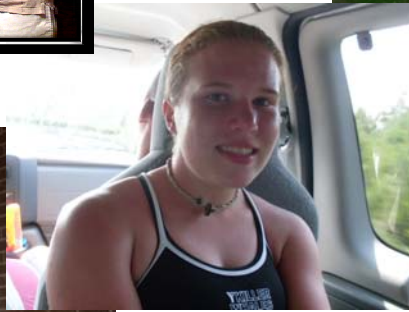


West Raleigh Presbyterian Church

YOUTH MINISTRY HANDBOOK



2010-2011



West Raleigh Presbyterian Church Youth Handbook 2010-11

~ Youth Mission Statement ~

Adopted 1998

“As a result of our youth ministry,
youth will be nurtured by their church family,
will be challenged to study
and understand God's Word in the Bible,
will realize how unique they are, how much they are loved
and how they are created in God's image,
as they grow closer to God.

They will become actively involved in the church community,
where they are accepted and feel free
to discuss, question, explore
and finally, embrace their faith,
as God's Word challenges them
to think, feel and act outside their comfort zone.

Our youth are called to be faithful Christians
throughout this diverse world,
to hold God's Word in their hearts
while sharing it and serving others.

Our youth will know, share and model love
as revealed in God's Word
as they express their faith uniquely
throughout their life journey.”

~ Goals for Youth Ministry ~

Using the Youth Mission Statement and prayerful discernment, the Youth Committee of WRPC has identified five specific goals for youth ministry, which serve as the foundation of our programs. These are:

Connecting youth with the Church and World

Discipleship

Inclusiveness

Meeting the needs/interests of youth

Youth and adult partnership

WEST RALEIGH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH seeks to offer a variety of opportunities for youth,

grades 6-12, to experience a relationship with God, the Church and the world that is reflected in the goals for youth ministry. These opportunities include youth-adult partnerships for Bible study, exploration of issues of faith, intergenerational friendship among the people of God, mission beyond the congregation, mission trips, youth conferences, participation in denominational ministry, and vital expression of faith through music. Youth serve God through church leadership, kitchen brigade, children's worship, Sunday worship leadership, children's library and a host of other callings. Some of our youth have served on Presbytery Youth Council, Summer Conference Leadership and International Youth Triennium. Clearly there is a lot, and each individual youth will discern his or her place in it all. It is our hope that youth will participate in as many of these activities as will feed their own spiritual growth. We strive to find a place in the life of the church for each individual.

SUNDAY MORNING MINISTRIES INCLUDE PRAISE CHORUS, SUNDAY SCHOOL, AND SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY.

Praise Chorus is a gathering for music and preparation for musical leadership in worship service. It meets 9:30-9:50 AM on the third floor. The high school youth are also welcome to sing in the *Chancel Choir*, which rehearses Thursday evenings 7:30-9:00 PM and Sunday mornings at 10:30 AM.

Sunday School, for **Middle School and High School Youth**, meet separately on the third floor to study and engage in discussions using the curriculum *Seasons of the Spirits*. 9:50 AM to 10:45 AM.

Service for the Lord's Day The youth often sit together during worship. There are many opportunities for leadership such as liturgist, music leadership, and drama.

SUNDAY EVENING MINISTRY On most Sunday evenings, **Middle School and High School Youth Groups** meet at the church on the third floor from **6:00-7:30 PM**. Gatherings include devotions, fellowship, mission service and special activities and projects. Special projects and activities may include lock-ins, retreats, outings for sports and games, day trips, concerts and mission work that may be scheduled on Saturdays, weekends and/or other times. In addition to group activities, games and snacks, youth groups plan for Youth Sunday (HS) and mission projects.

CONFIRMATION is a two-year course of study leading to a personal statement of faith. The curriculum takes students, often in Grades 7 and 8, through a complete survey of the Bible and immersion in the confessional tradition of the church. Confirmation is a voluntary covenant on the part of each participant. A person's decision to participate or not to participate will not, in any way, prevent participation in other parts of youth ministry.

