

# Youth Expectations

## 1 Who We Are

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come”  
2 Corinthians 5:17

**We are a group of people who are working everyday to put our old personalities aside and adopt new personalities that resemble Christ.**

**We are not perfect.** We make a lot of mistakes and often have bad attitudes, but we know that a change in the loyalty of our hearts has to be made in order to have a relationship with God and that true love is not possible without experiencing the love that Christ expressed to us on the cross.

We know that the only way to God in heaven is **BY GRACE ALONE, THROUGH FAITH ALONE, IN CHRIST ALONE!!!**

## 2 What this handbook is all about

At Gadsden First United Methodist Church our motto is; Changing Lives By Sharing Christ, Making Disciples, Serving People, and Giving hope.

In order for us to perform this God ordained mission most effectively and efficiently, we have to live lives that reflect Christ by maintaining a lifestyle of change and growth toward Christ-likeness.

This is a book of guidelines that Gadsden First United Methodist Church's Youth Department has decided will help youth learn to live more pure and healthy lifestyles for Christ.

This book is not meant to restrain youth with a whole bunch of rules. It is written with the complete intention of guiding youth into wholesome lifestyles that have the least harmful consequences.

This book is a book of the basic expectations that Gadsden First United Methodist Church has for its youth. It is not a “fix all” book nor does it list everything that will be expected. The point of these guidelines is to give a starting point for spiritual growth and discernment.

### 3

#### Respect

##### **# 1. This is a relationship**

- a. For this relationship to work there must be respect, especially respect for the youth council and adults helping.
- b. The dynamic of this relationship is that the youth are youth and the adults are the adults. This is not to insult anyone, this is just a fact.
- c. I expect the adults involved with any youth event to show respect. There will be times when they have to take disciplinary action. Please do not confuse this with disrespecting our youth.

##### **#2. The choice is yours**

- a. The choice to not follow the rules is yours.
- b. Do not be upset if you get in trouble or are asked to leave for not following the rule. We did not force you, the choice was yours.
- c. Please take accountability for your actions.

### 4

#### Cell Phones

##### **# 1. Don't use them in church...(In General)**

- a. We understand you have them but church is not the time to use them
- b. You don't need your cell phone at inside or outside events at church
- c. Texting is quiet but it's still a distraction to others and yourself from the message or event so don't text
- d. Phones are cool enough to have apps on them now, even Bible apps; this is not acceptable as a Bible... (it does too much other stuff at the same time) if you like electronic Bibles, get one that does just the Bible.
- e. If a member of the Youth Council asks you to put away and/or put your cell phone in designated spot, you are to immediately follow their guidance. (If not you will most likely be asked to go ahead and text and/or call you parents)

##### **#2. There is a time and/or place...(Exception to rule #1)**

- a. There will be times that I ask you or let you use your phone.
- b. Again I will let you know when the time is acceptable.
- c. On Youth trips you will be allowed to have phones, but there will still be times when rule #1 applies. Refer back to #2 B.
- d. If a member of the Youth Council asks you to put away and/or put your cell phone in designated spot, you are to immediately follow their guidance. (If not you will most likely be asked to go ahead and text and/or call you parents)

### 5

#### PDA (Public Display of Affection)

##### **# 1. Don't show physical affection at church.**

- a. No holding hands
- b. No arm around each other
- c. No kissing
- d. No sitting, laying, etc. on someone else's lap
- e. No touching any inappropriate areas (if a one piece bathing suit and shorts cover it, then don't touch it)

**Relationships among youth can be very healthy, but physically youth are too immature to handle their impulses and it is also a distraction to others if someone is all over someone else.**

## 6

### Language

**Ephesians 4:29** <sup>29</sup> Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

#### **# 1. Cursing**

- a. No foul language is allowed at all
- b. Curse words are strictly prohibited

#### **# 2. Slander**

Defined: a malicious, false, and defamatory statement or report:

- a. Talking about others in a hurtful way is not allowed
- b. Spreading rumors is not allowed
- c. Gossip whether true or false is not allowed

## 7

### Gossip

**Matthew 12:36** But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken.

#### **# 1. Gossip**

- a. Gossip will not be accepted.
- b. Gossip will not be accepted.

Gossip in any form or fashion is the fastest way to destroy a group and/or a church. I will not accept gossip in any form. If I see or hear of gossip and/or anything that might be questionably considered gossip, I will end it. That might include asking parent(s), youth, or both to leave. We can address the issue after the event and discuss it but it will be at a time that does not disturb the flow of events.

**Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. James 1:26**

## 8

### Designated Times and Areas

#### **# 1. Times: Leaving early**

- a. You must tell the Youth Leader before leaving early. (you are his responsibility, if you leave and you're not supposed to, he will be responsible)

#### **# 2. Areas: Staying with the group**

- a. All youth are to participate in all activities for each event.
- b. If you don't want to actually participate then you must participate in watching
- c. If everyone is inside, you can't be outside. All youth are to be in the area designated by the youth leaders.

## 9

### Transportation

Sometimes church sponsored events take place somewhere other than church property. Transportation to these events will be determined by the Youth Leader in charge of the event.

#### **# 1. Times when riding together**

- a. It is expected that you be at the church on time to leave with the group. (we understand things happen and will be as lenient as possible)

- b. Exceptions can be made but only by the Youth Leader. (showing up late so that you can drive yourself is not acceptable)
- c. Call the Youth Leader if you are going to be late. Being late happens and is understandable but if no one knows to wait on you then they won't wait on you. We will wait IF POSSIBLE so call us.

