register for the Bridge Night by sending me an email. If you want to call me, my office number is 404-496-8456 and cell number is 404-788-1356.

Peace of Christ!

JOHN Wendy