ADULT LEADERSHIP FOR YOUTH MINISTRY

The model of adult-youth partnership for ministry brings volunteer leaders, staff members and college students into partnership (*koinonia*) with middle and high school students.

The model for leadership includes a Leader, an Advisor, a Staff Facilitator and a Student Intern, often a member of Presbyterian Campus Ministry. This rotational model allows for knowledgeable, experienced leadership as well as the introduction of fresh styles and ideas each year.

Middle School and High School Youth Leadership

Middle School Youth Leaders – Pastor Joe Ward, Bruce Fawcett, Kelly Sanders (PCM College Intern)

Please add Elizabeth Meynardie to the list of YC representatives. It's Jeff Colby, Lizzie Sluchak, Anna Gillette, Elizabeth Meynardie, and Leila Wright on Youth Council. Also, Amy Veatch, Moderator, and Joe Ward on Youth Committee.

Middle School Sunday School – Leslie Friedrich, Bruce & Rane Fawcett (substitutes)

High School Youth Leaders – Jim House, Amy Veatch, Nick DeMuynk (intern)

High School Sunday School – Emily Grant, Mike Ramsey, George Leggett

Praise Chorus – Bruce & Rane Fawcett, Jeff & Sean Colby.

Youth Council Members from WRPC, 2010 - 11: Jeff Colby, Elisabeth Sluchak, Anna Gillette, Elizabeth Meynardie, and Leila Wright, Pastor Joe Ward and Amy Veatch, Moderator.

Youth Ministry Team

The Youth Ministry Team seeks to honor and follow Jesus Christ in the vision and implementation of youth ministry at WRPC. It provides guidelines for experiences, participation and behavior; calls and trains youth leaders for all areas; and plans conferences and major trips. The Youth Ministry Team supports youth, parents, youth leaders (in all ministry areas) and staff in their roles together. This year's Youth Committee includes Susan Randolph, Garry Umstead, Rane Winslow, Pastor Joe Ward, invited Leaders, Teachers and Youth and Elder for Christian Education Barbara Kirby.

The Youth Ministry Team, youth leaders, youth and staff devise an annual calendar each fall at the start of the school year listing youth group events, Sunday School and music dates and special events. This calendar is sent to each youth and parents. Youth activities are also listed in *WRPC News and Events*, on the Church Calendar at www.wrpc.org, and in e-mailings sent out by the Communications Coordinator. Additional communications may be sent out via postcard and phone tree. The web page also has a Youth link where information is available – please see www.wrpc.org and click on *To Youth*. Each year, data (e-mail/home address, birth date, etc.) is collected on an information form to facilitate communication efforts. Parent meetings are scheduled in the fall and as needed throughout the year to attend to details of various ministries and to keep families informed.

Youth Ministry Guidelines

YOUTH COVENANT STATEMENT

Adult and Youth Participants sign the following **Youth Covenant Statement**:

I have willingly chosen to participate in West Raleigh Presbyterian Church's Youth Ministry. As a participant, I will work towards the goals of WRPC Youth Ministry and building our group into a Christian community by...

- ★ Participating whole-heartedly and enthusiastically in all the activities planned for our group
- ★ Speaking up when I have a problem, need or concern.
- ★ Listening/Responding to the needs of others.
- ★ Following the guidance of the adult leadership.
- ★ Respecting the property and rights of others and the church, and abiding by the rules as agreed

to by the youth and leaders.

- ★ NOT using controlled substances (alcohol or drugs) or promoting use of these substances in our community.
- ★ NOT leaving the event grounds at any time without an adult leader present.
- ★ Encouraging others to understand and abide by the above covenant and striving, as a Christian, to live as a supportive member of the group and as an example of faith and belief to those with whom we are in contact.

YOUTH DISCIPLINE POLICY

The goal of our Youth Programs is to foster a sense of inclusion, learning, and connection with God and others. Often, discipline can be handled by redirecting a teenager to a more constructive use of time and energy. Our leaders and youth will work together, to the fullest extent, to ensure that all youth are welcomed and included in activities. All interaction will carefully consider a teenager's integrity and uniqueness. All youth will be treated with respect and understanding. Physical punishment will never be used.