### **# 2. Times when riding separately**

- a. Individuals can not leave on their own without telling the Youth Leader.
- b. Individuals are not allowed to leave with anyone without informing the Youth Leader.
- c. Individuals can not take anyone home without a parents permission and the Youth Leader must receive this permission from the parent.

## **10**

### **Social Networking**

Facebook and Instagram and other social networking sites are a great asset to people when they want to stay in touch with friends and family. However, Satan will try and use it for his own purpose. Remember that:

#### **# 1. What you post is public**

- a. Inside jokes may be funny between friends but when taken out of context, they may be very inappropriate
- b. Whether it's a picture, status update, comment, or message it is public the moment you push submit... and you can never really take it back.

#### **# 2. What you post influences others**

- a. People look up to you in many ways. When others see things on your profile it's the same as you approving it with words.
- b. You have a direct influence on those around you. If you call yourself a Christian and aren't showing it in your social life then you are pushing people away from Christ.

#### **# 3. What you post is a reflection of God and his church**

- a. Christian means "like Christ." If you call yourself a Christian then everything you do is a mirror of God. If there is doubt that what you want to post is Godly then DON'T POST IT!!!!

## **11**

### **How we handle problems**

**Our youth department tries our best to follow the Bible the best that we can. In Matthew 18:15-20 Jesus Christ gives us a method for dealing with sins among Christians. Our disciplinary policy is based on those very verses. In those verses you will find four steps for dealing with problems:**

**# 1.** "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you" Matthew 18:15

- a. First offense: the student will be verbally informed of his or her defiance by either the Youth Leader or a Youth Chaperone.

**#2.** "But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses" Matthew 18:16

- a. Second offense: Several adult leaders will again talk to the student in order to make things clear about what is expected of the student or parent(s) will be contacted.

**# 3.** "If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church" Matthew 18:17a

- a. Third offense: The youth committee will be informed of the problem and will approach the problem for the last time with youth and parent(s).

**# 4.** "and if he refuse to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or tax collector" Matthew 18:17b

- a. Fourth offense: the child will be asked to leave until he or she can comply with the expectations of the church.

## 12 Parents

I do encourage parental involvement. With this there come responsibilities that the parents must follow in order for this to work. If I see that it is not working within the guidelines, then I will be forced to change this policy.

### **# 1. Participation**

- a. Parent(s) are observers of Youth activities on general. Meaning if there are questions or concerns, please get with me after the event or at a time where we can talk about it that does not disturb the flow of events.
- b. There will be times where parent(s) are asked to participate in events. The youth council or I will let parent(s) know when that time is.
- c. There will be times when the subject matter talked about will be personal to the Youth. During these times I will ask parent(s) to leave the area. This is to ensure the Youth have the ability to express their thoughts, in an atmosphere of freedom.

### **# 2. Disruption(s)**

- a. Disruptions not acceptable. If you need to get your youth early, just let someone know or have the youth let us know so that they can leave when needed without making a scene.
- b. Gossip will not be acceptable. There is a difference in talking to your youth about an issue outside of youth events and talking with and/or gossiping with youth at youth events. Again, if you have a problem with something that has happened or something that is going on, please talk to me in a manner that does not disturb the flow of events.

Gossip in any form or fashion is the fastest way to destroy a group and/or a church. I will not accept gossip in any form. If I see or hear of gossip and/or anything that might be questionably considered gossip, I will end it. That might include asking parent(s), youth, or both to leave. We can address the issue after the event and discuss it but it will be at a time that does not disturb the flow of events.

## 13 What to expect

I am not here to offend, upset, or hurt anyone. I am here to teach and guide them in the Truth. My guidelines for what I teach will be, first the word of God that is in the Bible and second the UMC book of discipline. I will use outside resources to help me in this process but everything will be Biblical. This will not always be the most popular thing but it is why we all are here and it is the Truth. I will love each and every one of the youth no matter if they disagree with me or think that what I am teaching is wrong. My job is to sow the seed of the truth and I take it very serious. I will not compromise what the Bible says because the social view at the time says otherwise. I will not risk my salvation by compromising because someone is uncomfortable with what the Bible says. .

***Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.***

**James 3:1**

## 14

Again our goal as a Youth Group is not to be burdened with rules and regulations but certain things must be understood and there must be a certain amount of respect given to the Leaders. If a student wants to be a part of Gadsden First United Methodist Church Youth Group he or she must understand that for the proper growth to occur the whole group must act in one accord.

There is an understood and unwritten responsibility that is placed on our shoulders when an adult leaves their children in the hands of Gadsden First United Methodist Church. We understand this responsibility and take it very seriously. Our whole dream is to see youth grow in spiritual maturity. We want everyone to know that the things in this handbook are what we as a church will be pushing each student to be better at. This process goes through different speeds for different students. Please understand that lack of

enforcement is no grounds for argument when one student is being reprimanded and another not. We are **NOT** showing favoritism or partiality intentionally.

**If you feel that we are not carrying out these rules or expectations as well as we should be, please follow the steps Christ set for us in the order that he tells us; please come and talk to the Youth Leader one on one first and then so forth according to Gods example provided in Matthew.**

**15**  
**Youth Council**

**Chair- Carmen Mckiven**

Jenny Guthery

Matt Lovato

Bob Blunt

Michael Mckiven

Jami Beck

Hannah Murray

Helene Haller

Bill Haller

Amy Self

Chris Self

\*\*\*\*\*PLEASE RETURN\*\*\*\*\*

By returning this page the youth participating in events at Gadsden First United Methodist Church agrees to follow the rules set forth. The parents also agree that they will follow their part and that they will also back up any decisions we make as a youth council.

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Youth's Name Printed

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Youth's Signature

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Date

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Parent(s) Name Printed

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Parent(s) Signature

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Date