

F.A.Q.'s

Following is a list of Frequently Asked Questions (F.A.Q.'s). Please contact Jeff or Katie if you have any questions, either general or specific, that relate to Middle School Ministry.

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WHY ISN'T THERE DIFFERENT TIME OPTIONS TO GATHER WITH OUR SMALL GROUP LIKE ON SUNDAY MORNINGS OR EARLIER ON WEDNESDAY NIGHTS?

There are a number of reasons why we meet at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays as one large group and don't offer any other day/time options. The primary reason is that most people have already set aside Wednesday evenings as their family "church night." The majority of our families are already coming to the Prince of Peace campus to bring their younger children to Children's Ministry earlier in the night.

Due to room limitations, it is not possible to meet earlier on Wednesday evenings because of all the rooms that are being occupied by the Children's Ministry small groups. The children's choir takes place during this earlier time as does WOW worship which meets in the sanctuary.

Probably the main reason why we don't split up MSM large and small groups into different time or day options is that it is much more efficient and even cost effective, not to mention that we're able to put together a much more dynamic gathering on one night during the same time. By having all of the middle school students gather at the same time, we are able to provide talented presenters on specific topics who wouldn't be able to present the given topic outside of the given time slot. Periodically we bring in professionals, so paying them for one presentation rather than two is financially more feasible.

CAN MY FRIEND VISIT ON WEDNESDAY NIGHTS?

Most definitely YES! There are many students that bring their friends to the Middle School Ministry large and small group gatherings. All we ask is that the two of you be on your best behavior and that you respect your small group leader and the others around during their visit.

If they enjoy attending with you, we ask you to have them register online after attending a few times so that they get on our mailing list for all of the upcoming events. This will also assure that they officially get placed in your small group and that we have their emergency contact information.

WHY DON'T MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS GO TO Camp WAPO?

We acknowledge that Camp Wapo is a great camp, and that most of our youth entering Middle School Ministries have had great experiences at this camp a few or more years in a row. We would like to offer an new experience, one that is geared specifically towards middle school students with a Bible camp that has an extremely strong junior high ministry emphasis.

As a youth minister who has personally attended many summer camps over the last 12 years with children's ministry and junior/senior high teenagers, I find that there are but a few that are geared specifically towards the junior and senior high teens with ministry objectives that fit well with our vision.

Most teens who attend Ingham for a week in the summer who were reluctant because they loved Wapo so much actually enjoyed it even **better** than what they had experienced as a child at Camp Wapo. There are DVD's available of our week at Camp Ingham for your student to check out. Camp Ingham is for students entering 7th grade through students entering 9th grade. Students entering 6th grade should go to Wapo.

ANOTHER CAMP QUESTION, DO PARENTS DRIVE DOWN TO CAMP, WHERE IS IT, AND HOW DO I REGISTER?

We actually all ride the bus to encourage students to get to know the others campers. There are no options for parents to drive, unless under specific situations where a camper must arrive late or leave early. Parents are asked to check the MSM website and register their student before the close of the early bird rate, usually by March 15th. The \$30 bus is tacked onto the camp payment when registering. Camp generally runs around \$375 without an early bird discount.

Camp Ingham is on Lake Ingham about 3 hours southwest of the Twin Cities just north of Emmetsville and south of Estherville, IA off of I90. Okoboji and Ingham are two separate camp locations all run under the same ministry staff and director. We hold Middle School summer camp at the Ingham Lake campsite because there is much more secluded acres for students to run around and play capture the flag, commandos, and other fun games. To check out the camp website, go to www.okoboji.org, or call the camp at 1-800-okoboji.

YOU WERE AT MY SCHOOL FOR LUNCH, SO WHY DIDN'T YOU COME TO MY TABLE?

We actually get asked that a lot. We want to respect each and every one of you. We don't want to do ANYTHING that either embarrasses you or makes you feel uncomfortable in front of your friends. Just know that we won't approach your table at lunch unless you flag us over or give us an invitational gesture with your hand or do something (like yelling: 'Hey Jeff' or 'Hey Jeff, come here!') that tells us you don't mind if we come over and visit with you and your friends for a while. Don't ever worry, we're not going to do anything weird to make you embarrassed. You'll be glad you asked us to hang out with you. Thanks for asking us to lunch!

WHY DO YOU DIVIDE THE SMALL GROUPS BY GENDER?

While most mixed-gendered small groups work pretty well throughout Children's Ministry years, once the students reach the late childhood / early teen years there is so much happening within themselves that the dynamics of the entire group changes. The only time we have made exceptions in the past years were for a few groups whose leaders were confident that things would work out. By the middle of the year, these leaders almost always ask for their group to be split by gender because dynamics of the group changes so drastically with students at this age.

WHAT DOES THE CONFIRMATION PROGRAM LOOK LIKE?

Confirmation, preferably called "Affirmation of Baptism", is an in-depth yet spiritually enriching ministry that takes place in Senior High Ministry at POP. Typically students set aside time in their freshman year to participate; however, families can join this process at other times as well. Parent

involvement in this process is a new addition to Affirmation of Baptism. This year, there are two separate sets of discipleship courses offered for students in high school. An “Affirmation of Baptism” celebration takes place following the completion of special training classes. Parents who desire to have their children continue their Christian faith journey following “Affirmation of Baptism” will encourage them to attend the Senior High student ministries on Wednesday nights along with serving the Lord on mission trips and retreats throughout their Senior High years. Please visit <http://www.princeofpeaceonline.org/ministries/family/shm/aff-of-bap.html> for more info.