When special needs are present, we will attempt to provide appropriate mentoring as far as we are able. There may be events, such as extended conferences or mission trips, to which a particular individual should refrain from attending. These decisions will be made on a case by case basis in conversation with the parents, youth director/pastor, and the individual.

When a youth willfully breaks the Youth Covenant (see above), the following procedure will be followed:

- ◆ The individual will be reminded by the leaders and/or other youth about the purpose of our Youth programs.
- ◆ If the individual continues to break the covenant, he/she will receive a warning from the leader.
- ◆ If the incident is severe or continues, and needs further discussion or time out, the individual will be removed from the setting so that
 - the youth cannot continue to break the covenant and can stop the behavior
 - the youth can discuss how to change the behavior and reconcile with the leader/group as needed

Things to know when a youth is asked to leave a Youth Setting:

An adult will remain with the youth at all times

The youth will remain in a visible area but away from the youth room.

If needed and possible, the adult may accompany the youth to discuss the situation with the Christian Educator or the Pastor (responsible for Youth Programs) or may send someone to ask the Educator or Pastor to come to the youth.

When a youth has been asked to leave the Youth Setting, parents will be contacted and the situation will be explained. The pastor and/or educator should also be contacted.

Examples that may result in a youth's removal from the Youth Setting.

Repeated foul language

Disrespect of a leader, youth, or the intention of youth ministry

Damaging church property or other property that the youth group is using

Injury of a leader or youth

West Raleigh Presbyterian Church has an absolutely zero tolerance for violence. *If a volunteer*

threatens or displays violence, he or she will be subject to immediate disciplinary action, including verbal or written warnings, a meeting with a pastor or elder, or termination, depending upon the circumstances. In addition, the volunteer may be subject to criminal proceedings, as appropriate.

If a youth is violent to a youth, leader, or property, the youth will be immediately removed from the situation. The incident will be discussed with the parent, youth, pastor/educator, and chairperson of the Youth Committee. Since violence affects the entire group's sense of well-being and security, it will also be discussed with the Youth Group, particularly with an eye toward reconciliation when possible. The individual will be suspended for a minimum of two weeks. In the case of a youth trip, the youth will be sent home immediately. All expenses will be covered by the parents/youth.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES: COMMITMENT FOR PARENTS AND YOUTH

Each fall, Youth Ministry Program participants will be asked to tentatively identify events in which they are likely to participate. This provides leaders, the Youth Ministry Team and the Session adequate time to plan for accommodating as many youth as possible in these events. Youth and families will receive an annual calendar of events and meetings. Read *e-mails* and *WRPC News and Events* for any schedule changes. Registration deadlines and the timeline for payment(s) will be provided for each major event such as retreats and mission trips. Because facilities and programs have strict payment deadlines, full refunds may not be made for cancellations post program or facility registration deadlines.

POLICY FOR YOUTH ACTIVITIES CHAPERONES

Given the various configurations of teachers, youth leaders, parents and other support persons, it is desirable to provide appropriate supervision while ensuring that adults are not overburden with this activity. Certain events, central to the spiritual development of youth, should include the pastor/pastors or persons whom they recommend as chaperones. Chaperone coverage should be part of the annual plan prior to start of the Youth Ministries year. Revisions may be necessary due to schedule changes. ***Parents are key to assuring there is enough adult coverage and are expected to volunteer for events.***

Chaperone for Two Days or less (Presbytery events, lock-ins, WRPC Retreats)

Preferences: 1 - Advisors and Leaders; 2 - Intern; 3 - Parent /other volunteers.

Chaperones for More than Two Days (Mission Trip, Montreat, Youth Council and Massanetta)

Preferences: 1 - Staff; 2 - other volunteers/Advisors and Leaders; 3 - Intern.

