

Prairie Rose EMC Senior Youth Group (Youth Inc) Information - September 2020

Parents, 2020 has been an interesting and unsettling year. Many things that we have taken for granted have changed and we are trying to make the best of the situation we find ourselves in. This also applies to the youth groups of our church.

After meeting as youth leaders, we have decided that the best way to deal with the restrictions we are living with is to make some adjustments to how we do youth. Normally we would have 4 distinct types of events per month (Bible study, small groups, service, activity). For this year we are planning that about 3 of the 4 evenings per month will have a discipleship focus and will include a Bible lesson, small group prayer and discipleship, and a game. Additionally, about once a month we will have an activity night or service night. We will still be running from 7:30-10pm but check the schedule as this may vary from week to week.

The leaders for this year are Brandon and Emma Livingston, Emily Plett, Gillian Wiewel and myself. As leaders we are feeling optimistic about the year. In some ways we have been forced into these changes, but we believe these changes will give us an opportunity to focus more on discipleship, prayer, building deeper relationships and helping students go deeper in their faith in Jesus.

To create a safe environment for both students and leaders and to honour what our provincial government is asking of us currently, we have some expectations of those who participate. Please talk about these with your children before sending them to youth (I actually mean this. It would be really nice if you would talk with your children about this). Your support in this will help us as leaders immensely.

Youth expectations for this year

1. Health Assessment - please assess your child's health according to the Manitoba Health guidelines before sending them to youth. If they have one of these symptoms (Fever/Chills, Cough, Sore throat/hoarse voice, Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, Loss of taste or smell, Vomiting or diarrhea for more than 24 hours) or two of these symptoms (Runny nose, Muscle aches, Fatigue, Pink eye, Headache, Skin rash of unknown cause, Nausea or loss of appetite) please keep them home.
2. Physical Distancing – we are expecting students to respect the 6 ft physical distancing guidelines that are in place.
3. Good Hand Hygiene – we want students to clean their hands when arriving at youth, before eating, after using the bathroom, before playing a game where equipment is shared, and after touching a commonly touched surface. Students should also be reminded to cough/sneeze into their sleeve and avoid touching their face.

4. Lawn Chair - we will be outside as much as possible this fall so please make sure students are dressed warmly and bring a lawn chair. We will let them know when this is no longer needed.
5. Water Bottle - we will be providing snacks at youth but not drinks. Please have students bring a water bottle. Student should not be sharing food/drinks with others.
6. Face mask – please send a mask along to youth every evening. They will not be needed most evenings, but masks will allow us to run certain activities where social distancing is not possible.
7. Transportation – transportation is difficult with the present level of restriction. For this reason, we are primarily planning events at the church this year. At this time, any event that is not at the church will require parents make their own travel arrangements to and from these events. For instance, we are planning to serve at the Samaritan’s Purse Shoebox Store so drop off and pick up on that night will be at the Landmark Christian Fellowship.

Other Information

1. Consent form – Please fill out the registration and consent forms. This is part of what we are doing to create a safe environment for students and leaders.
2. Money – typically for youth we simply ask parents to send money when we have events that have costs associated with them (like snacks and game supplies). If you would prefer, you are welcome to simply send \$25 at the beginning of the year to cover incidental costs of events. We will still advertise the cost of events, but you can simply ignore that (cost for events like a retreat or bowling would be an additional cost).

A month ago, as I began to think about the 2020-2021 youth year, I looked forward with dread, disappointment, and discouragement. All I could see was what we would not be able to do. God has done a work in my heart since then. I can now say that I have a sense of optimism for what lies ahead. We, as leaders, have been forced to rethink what youth will look like. I believe the changes we have made and the focus we want to give to discipling teens and walking with them as they go deeper in their walk with Jesus is going to have long lasting results. As you talk about the youth program with your child, I encourage you to also be optimistic about the opportunity we have been given.

God Bless
Nathan Plett