WHAT KIND OF LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES ARE THERE FOR MY MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT?

Students entering 6-8th grades in the 2010-2011 school year are invited to deepen their faith and leadership skills through ministry at MSM. Those interested in music, graphic design, media arts, event planning, skits, and friendship strengthening are encouraged to sign up. These students organizing our 6:30 Community Room game time and other “up-front” or “behind-the-scenes” ministries. What began as two separate teams is now combining to form one faith-in-action team of all 3 grades with many layers of skills, talents, abilities, hopes and dreams for what God is up to! Our year will begin with an off-site fall training retreat in early October to make new friends and plan our year of ministry together. We will be meeting twice each month on Tuesday nights from 6:00-7:30 p.m. for teambuilding & Bible study (Luke/Acts). [For musicians, additional Tuesday rehearsals may be needed throughout the year and will be announced as needed.] Registration is open all year, online at popmsm.org.

ARE THERE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS TO FUNDRAISE FOR TRIPS?

There sure are! Students who are registered for the summer mission trip can choose to be in various work groups in the spring and the fall. Some groups will do leaf raking, lawn aerating, and yard work, while other groups will do cleaning like washing windows and various light household duties. Many of the jobs have a set suggested donation amount. All donations made to help support the students’ mission trip are tax deductible as these monies are included in the overall giving report at year’s end. Many students, if they are willing to work hard for a few weekends can pay the majority of the cost towards their trip.

WHAT DOES THE \$60 REGISTRATION FEE GO TOWARDS?

Much of our expenses are tied up in printing and mailing costs (which includes letters and postcards, leader curriculum, family devotion booklets, brochures, etc), special guest speakers, 6th Grade Bibles (Keeping the Promise) and Family Connect Nights, recreational games to promote fellowship for the students prior to the start of large group, 4 mentor trainings throughout the year, various supplies, and many more things that which contribute to the expenses of this ministry.

The actual cost per student far exceeds \$60 but that we must rely on offerings taken at worship both in MSM and on Sundays to help offset all the additional costs. Among the larger churches that are doing an exceptional job, \$50-\$100 is an average price per student for a registration fee.

We charge individually for each Connect Event because it allows students the freedom to choose which events they would like to participate in. This is opposed to including the cost of a given event into the registration fee and then expecting that they attend.

Please know that we don't want financial hardships to play any role in having your student involved with ministry participation. If your family is in financial, contact Kristine Krueger at 952-898-9337 or stop in to pick up a scholarship form.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT THAT PARENTS ATTEND THE FALL & WINTER CONNECT NIGHTS?

This is a common question. Here are three main reasons why your presence is crucial:

- 1) It is on these two nights, one in the fall and one towards the end of winter that we come together as an entire group of parents and even students on most occasions to learn and laugh together. You will receive important information such as the MSM Devotions along with vital instructions on important items for the calendar.
- 2) On these nights, you learn about upcoming service projects that you as parents can do with your student's small group. You also will find out all the specific details pertaining to the upcoming Connect Events and get the chance to register your student for these and summer trips before they get booked up.
- 3) Finally, it speaks volumes to your middle school student when you take the time to attend this hour and half with them. Not only do your students see that they are important, but they understand that the faith journey they are on is highly important and valued. These are fun-filled nights of ministry connections! Please do everything you can to attend with your student.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT CONNET EVENTS, AND WILL IT COST ME AS A PARENT TO GO ON ONE OF THESE CONNECT EVENTS?

Connect Events are outreach events for your student and your student's friends to attend with the purpose of getting to know others in Middle School Ministry at Prince of Peace, while growing deeper in faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are always looking for more adults to come with and hang out as mentors on these trips/events. Every parent that goes has a fabulous time with the other parent mentors and students.

HOW DO YOU DECIDE WHAT THE 'CONNECT' EVENTS SHOULD BE?

The student leadership team, Team Ichthus, discusses what events in the pervious year were successful and which ones need to change so that they are well-attended and well liked. The students then intentionally plan so that friends outside of the church will want to participate. The MSM Advisory Leadership Team partners with Team Ichthus to make sure everything is planned accordingly.

The Recharge Retreat is a weekend at Camp Okoboji that MSM students go to every spring. It is an outstanding faith-filled and fun retreat that allows students to make close friends while giving them a snapshot into what a full week of camp might look like in the summer. Registrations for these events are on the MSM website: www.popmsm.org

WHAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT THING I CAN DO AS A PARENT WITH MY TEEN REGARDING MSM THROUGHOUT THE YEAR?

We feel that the most important thing you can do as a parent is partner with your student on his or her faith journey. How you can do this takes many forms, but one of the most important ways is through the Family Connect Devotions. We suggest that you set aside 15 additional minutes of your time, either on Sunday, Monday, or Tuesday night, for you and your student to prepare for his or her Wednesday night experience.

Other ways you can partner with your student is to participate as a leader on one of the Connect Events, attend one of the three service projects that your student's small group will be doing throughout the year, sit next to them at worship each week, pray for and with them when you say 'goodnight,' and simply let them see your love for the Lord Jesus Christ who paid for the price of your sins on the cross. Nothing will impact the faith of your children and their walk with God more than being able to see your faith and your desire to walk with the Lord.