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR YOUTH EVENTS

Partial to full scholarships are available for youth who need financial assistance in order to participate in official WRPC, Presbytery and Synod MS and HS events that carry significant registration fees. Youth who demonstrate financial need and who otherwise will not be able to attend the event without financial assistance from the church, should write a letter of request to the Pastor and/or the Youth Ministry Team Elder. The letter should include the name of the event, and how this event will benefit the youth member or build on his/her experiences. The requesting youth should also indicate how he or she will contribute to the spirituality, mission or Christian leadership upon return from the supported activity. The YMT in consultation with the pastor will determine the amount to be paid or shared with the youth. If it is not possible to offer full financial support, the youth will be given the opportunity to earn part of the fee through special work or projects at WRPC.

COMMUNITY BOUNDARIES

Parents, friends and former members of youth groups are often unsure as to when and how to participate and assist in youth ministry. Drop-in visits and interruptions can significantly change the dynamic of a group discussion or spiritual-life event. This is especially true when graduates of any of the programs return for a visit.

There are many opportunities for volunteer support for the youth programs. Anyone should feel free to ask leaders, advisors or staff persons about ways to help. In general, any visit to a youth program should be coordinated with and defined by leaders.

DRIVING

Drivers on all youth activities must be at least 25 years of age, with valid driver's licenses. Background checks will be done for drivers. Youth are not permitted to operate a vehicle during any youth activity.

FIRE SAFETY

Once a year, the Board of Deacons holds a fire drill. Notification is given via *WRPC News and Events* and leaders will be specifically contacted if their meeting will be affected. Exit routes are posted in each classroom and in the hallways. Upon notification, parents and youth are asked to review these routes together to prepare for the drill that will take place during Sunday School. Teachers will be prepared to assist their classes to the indicated safe areas outside the building. Adults will be assisted with routes by their Sunday School teachers or the Deacons.

SUPERVISION

At all times, youth must be supervised on the campus of WRPC. During scheduled and unscheduled times, youth should be supervised under parental judgment and the following guidelines:

- 1. Drop Off & Pick Up for All Youth Events** (i.e., Sunday School, youth group meetings, trips, etc.)

Upon arrival, the youth's teacher or leader should be notified that they have arrived and where the parents/guardians may be found while they are in our care. Youth should be picked up at the scheduled time so leaders can meet other obligations they may have. (If youth are driving, parents/guardians need to indicate, in writing, their knowledge that the youth is driving to and from events. If youth desire to carpool, permission must be granted in writing from parents of passenger youth and copies provided to both the church and the parents of the driver youth.) Upon arrival and/or drop off, youth are not allowed to walk to Hillsborough St. or other vicinities prior to youth events, unless adequate time is available to return on time. If parents/guardians are not accompanying the youth to Hillsborough St., etc., and are leaving them in our care, youth will not be allowed to make these excursions, as leaders are needed to welcome youth, set up for meetings, pack the van, etc., and are not available to leave the campus. Youth are not permitted to bring personal meals or snacks to youth events, unless requested for the specific event.

- 2. Facilities** Youth should not be in the Campus Ministry Student Lounge, unless supervised by an adult or unless it is unoccupied by Campus Ministry students. Equipment in this lounge is not owned by WRPC and must be replaced at youth expense if damaged or misused during their use. The television in the lounge is not to be viewed unless during a youth event for scheduled ministry purposes. Damage or misuse of other church facilities or equipment will be charged to the youth responsible and may result in the youth missing youth events.

West Raleigh Presbyterian Church
Policy for Safeguarding Our Children and Youth


General Policy Statement

It is the policy of West Raleigh Presbyterian Church that all staff, member and non-member volunteers and all other persons who work with children and/or youth through West Raleigh Presbyterian Church are to maintain the integrity of ministerial, employment, and any volunteer relationships at all times and in all places. Child sexual abuse or any other form of child abuse is not only a violation of the principles set forth in Scripture, but also of these relationships. Child abuse and sexual abuse of children or adults in any form are never permissible and will not be tolerated.

The Session of West Raleigh Presbyterian Church adopts this policy for the following purposes:

1. To set and enforce standards of ethical behavior consistent with scripture;
2. To define a procedure by which volunteers that work with children and/or youth are recruited and supervised;
3. To provide procedures for inquiry and effective response to allegations of abuse to children and/or youth;
4. To demonstrate pastoral concern for the victims and those accused of abuse to children and/or youth;
5. To serve as a guide and to reinforce the church's commitment to prevention of child abuse and sexual misconduct;
6. To further the peace, unity and purity of the church; and
7. To help protect children and/or youth from physical and sexual abuse, and, at the same time, insulate West Raleigh Presbyterian Church from charges of negligent hiring or negligent supervision of its children and/or youth workers.

