

First Plymouth Youth News

AUGUST 2010



Participants in the 2009 SpiritLife Retreat walk the labyrinth in the snow. This year's retreat will be held in warmer weather, September 17-19 at La Foret.

Welcome to Youth Group 2010-2011!

Fall is here!

August marks the launch of our programming for youth, and this newsletter is dedicated to getting everyone up to speed on what the year holds. In it you'll find a calendar, articles about a few important events and programs, and a heads-up about the August and September schedules specifically.

If you're new to the youth program this fall, you should

know that you can expect to find one of these in the church newsletter each month. In addition, you can find most of this information on the church website (firstplymouthchurch.org) and in the weekly email blasts from the church office, and the weekly (ish) emails from me. And if you're new to the program—welcome!

If you're an old vet at our youth program, welcome to you too. 2010-2011 is going to be another

great year, and I know you're looking forward to it as much as I am. So take a look at this newsletter, and I'll see you soon!

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a few highlights of last year's youth group:

2009-2010

pie night...SpiritLife...prayer flags...ultimate frisbee...conference retreats...bowling for the Denver Inner City Parish...lock-in...GROG...confirmation...youth choir...inclusivity...Advent skits...social justice...senior banquet...Haiti relief and prayer service...Rockies game...slideshows...love...pipe cleaner art...prayer beads...siyahamba and sanctuary...the chapel and the meadow...movie nights...community...



The youth group after making prayer flags with Rev. Jane Anne Ferguson in March. The flags are on their way to be a part of a collection in Ireland.

Shindig!

(August 15)

We're hosting a party! Or rather, a Shindig. On August 15th from 3-9 p.m., UCC youth groups from across the Front Range will converge on First Plymouth for our first (hopefully of many) annual Shindig. We'll have games, an Ultimate Frisbee tournament, t-shirt tie-dyeing, a talent show, a campfire, a cookout, and more. It will be a chance to get to know new folks, and to reconnect with friends from other churches that we don't get to see too often.

Be on the lookout for more information on the Shindig over email.

Youth Group Kickoff

(August 22)

While we're having the Shindig on the 15th, that's not *really* our kickoff, since it's more of an event for the entire Conference. The First Plymouth youth groups will kick off one week later, on August 22nd. Keep your eyes peeled for more information via email, but definitely mark your calendars for 6:15 on the 22nd. See you there?

Community Day Camp

(September 12)

Community Camp is a lot of fun—but not everyone is always able to go. That's why

we've started having a one-day Community Day Camp each year, dedicated to bringing the Community Camp experience here to First Plymouth. This year's Community Day Camp will be on September 12th. You can find lots of information about it in the church newsletter and on the website. There will be youth activities throughout the day, led by Eric Smith and others, so all youth are encouraged (cajoled? begged?) to attend.

SpiritLife Retreat

(September 17-19)

Last year was our first ever SpiritLife Retreat, and those who attended gave it rave reviews. It's a First Plymouth-only retreat, held at La Foret, that focuses on developing spiritual practices that can help center your life, bring you into communication with God and the world around you, and live a more aware and connected life.

The only request from last year's group was that this year's retreat be held at a warmer time of year. So this year's retreat has been moved into September, which will hopefully give us more outdoor time and make the entire experience more comfortable.

The cost will be \$50, (the cheapest weekend retreat you'll find anywhere, thanks to a generous Endowment grant), and registration is due by September 1st. This is one retreat you won't want to miss, so register ASAP. Space is limited.

Frequently Asked Questions

Five questions about youth group logistics:

What time is youth group?

We usually start at 6:15, and finish at 8:30. Some special events may require different times, which will be announced ahead of time, over email.

Who is youth group for?

All youth grades 6-12 are invited, whether they and/or their families are members of First Plymouth or not.

What do we do there?

We do lots of fun stuff, some serious stuff, some spiritual stuff, and quite a bit of random stuff. We've been known to make giant messes, spend time praying, roll up our sleeves and work, and accidentally fall asleep while pretending to listen.

What does it cost?

Our goal is always to make youth group free. Occasionally, because of special events or budget limitations, we have to ask participants to bring \$5 or \$10. This is *always optional*, however, and if you don't have it, we'll cover you.

Is it true that Eric is good at foosball?

I'm in my fourth year and have been beaten 3 or 4 times. So if you want to be a hero, bring it.

Bonus Trivia:

Did you know that the icons below were part of a template, and Eric couldn't think of anything to put in their place? True story! Perhaps we'll go camping...or whatever it is that these represent...and perhaps not.



More FAQ:

Here are some more frequently asked questions about youth group:

What if I like to sing?

