

Contact Us!

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Youth Ministry

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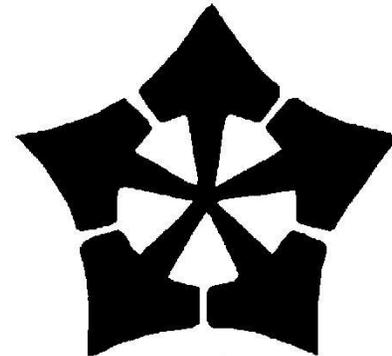
Watts Street Baptist Church



Youth Ministry at Watts Street Baptist Church

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity. 1 Timothy 4:12

The youth ministry at Watts Street Baptist Church seeks to provide a place for middle school and high school students to come together for worship, fellowship, study, and service. We work hard to create an environment where youth feel safe to ask difficult questions, explore the Christian faith, and hopefully, make lasting spiritual commitments. Through both a "journey inward" and a "journey outward", we encourage our youth to discover their God-given gifts, talents, and interests and use them in service to God and neighbor.



The Journey Inward

Bible Study

Bible Study is offered each week during Sunday morning Church School. All youth gather at 9:45 a.m. in the Youth Room for a light breakfast, announcements, and prayer concerns and celebrations. At 10:00 a.m., Bible Study begins with the Middle School Youth in Room 208 and the Senior High Youth in the Youth Room. We use a curriculum called, "Intersections" (published by Smyth and Helwys), which provides both solid content and creative teaching ideas. With guidance from our excellent teachers, the youth explore the scriptures through lively, challenging discussions.

Worship

The youth join with the larger congregation for worship on Sunday mornings at 11:00 a.m. Youth are frequently involved in worship leadership as light bearers, scripture readers, puppeteers, or members of the youth choir. On two Sundays during the year, the youth lead the entire worship service: once in the spring with our high school seniors reflecting on the lectionary text and once at the end of the summer with the youth sharing about their summer mission experiences.

There are other times when the youth gather for worship apart from the larger congregation. This happens on retreats, mission trips, holidays, and other special occasions. These services tend to be creative, experiential, and youth-led.



Sunday Night Youth Fellowship

Sunday night "youth group" has long been a favorite and important time for the Watts Street youth. The normal schedule during the school year:

- 4:00 p.m. Youth Choir Rehearsal – in the Choir Room
- 5:00 p.m. "Guaranteed Recreation" – outside, weather permitting (a time for us to burn off a little energy and enjoy socializing!)
- 5:30 p.m. Youth Supper – in the fellowship hall (Meals are provided by a different youth family each week.)
- 6:00 p.m. Small Groups – in classrooms on the top floor (An opportunity for the youth to share about their lives and to pray for one another. Our small group leaders also facilitate discussion questions based on the night's theme.)
- 6:30 p.m. Large Group – in the Youth Room (Singing, theme presentation, announcements, and structured games/activities)
- 7:15 p.m. Dismiss

Sunday nights are all about developing *koinonia*, or Christian community. We encourage each other in the faith as we deal with the variety of life issues teenagers face and seek God's guidance. We also hope to create an environment where positive, meaningful relationships are formed that will last for years to come!



Mentors and Mentees

At the beginning of the year, we ask each of our senior high youth to serve as a “mentor” to one of our middle school youth. With this arrangement, the middle school youth get a “big brother/ big sister” to show them the ropes and give them attention. The senior high youth get the opportunity to be an encourager, a wise old sage, a Jedi knight, and yes, even a real Christian.



Power to the People Teams

“Power to the People” teams give our youth a chance to discover their gifts and develop leadership skills. There are four teams and each team takes one of the following responsibilities each month: leading recreation, serving the meal and offering the blessing for the Sunday night meal, leading our music/worship time, or planning the big events for their assigned month. On the first Sunday night of the month, we meet with these teams to plan and prepare for the coming months.



