

Saint Paul's United Methodist Church
Youth and Parent Handbook
2019-2020



Raymond L. Pandley II
Youth Ministry Assistant
raymond@saintpaulsumc.org

Becky Rokitowski
Associate Pastor
becky@saintpaulsumc.org

Saint Paul's United Methodist Church
1700 N. Meridian Rd.
Tallahassee FL, 32303
(850) 385-5146

Table of Contents

ROOTED Saint Paul’s Youth Purpose and Vision Statement	3
ROOTED Youth Covenant and Behavioral Policy	4-6
Volunteer Expectations and Policies	7-8
Youth Council and Youth Lay Team Guidelines	9

ROOTED Saint Paul's Youth Covenant 2019-2020

As a youth group we are committed...

- To being respectful to ALL who enter our doors.
- To supporting one another through encouragement, accountability, and love.
- To show respect and support, we will disconnect from our electronic devices so that we can connect with each other.

We recognize to fully commit to this we must be honest with each other and be present in one another's lives!

Youth Behavior Policy

In order to keep this covenant, we understand that the following specific rules must be upheld:

1. Appropriate language should be used at all times. Cursing, jokes, and language that is hurtful or discriminating toward another person will not be tolerated.
2. Appropriate physical behavior is expected of all youth. Physical harassment and abuse, including sexual harassment, physical intimidation, and fighting will not be permitted.
3. While attending any Saint Paul's Youth event on Saint Paul's property, youth must remain in the designated, adult-supervised areas. Youth are not permitted to wander alone and must stay in the presence of an adult chaperone unless he/she has been directed otherwise by the Youth Director or other person in charge of the event.
4. Physical contact will be limited during any youth event or other church activity. There will be no kissing, petting or any other physical contact deemed inappropriate by staff of adult volunteers.
5. Clothing worn to any youth activity should be modest. Clothing that is sexually suggestive or spiritually degrading is not permitted. Clothing with content that is vulgar, illegal, or offensive in nature is not permitted. If the activity requires bathing suit attire, females are **strongly encouraged** to wear one-piece suits or tankinis (not bikinis), and males **must** wear swimming trunks or shorts (no Speedos).
6. There is **ZERO TOLERANCE** for alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco products, vapes, e-cigarettes, and weapons of any kind during any youth related activity.
7. Attending a church related function while under the influence is grounds for immediate dismissal from activity.
8. Electronic devices may only be used during fellowship activities. They may not be used during worship, Sunday Night Activities or bible studies.
9. Respect for other youth and adult leaders is expected at all times. Disruptive behavior, including horse-play, or other types of interruptions that are discourteous during a youth event will not be permitted.
10. Bullying or teasing of any kind will not be tolerated during any youth related activities.

If the standard of our Youth Covenant is not upheld, or if the behavior policies are broken, the following action(s) will take place:

- All individuals will be held personally responsible for any damages to property they may incur. This may include paying for damages outright or working out a service to pay for the damages.
- Immediate removal from the activity **by the parent(s)** will occur for possession of any kind.

Additionally, if the Youth Director or other adult volunteers feel, at any time, that the presence of a youth puts him/herself or others at risk, the parents will be notified and asked to remove that youth.

For all other problems, the following procedure will be used:

1. A verbal warning will be given which may include a conversation with an adult leader apart from the group.
2. Depending on the severity of the offense, a second warning may be given. If a second warning is issued, the youth will also be required to alert his/her parent or guardian of the situation with a phone call.
3. If the disruptive or inappropriate behavior continues, the parents/guardians will be asked to remove the youth from the event. The youth will be allowed to return to the next event with a clean slate.
4. In the event that a chronic behavior problem develops with a youth, consequences may vary, including the implementation of a cooling off period, suspension from the program, or limited access to youth events. In such cases, the parent/guardian will be asked to partner with the Youth Director and Saint Paul's Pastoral Staff in developing strategies to address the youth's behavior. In severe cases, outside counseling may be recommended. Future attendance of SPY events will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Saint Paul's UMC recognizes that we all miss the mark, and we are not perfect beings. The youth ministry team will therefore be expected to uphold this covenant with grace and compassion through the use of prayer, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and the collective guidance of our siblings in Christ. Our purpose is to discipline and teach in a manner that uplifts and encourages youth to know the love of Jesus Christ and to glorify God in all they do.

We ask that each year, youth and their parents sign this policy. The church, its staff, and designated volunteers care deeply for the youth of this community and make every effort to provide safe and enjoyable activities for the youth to experience. These policies must be agreed upon and enforced in order to accomplish that.