Then Youth Choir is for you! Youth Choir meets Sunday evenings just before youth group, from 4:45 to 6:15, in the Odeon. You need not be an awesome singer to join.

Is there going to be a middle school mission trip?

I sincerely hope so. I'm working on one, but there's nothing to announce yet.

I'm an 8th or 9th grader, and I want to be in Confirmation.

That's not a question. But you're in luck! This year we're radically changing the way we do Confirmation (example: it won't be on Sunday mornings anymore). If you're in this group, you'll be getting a letter from Eric soon, and if you don't see one by September 1st, give Eric a call to see what's up.

I like to hang out and do cool stuff and do good things for the world, but I don't know how I feel about God/Jesus/spirituality/whatever.

That's not a question either. But don't sweat it. Youth Group is open to anyone and everyone, regardless of where you might be on your journey.

Did you know?

These icons that keep appearing? I'm starting to take them as a sign. A sign that we need to do a youth group camping trip sometime. Hmmm. Bonus Did you know: Somewhere, Aaron Bugh is nodding vigorously while reading his youth newsletter.



This disgusting picture is of youth director Eric on our 2010 mission trip to Miami. Our goal is to include 86% fewer hairnets and 98% fewer chunks of semi-rancid meat on the 2011 mission trip (see below).

Second Wind Fund Run/Walk

(September 19)

The Second Wind Fund was created in the wake of a series of suicides at a Denver-area high school in the mid-2000s. A local church (much like ours) that bordered the high school decided that it needed to take action, to do something to help the students who were dealing with the losses and those who were themselves feeling like suicide was the only way out.

So was born the Second Wind Fund, which is now the nation's largest teen suicide prevention program, and is headquartered in Lakewood. Each year they host a run/walk 5K, to raise funds for their prevention efforts. We participated in 2008, but a conflict kept us away in 2009. This year we'll be back in the race. Each participant will need to raise funds from sponsors (forms will be available at youth group beginning August 22nd). As was the case last time, Eric will donate \$5 to the total of any youth who can beat him in the 5K. Last time he paid out \$15; this time, it might be more.

Rocky Mountain Conference Fall Retreats

(September 19)

The Rocky Mountain Conference holds retreats for middle school and high school youth each fall and spring. The dates for the fall are October 15-17 for the high schoolers, and November 5-7 for the middle schoolers. If you would like more information on the retreats and how to register, please ask Eric. Forms will be available approximately one month before the retreat.

High School Mission Trip 2011: Venezuela!

(July 2011)

It's early yet, but we've already decided on our destination for our 2011 trip. In cooperation with Rev. Stuart Haskins, we'll be traveling to Venezuela to work with the Rocky Mountain Conference's ecumenical partner, the Evangelical United Pentecostal Church of Venezuela (EUPV). The Conference has a long and deep relationship with the EUPV, and we look forward to joining that relationship next summer.

Such a trip requires a great deal of work and financial commitment, of course, so please begin to consider how you can support us in our fundraising efforts. You'll begin hearing about them in the fall.

Calendars

August and September

August 15: Shindig, 3-9 p.m.

August 22: Youth Group Kickoff, 6:15-8:30 p.m.

August 29: Youth Group, 6:15-8:30 p.m.

September 5: Youth Group, 6:15-8:30 p.m.

September 12: Community Day Camp, all day (see newsletter for more information). Youth Group 6:15-8:30 p.m.

September 17-19: SpiritLife Retreat

September 19: Second Wind Fund Run/Walk (around noon; watch for details), Youth Group 6:15-8:30 p.m.

September 26: Youth Group, 6:15-8:30 p.m.

October and Beyond

October 15-17: Conference High School Retreat

November 5-7: Conference Middle School Retreat

December 3-5: Our Whole Lives Retreat (8th and 9th graders)

March 6: Youth Sunday (tentative)

July 2011: High School mission trip to Venezuela

Leftovers

Parent Meeting

During the dinner period of our kickoff night (August 22), we'll hold a brief parent meeting to discuss the year's plans, fill out forms, and answer any questions you may have. Think of it as orientation.

Volunteers



If you are not a youth parent or grandparent, we could use your help as a youth mentor! Let Eric know if you're

interested. All mentors must be background checked and go through the First Plymouth boundary training program.

Contact Info



You can reach this handsome fellow on the left any time day or night at the contact info below.

Please don't hesitate!

[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/
REVERENDERIC](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/REVERENDERIC)

ESMITH@FIRSTPLYMOUTHCHURCH.ORG

828.337.0975 (CELL/TEXT)
303.762.0616 (WORK)