Summer “World Tour”

On Sunday nights during the summer, our youth group goes on “tour”. Each week we have youth group in the home of a church member. We usually meet from 5:00-7:00 p.m. with a light supper included. In recent years, we’ve asked the youth to take turns leading our devotional time by sharing “A Verse, a Song, and a Prayer” with the group.



Youth Fellowship and Recreation

Our youth group enjoys fellowship and recreational activities throughout the year. Activities like The Welcome Sixth Graders Party, Battle of the Small Groups, The Scavenger Hunt for Red October, Fall Bonfire, Christmas Party, Super Bowl Pre-Game Party, Pool Parties, The Wattsies (our End of the Year Youth Ministry Celebration), and more provide on-going opportunities for Christian connections with other youth along with lots of fun.

Youth Retreats

Weekend retreats are certainly highlights of the year, giving us opportunities to explore new places, study the Bible and focus on our faith without distraction, enjoy God’s creation, and bond together as a group! We usually go on a Fall Retreat in September and a Winter Retreat in January. In the Spring, we join with the rest of the congregation for the incredibly popular All Ages Beach Retreat at the NC Baptist Assembly at Fort Caswell.

Youth Discipleship Classes

In February, we offer a series of three Wednesday afternoon classes for youth to explore what it means to make a profession of faith and become a follower of Jesus. We’ll also cover topics like baptism, the Lord’s Supper, worship, service, joining the church, being Baptist, etc. At the end of these sessions, participants may decide to join the church and be baptized...but there is no pressure to do so. The goal for these classes is not to coerce but to provide information that might be helpful for making a spiritual commitment. Baptism services at Watts Street are held on Easter Sunday (and at other times, as needed).



The Journey Outward

Wednesday Night Youth Service/Learning

On Wednesday nights during the school year, we gather from 6:15-7:00 p.m. in the Youth Room for Youth Service/Learning. We turn our focus outward and explore ways we can follow Jesus and be servant-leaders in a world of poverty, violence, and suffering. We use our time on Wednesday nights to learn about social justice, connect current events with our faith, plan and conduct service projects, prepare for mission fund-raisers, etc.

Service/Learning Opportunities

The Watts Street youth are actively “serving to learn and learning to serve”. Some of our favorite service projects in the community are:

- Gleaning sweet potatoes at YAM JAM
- Sorting donations at the Food Bank
- Serving meals at Urban Ministries or Families Moving Forward
- Leading chapel services at the Murdoch Center
- Visiting with homebound friends
- Christmas Caroling at retirement centers
- Volunteering at the SEEDS community garden
- Painting, building, or landscaping with Habitat for Humanity
- Participating in the CROP Walk for world hunger
- Working with children at Vacation Bible School
- Sharing meals and fellowship with Reality Ministries



PASSPORT Youth Missions Camp

PASSPORT camps, sponsored by the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, balance spiritual growth and mission work, Bible study and fun, personal reflection and group worship...all in one exciting week! Our group joins youth from other churches from all over the country. Each morning, we go to our Bible study groups where we meet new friends and have fresh encounters with Scripture. During the afternoons we go out into the surrounding community to put the Bible into practice through ministry with senior adults who need a friend, with children who need loving attention, with homeless people who need shelter and a meal, and with neighbors who need help repairing their homes. Evenings consist of creative worship experiences, camp fellowships, and church group devotions. In recent years, we've attended PASSPORT camps held at Averett University (Danville, Va), Mercer University (Macon, GA), and Gordon College (Wenham, Ma). For more information, visit www.passportcamps.org.



Senior High Mission Trip

The annual Senior High Mission Trip challenges our youth to step out of their comfort zones, serve in areas of significant need, and see what God is doing in the world. As we assist partner organizations who are engaged in ministry throughout the year, we learn so much about social justice, racism, poverty, servanthood, patience, humility, and the Body of Christ.

