

# St Mark's Episcopal Cathedral – Youth Program Grades 4-12

St Mark's youth program provides each of our youth a nurturing, informed, meaningful and FUN path to spiritual adulthood grounded in our Baptismal Covenant and in a community of unconditional love and acceptance. The intentions of our youth programs are to support our youth on their spiritual journey as a continuous program from 4<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

Each of these groups will offer opportunities to experience spiritual growth and faith through the categories of: **Learning**, **Pray & Discern**, **Experience Community & Big Church**, **Leadership and Service**.

## **4, 5, 6 Grades - FOUNDATIONS**

A personal look at the Episcopal church in liturgy, prayer and history. Youth learn why this group is called 'Foundations' and is based on Luke 6.

Pray: Personal spiritual practices: talking with God, practices alone and in community, verbal and non-verbal.

Study: Church Year, Sacraments, Native American Traditions (learning about both treasured and difficult stories), Spiritual Life and Practices, ECMN History including Native American history with the ECMN

Serve: Acolyte and Altar Guild Requirements called 'Holy Hands'

Tri-annual pilgrimage: 2018 (2019), 2021: 4 day road trip to Faribault Cathedral: ECMN history and Native American connections, this will of course involve pools and water slides. Estimated cost \$300.

## **7, 8 Grades - CATALYST**

Youth encounter stories of past and present saints and explore their personal faith calling. We also have an annual course with honest conversations on integrating body and soul. Youth learn why their group is called Footsteps and is based on Ephesians 4.

Pray: Introduction to the Rule of Life, prayer and meditation, discernment and listening

Study: Saints, Episcopal Church history, These Are Our Bodies (faith and sexuality), Spiritual Life and Listening for Discernment

Serve: 1<sup>st</sup> Covenant Shelter 4x/year

Tri-annual pilgrimage: 2019, 2022 - Tri-annual summer 7-9Gr, 6 days with air travel to East Coast: Early Anglican and Episcopal History in US, National Cathedral. Estimated cost \$1000

## **Sr High 9, 10,11,12 Grades - PRIMED**

The focus is discussing "What is my personal faith?" "What does that mean for who I am and what I do?" This group learns why their group is called Primed and is based on John 15.

Pray: Continued various prayer practices, praying in a group, Celtic Spirituality, Prayer as a Lifestyle

Study: Comparative Religions, Real Life, SrH Requested Topics on where their 'hunger' is, Celtic Spirituality

Serve: 1st Covenant Shelter 4x/year, Eucharistic Ministers & Lectors, Peer Ministry Training

Tri-annual pilgrimage: See below

### **Sr High Confirmation Class – Tuesdays Oct-Apr 6:30-8pm - GATEWAY**

A cohort structure for youth 9<sup>th</sup> grade and above, that weaves Episcopal 101 with a personal and detailed look at the Baptismal Covenant in our daily lives. We read Acts 2 and Romans 8 and delve deeply into prayer practices.

### **Sr High International Pilgrimage: 2020, 2023**

A spiritual journey to a sacred 'thin' space that takes us out of our familiar daily lives, to walk together as a larger community to seek God in nature, Christ in each other and the Spirit in ourselves.

Pray: Celtic Spirituality, Praying the Hours, Deep listening to the Spirit

Study: Saints, History, Large Church, Pilgrimage Purpose, Hebrews 11

### **Teacher Training with Spiritual Direction:**

St Mark's amazing team of youth leaders are supported many ways, including training in teaching youth and provided with intentional monthly spiritual direction by a professional spiritual director.

### **What Parents Can Do:**

From the earliest of early days, people communicated with the beautiful sharing of real and imaginative stories. Starting early in development, kids do the same. Since parents have the biggest influence on faith development in their kids; share your faith stories and questions and ask your kids to tell you stories about what they learned and experienced in youth group and to share their questions.