ROOTED Saint Paul's Youth Program Volunteer Description, Training & Evaluation Policies

Volunteer Role Descriptions

- **Sunday School Teachers:** To nurture the faith development of the Youth through lessons that are biblically based and/or spiritually relevant in a safe and loving environment in order to lead them to be disciples of Jesus Christ. Sunday School Teachers are responsible for planning and implementing lessons with the support of the Youth Director. They are also expected to be a reliable and consistent presence in the life of the Youth.
- **Sunday Night Fellowship Adult Leaders:** To nurture the faith development of the Youth by supporting the programs/lessons developed by the Youth Director. These leaders should feel comfortable participating in games and activities and leading small group discussions.
- **Snack Supper Providers:** To prepare and serve a small snack meal for the Youth and Adult Leaders on Sunday Nights. They should also clean the kitchen and serving areas used during the preparation and serving of the meal.
- **Chaperone for Special Events:** To maintain a safe environment for all Youth during the event by understanding and implementing Saint Paul's policies regarding Youth. At certain events, such as Lock-Ins, chaperones may be given specific instructions or locations for which they are responsible.
- **Chaperone for Mission Trips & Retreats:** To maintain a safe environment for all Youth during the event and to nurture the faith development of the Youth during the event. Chaperones should be able to participate in the mission and/or recreational activities if possible. These leaders must uphold Saint Paul's policies regarding Youth, as well as any policies of the organizations utilized during these events.
- **Bible Study Teachers:** To engage and teach Youth about the stories and history of the Bible as well as help them interpret the Bible and apply its values to their lives. Bible Study Teachers are responsible for planning and implementing lessons with the support of the Youth Director. They are also expected to be a reliable and consistent presence in the life of the Youth.

Volunteer Training

All regular adult volunteers must be screened (see Saint Paul's Child & Youth Protection Policies for this procedure). The Youth Lay Team requests that our adult volunteers become trained on Saint Paul's Child & Youth Protection Policy at the earliest training date possible, and that they maintain their trained status while they remain active volunteers at Saint Paul's.

Payment Policy

We recognize the value of our adult volunteers and the expense that comes with volunteering with the program. It is our hope to make it affordable for our adult chaperones to attend trips and retreats as a thank you for giving up their time and energy.

- For Mission Trips and Retreats – Adults are not expected to pay. For any mission trip retreat, the cost of adults will be covered by the students payments.
- For Fun Activities and Trips (i.e. Rock the Universe, Tubing, Mystery Trips, etc) – Adult volunteers will be asked to pay a discounted fee of what students are expected to pay.

Volunteer Requirements of Parents

In order for your child to participate in youth programming, we are asking all adults to commit to volunteer at a minimum of 2 youth activities, maximum of 4 youth activities each semester (Fall, Spring, Summer). This will give the students a wide variety of adult volunteers to connect with.

Dismissal of Volunteers

Occasionally, volunteers feel compelled to work with youth but may not be the right fit for the Youth Program due to personal or theological conflict. Should such a conflict arise, the Youth Lay Team reserves the right to discontinue the use of a volunteer for Youth events and programs. However, the following steps should be taken:

- Upon recognizing a potential problem with a volunteer, the Youth Director should immediately report to the Youth Lay Team about his/her concerns/
- The Youth Director and at least one member of the Youth Lay Team should meet with the volunteer to discuss the issue(s) being raised. A plan of action agreed upon by all parties should be determined to address the issue.
- If the issues persist and/or the volunteer is unwilling to modify his/her behavior to the benefit of the Youth Program, then the Youth Lay Team may decide to discontinue the volunteer relationship within the Youth Program

Throughout the review and/or dismissal process of volunteers, the Youth Director and the members of the Youth Lay Team will recognize that we are not perfect beings, and that we all miss the mark. Any disciplinary actions regarding an adult volunteer will be approached with grace and compassion through the use of prayer, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and the collective guidance of our siblings in Christ.

Youth Council Purpose and Expectations

Purpose & Expectations

Saint Paul's Youth Council acts as a group of youth leaders within the larger body of Saint Paul's Youth Fellowship Program. The Youth Council serves to represent the interest of all youth participants and will meet regularly with the Director of Youth Ministries to coordinate and give input for programming and special events. The members of the Youth Council also serve to symbolize and advocate for the Youth Program within the larger church congregation.

Members of the Youth Council are expected to:

- Model Christian leadership and behavior
- Attend Sunday morning worship at Saint Paul's
- Regularly attend all Youth Council Meetings. If after 2 unexcused absences, youth will be asked to reconsider their commitment, and, after the 3rd unexcused absence will be asked to step down

Youth Lay Team Purpose and Expectations

Purpose & Expectations

The Youth Lay Team is a committee made up of lay adults (both parents and non-parents) from Saint Paul's United Methodist Church who are committed to support the Director of Youth Ministries and the success of the youth program. The lay team will do this by meeting regularly as a committee with the youth director in order to help cast the vision of the program, encourage the youth director, provide guidance and ideas for programming, and act as a liaison between the youth program and the church at large.