Scriptural Mandates for this Policy

The Lord is your Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength ... You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these. Mark 12:29-31

As the Lord who has called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct. I Peter 1:15

I exhort the elders among you to tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the over-sight, not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it - not for sordid gain, but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock. I Peter 5:2-3

For you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. James 3:1

Policies and Procedures

In order to provide as safe and secure an environment as possible for our ministry participants, and to minimize the ministry's and workers' vulnerability to unwarranted accusation, the following procedures have been adopted and will be enforced.

Screening and Training

1. Potential volunteers may work with children and/or youth on 3 different levels of interaction and will complete a volunteer application based on their length of church membership and choice of level as set forth below:
 - A. **Occasional Supervised Interaction (application Part A):** an adult who volunteers at church sponsored events or programs primarily for children or youth on a limited or infrequent basis (approximately 5 times per year or less) in a supervised capacity. Examples include, without limitation, occasional nursery, Children's Worship Greeters and Assistants, Sunday School or Youth Fellowship helpers, D.O.C.K. assistants, or Summer Sunday School assistants.
 - B. **Regular Supervised Interaction (application parts A and B):** an adult who regularly and frequently volunteers at church sponsored events or programs primarily for children or youth in a supervised capacity. Examples include, without limitation:
 - Sunday School or Youth Fellowship Leaders, Children's Worship Leaders, Vacation Bible School or Summer Sunday School Leaders, Music Leaders
 - overnight and/or offsite activities such as lock-in, retreats, and mission trips
 - program staff members, such as pastors, Directors of Christian Education, and student interns.
 - Confirmation elders and mentors
 - deacons
 - C. **Drivers (application parts A, B, and C):** any individual who may need to drive a vehicle owned by WRPC or use a personal vehicle while conducting church business or ministry. Any person who transports children/youth for WRPC is required to have a background check and a DMV check.
2. **6 Month Rule:** All volunteers working with children or youth must be a member or regular attendee of West Raleigh Presbyterian Church for a minimum of six months prior to working with children or youth. Members of the Presbyterian Campus Ministry must have a reference from the Presbyterian Campus Ministry pastor verifying that they are active participants in this program and are recommended by the PCM pastor.
3. **Review Procedure** All adult volunteers working with children / youth and all hourly paid staff will be interviewed/reviewed by an appropriate staff member to determine suitability for that work. The personal references of all volunteers and staff members working with children and/or youth will be checked by the Church Office Administrator. All volunteers and staff must also have provided written acknowledgment of reading and understanding this policy.
4. **Background Checks:** Level B and C volunteers must undergo North Carolina statewide criminal background and sex offender registry checks conducted by an independent company as part of the application process. Checks are comprised of a multi-state criminal record, sexual offender's registry, and social security verification. Level C also includes a motor vehicle report. All information pertaining to criminal background and sex offender registry checks will be collected and maintained by the church office administrator and secured and held in confidence.
5. **Annual Updates:** All volunteers will update their applications annually.
6. **Session Review:** The youth and/or Children's program directors will present lists of volunteers at each level to the session for review, provided that no confidential information may be divulged.

Procedures

1. **2-Person Rule:** At least two adults must be present for each function and in each room or area involving children's and youth activities. The presence of a designated adult supervisor who moves in and out of rooms and monitors the hallways at all times during any function involving children or youth may be counted as one of the adults for purposes of this rule. If two adults

from the same family work together, another adult must be in the area at all times. This rule may be modified only under unforeseen or special circumstances for particular events. Where children/youth are both male and female, the chaperones must be both male and female. If these conditions are not met, the activity must be canceled. The Two-person Rule will not apply to pastoral or educational staff in counseling situations.