In recent years, we've worked alongside our sister church, Emmanuel Baptist, in El Salvador as well as partnered with the Rural Poverty Initiative in Eastern Kentucky, Urban Promise in Camden, NJ, The Timothy Project in Mars Hill, NC, Baptists on Mission Disaster Relief, and Rauschenbusch Metro Ministries in New York City.



Youth Fund-raisers

We have several fund-raisers throughout the year to support our Youth Summer Mission Experiences (the PASSPORT youth missions camp and the Senior High Service/Learning experience). In addition to raising money, these events rally us together around a common cause and bring forth some of our best creativity and energy.

These events may include:

- Serving lunch at a WSBC Church Meeting
- Fall Bazaar and Church Yard Sale
- Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
- Church Square Dance
- Youth Spring Bucket Auction
- Wattsstock Festival at the Lutz Farm



Yes, there's a disco ball in the Youth Room...

Joining with the Larger Congregation

Nursery/Second Hour Ministry

During the worship hour, several of our youth assist adult volunteers with child care in the nursery and pre-school rooms. These youth participate in a training event with the WSBC Minister with Children and are scheduled to serve once a month.

Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School is a rich tradition at Watts Street. Held during the mornings one week each summer, this ministry provides the children, as well as the youth helpers and adult teachers, with opportunities for energetic Bible study and mission experiences. We couldn't do VBS without our incredible youth volunteers!

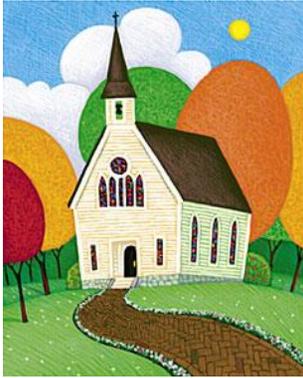
All Ages Experiences

Two or three times each year, everyone is invited to gather in the fellowship hall for an all-ages Church School. Other intergenerational gatherings are the Fall Church Picnic, the Hanging of the Greens, and the All Ages Beach Retreat. These experiences help the youth experience the gift of being a part of a dynamic family of faith.

Youth/Senior Adult Sweetheart Banquet

The Sweetheart Banquet is our most anticipated and well-attended event of the year! The Sunday closest to Valentine's Day, the youth sit with their senior adult "dates" during worship and then escort them to a grand and gala lunch in the fellowship hall. The youth go all out with planning the theme, putting up decorations, and providing the entertainment. The conversation and fellowship around the tables is priceless and the intergenerational connections made at this event last for years to come!





WSBC Volunteer Policy

There is a long, proud tradition at Watts Street of recognizing that when we welcome children and youth, we are also welcoming God's presence. Naturally, we want to do everything in our power to create a safe environment where our young people are welcomed, encouraged, nurtured, and celebrated as precious children of God.

In May 2006, our church voted to adopt a program designed to reduce the risk of child abuse occurring within our community of faith. We now ask each of our volunteers who work with children and youth to:

- 1) Read and follow the Policy of Procedure for Volunteers Working with Children and Youth
- 2) Participate in a Volunteer Training Session
- 3) Submit a Volunteer Application (which includes a request for references and consent to a criminal background check)

You can find the policy on our website, www.wattsstreet.org

- > Connect
- > Volunteer requirements



Getting Involved...

As the saying goes, it "takes a whole village"! Here are a few of the ways parents and adult volunteers can plug in and become involved with the youth ministry at Watts Street Baptist Church:

- Feed the Youth! (Sunday breakfasts or suppers)
- Chaperone a retreat
- Join us for a service project or fellowship event
- Serve as a Youth Sunday School Teacher
- Serve as a Sunday Night Small Group Leader
- Serve as a Wednesday Night Youth Service/Learning Helper
- Serve on the Youth Education Committee
- Host the youth group in your home one Sunday night in the summer
- Host the youth group Christmas party
- Speak to the youth group about a topic that connects to your faith experience
- Lead or facilitate a forum for parents of youth
- Pray for the Watts Street youth and their leaders