

Youth Ministry

The purpose of St. Paul's Youth Ministry is to tend to the Christian Formation of our young people, assisting in their transition to becoming full communicants in the church and witnesses of Christ in the world.

Youth Ministry here at St. Paul's is about being a community of young people and adults who are trying to shape their lives around following Jesus. Together we aim not just simply to go to church but to actually be the church: participating in the hope that God brings to this world. And together we try to create a sanctuary where together we can stop, breathe and return to God (who made us, who loves us, who knows us) so that we can go back out into our crazy worlds following Jesus more closely and bringing the Kingdom of God nearer.

2008 Highlights

Sundays:

Film School: for 7th- 10th grades at 10 a.m. Watching 20 minutes a week of contemporary films and other media, we learn to sort through what we watch and hear, listening for God's voice amidst the myriad sounds and images that fill our lives. Movies become the catalyst for conversation about the places where culture intersects with faith and the places where we can cease to be consumers of culture and instead become participators in its redemption. *In 2008 we screened Iron Man, the Spiderwick Chronicles, Juno, Transformers, Stranger than Fiction and episodes from Friends, the Office and Scrubs. Taught by David Johnson, Jay Fahey, Mark Paris and Keith Hege.*

Catechumenate: for 11th – 12th grades at 10 a.m. This class is a one year journey that creatively moves through the catechism of the Episcopal Church towards the rite of confirmation emphasizing what we believe and why—well as what we do and why. An actual Pilgrimage to England is offered in the summer as an integral part of the class. *The current class has 22 participants taught by Sally Chambers and Cindy Thomsen.*

Se*lah: Sundays at 5 p.m. At Se*lah, a "holy pause" in the grand orchestra of life, we gather as a community of youth and adults in a context of worship to further our relationships with God and with each other as we translate into the details of our everyday lives what it means to live life with God in this world. Our weekly liturgy is based loosely on an Order for Evening Worship in the Book of Common Prayer. Together we break bread (i.e. supper), we read the scriptures, we creatively try to connect to God and we have conversations with each other in smaller groups. *2008 saw an average attendance of 30 – 40 youth and adults each week and as high as 50 some weeks. Approximately 55 – 60 young people rotate through the doors. Sally Chambers, David Johnson, Christina Covey, Kristi Herring, Zak Bryan, Pam Horne, Erin Hepper, Joey Bryan, Alex Farmer, Mackenzie Merry, Martin Coleman and Sarah Paris comprised the 2008 team who help lead Se*lah. The fall of 2008 saw the beginning of paid-student-led music (Alex Farmer and Mackenzie Merry) and the weekly posting of our slides (i.e. our liturgy) and a summary of our conversation and seeking to our blog www.stepoutofthetraffic.com (link found on the YM page of www.stpaulsfranklin.com).*

Beyond Sundays:

Worship: On various Sundays throughout the school year our young people participate in worship as ushers and oblationers at both the 8:45 and 11:00 services.

Mardi Gras: A parish-wide family fun event--the traditional pancake supper taken up a notch. *In 2008 we raised \$1053 towards our summer pilgrimage in mission. Linda Wesson coordinated the celebration.*

30 Hour Famine: Young people and adults fast for 30 hours to raise money to help fight world poverty. *In our 11th year, 40 young people and adults raised \$9326 and over 50 young people and adults participated in the fast itself. St. Paul's has raised almost \$85,000 for World Vision through the 30 Hour Famine.*

Parent's Luncheon: Our young people host a thematic luncheon in honor and thanksgiving of their parents. In 2008 Otey Hall was transformed into a medieval castle as we crowned parents as "kings and queens."

Main St Festival Car Park Fundraiser: During the Main St Festival, the parking lot behind Barnabas is blocked off and its spaces are sold. *In 2008, we raised \$866 for our summer pilgrimage in mission.*

Senior Sunday: On May 19th our graduating seniors honored their church by offering their gifts. *Joey Bryan, Megan Roth, Andrea Ley, Kathryn Richter, Sean Aiello and Clay Boring participated.*

The Pilgrimage to Scotland and the Borderlands: a 10-12 day spiritual journey offered to 11th and 12th grade catechumens and other adults. *In 2008, 13 pilgrims ventured across the ocean on this sacred journey.*

A Pilgrimage in Mission: Mountain TOP: This pilgrimage of service and Christian formation takes us to Camp Cumberland Pines in Grundy County. Through the organization of Mountain TOP, we join with others from around the country to work alongside the people of the counties in either home-based service projects or community-based day camp for children. *In 2008, we took 37 young people and adults to.*

Back to School Retreat: The last weekend in August we re-gather after a summer of travel and sabbath. Together we build community and look towards the path that God is calling us down for this school year. *In 2008 we took 42 young people and adults back to Camp Cumberland Pines in Grundy County for this retreat that included white water rafting on the Ocoee River.*

Family Game Nights: 2008 saw the continuation of this beloved evening. Understanding that sometimes our best worship for God is to play and to enjoy the life He has given us, we set up several Wii's and other game systems. These alongside pizza, foosball, air hockey and board games create a fun night for entire families.

Fall Retreat: The Jesus Dojo: In 2008 our fall retreat was in collaboration with St B's, St George's and Church of the Good Shepherd. What made this retreat unique was its being a "dojo" – not a place to experience God but a place to practice life with God.

Advent Feast: In 2008 in lieu of swapping inexpensive presents with each other, we collected \$5 gifts cards and donated them to Mercy Ministries, the Josh Steven's fund at Make-A-Wish and to a needy family at CHS.

Transitions in 2008:

August saw the departure of *David Johnson*, the Youth Ministry Assistant of 6 years. *Christina Covey*, a graduate of St. Paul's, served as interim this fall. In December, *Seth Keafer* became Youth Ministry Assistant.

The Youth Minister in 2008:

- Completed studies through Sursum Corda, Spiritual Director's Formation Program.
- attended, *The Great Emergence* in Memphis: a conference looking at how Christianity and the church is changed and why.
- Third year serving as the chaplain and a member of the Board of Directors for Mountain T.O.P. Also served as trainer and Spiritual Director for the year round and summer staff.
- Served as Spiritual Director and led a workshop and *Taize Services* for the National Youth Workers Convention here in Nashville.

Sally Chambers