2. **Visibility:** Hallways, classrooms and other areas of the building will be monitored while activities for children and youth are ongoing. All classrooms and offices will have windows or other provision for visibility and accountability.
3. **Age Minimum:** All volunteers must be at least 21 years of age, provided that a person aged 18 to 20 may volunteer if he or she is at least 5 years older than the oldest youth in the group and that the other volunteer with that group is at least 23 years old. Except when an adult is present, older youth are not permitted to supervise younger, minor children and/or youth. Presbyterian Campus Ministry students are exempt with a recommendation from the Campus Ministry Pastor. Drivers must be 25 years of age.
4. **Annual Review:** The Safeguarding Policy of WRPC will be reviewed annually and the Session will be informed of any substantive changes thereto.
5. Whenever possible, two adults will be present in a vehicle. All drivers and those riding with them are required to wear seatbelts. Drivers must be 25 years of age and must have completed Parts A, B, and C of the Application.

Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse

Upon the suspicion that child abuse, including sexual abuse of a child, has occurred during activities sponsored by West Raleigh Presbyterian Church, either on or off the premises of the church, the victim or his/her parents, or a witness or anyone that suspects that abuse has occurred must report the incident immediately to the Pastor/Head of Staff. If the complaint implicates the Pastor/Head of Staff, then the complaint will be made to the Chair of the Personnel Committee.

Program of Response

As soon as an allegation is made, the Pastor/Head of Staff (or Associate Pastor in the absence of the Pastor/Head of Staff or the Chair of the Personnel Committee if the allegation implicates the Pastor/Head of Staff) will do the following:

1. Set up an initial meeting with the victim and his/her parents if the victim is a child, or the complainant. An additional person shall be present at this meeting to take notes. At this meeting, the Pastor/Head of Staff will receive information regarding the suspected abuse, discuss the procedure for handling the complaint, advise the victim regarding the limits of confidentiality and offer to arrange pastoral care by a pastor not presently serving as a pastor at West Raleigh Presbyterian Church for the victim and/or his/her family.
2. The Pastor/Head of Staff shall then conduct an immediate and brief initial investigation of the complaint, including interviewing witnesses or checking with references regarding past behavior.
3. As soon as practicable, the Pastor/Head of Staff will set up a meeting and confront the alleged perpetrator regarding the allegations. Again, an additional person must be present for this meeting to take notes.
4. Based upon the results of his/her investigation, the Pastor/Head of Staff shall explore options and determine the appropriate course of action. At this stage the Pastor/Head of Staff will notify appropriate West Raleigh Presbyterian Church and other Presbyterian officials, governmental bodies or law enforcement agencies, and the insurance company as appropriate to the circumstances.

5. If the alleged perpetrator is a member of the church staff, the Pastor/Head of Staff must make a decision as to whether to place the individual on indefinite leave, with or without pay. An implicated volunteer should be suspended pending further investigation.
6. The Pastor/Head of Staff shall communicate his/her determination to the victim, complainant (if different than victim), the alleged perpetrator, and any other appropriate individuals or entities.
7. Each of the complainant, alleged victim (if not the complainant) and alleged offender may request reconsideration of the decision within five days of learning of the determination that the complaint has been or has not been sustained. The party requesting reconsideration shall specify with particularity the basis on which the request for reconsideration is requested. The Pastor/Head of Staff may involve members of the Personnel Committee in reviewing the request for reconsideration.
8. Such allegations should be kept as confidential as is consistent with the protection of all concerned and other responsibilities of the church. All parties should be advised that while confidentiality will be respected to the extent possible, that in the course of investigating a complaint, and responding, that some information may be disclosed. In addition, when appropriate, disclosure to the congregation of allegations and the church's response should be made in a sensitive and thoughtful manner. The parties involved will be advised and consulted prior to disclosure to the public or congregation. Should the media be aware of the allegations, the Pastor/Head of Staff should speak for the church as its single spokesperson.
9. The church shall retain in the files of the Church Office Administrator for ten years from termination of service, records of all volunteer and employee applications and screening. In addition, the church shall retain all records regarding any report of alleged abuse or sexual misconduct. All records will be securely stored and kept as confidential as is consistent with the protection of all concerned and other responsibilities of the church.