

Youth and Family Ministries

Junior High Youth Group

During the winter and spring of the 2014 school year, the Junior High Youth Group met regularly and with much attendance. We went rock climbing, had an evening out in Red Bank for dinner and dessert, and a final ice cream and game social. Our first activity in September 2014 was a pizza party where we brainstormed ideas for the year. We had about 10 middle schoolers. In October we raised money for the CropWalk. We also had a Halloween party with the Senior High Youth Group. We had a large turn-out for the party, about twelve 6th- 8th graders (and twelve senior high students). We carved pumpkins, voted for best costumes, played pin-the-spider-on-the-web and did crafts. In early November we participated in Operation Christmas Child through Samaritan's purse. Each student packed a shoebox with gifts, school supplies and toiletries for impoverished children overseas. We had a wrapping party to get the boxes ready for shipment. Some students sponsored one child, and some sponsored three. We had 12 students participate and we sent 26 boxes. In December about 8 students, along with parishioner and Junior High Youth Group co-coordinator Cathy Sutherland, volunteered at Holiday Express. On January 30th, we will go ice skating at the Armory. We will also plan outings for trampolining, rock climbing and Yestercades.

High School Youth Group

We (Jeff and I) had another very active High School Youth Group this school year. Beginning in September we decided to meet about once every other week per the request of the students. We hosted Family Promise in September and cooked for, played games and did crafts with the children and their moms and dads. In November we volunteered at Holiday Express. We had about 16 kids volunteer. In early December we went Go-Karting. For Christmas, we adopted a family in need and the students bought items for the 3 children and their mom. At our Christmas party, we had a "Wrapping Party" at a senior high student's home. We wrapped all the presents for the family and then had our own secret Santa exchange. Many of the students who attend SHYG aren't even parishioners at St. George's. We plan to volunteer at St. Mark's food kitchen in Keansburg, as well as, at Bridge of Books. And of course, we are busy planning for our REACH trip in July.

REACH WorkCamp

July 2014 in Monroe, NC was filled with much enthusiasm, faith and hard work as we served those in need... laying flooring, painting walls, building ramps and installing new septic tanks. In July 2015, we are off to Newfane, NY. We have already filled all our spots for 2015 with approximately 36 students and 9 chaperones. Our numbers have gone up by seven people compared to our 2014 trip. For the 2015 trip, we held two very successful fundraisers. A mum sale in late October raised over \$500 and a poinsettia and wreath sale in December raised over \$700. We are currently planning for our annual IHOW (International House of Whatever) Mardi Gras brunch on February 15th, 2015. All monies raised helps to pay for the rental vans which we drive to the REACH camp. Again this year, there are many students attending who are from outside of St. George's.

Church School

Sunday School this school year (2014-2015) is based on the Episcopalian program, Weaving God's Promises. It integrates Biblical stories with the liturgical calendar and seasons of the church, including Holy Days. There has been much positive feedback from the teachers, that it is a very interesting and easily teachable program. Again this year, our Church School has 5 classrooms, but with many more parent teachers and high school helpers for each classroom. Each parent is on a 5 to 6 week teaching rotation.

The classrooms are as follows: Pre-K/K (4 parent teachers and 2 high school helpers), 1st and 2nd grades (5 parent teachers and 3 high school helpers), 3rd grade (5 parent teachers and 2 high school helpers), 4th and 5th grades (5 parent teachers), and 6th thru 8th grades (one parent teacher).

The following is the number of registered students in each classroom:

Pre-K and Kindergarten: 26 students

1st and 2nd: 43 students

3rd: 19 students

4th and 5th: 30 students
6th, 7th, and 8th: 37 students

Solemn Communion

On May 4, 2014 St. George's had fourteen students (twelve 2nd graders and two 3rd graders) receive Solemn Communion. The students participated in a six week meditation class based upon the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. On the Saturday before Solemn Communion, the students participated in a retreat where they made their name banners and belts and baked bread for Sunday's Eucharist. Class for Solemn Communion 2015 will begin on March 1st.

Confirmation

On June 22nd, ten St. George's students (eight 8th graders and two 7th graders) were confirmed by Bishop Stokes. (The month previous, two St. George's students were confirmed at the Episcopal Church in Princeton due to a conflict with the June 22nd date). Students had participated in once a month theological and liturgical reflection class on either Sunday (with teacher Bob McGill) or Wednesday (with Fr. Jeff). Students also participated in an instructed Eucharist, group interview with Mother Ophelia or Father Jeff, and completed a service project. Currently, for 2015, we have 14 students participating in Confirmation classes.

Acolytes

In June of 2014, we had four seniors graduate from serving as acolytes. In response, we have been blessed to have 7 new students volunteer. During the summer and fall, the new acolytes had two separate trainings lead by the acolyte captains.

Youth Sunday

In 2014, we had four Youth Sundays at the 10am Service. Students lector, usher and participate with the Altar Guild. For the Winter/Spring of 2015, we have two Youth Sundays scheduled.