

Dear Youth and Parents,

### UMY Overview

Welcome to the United Methodist Youth program at Kennewick First United Methodist Church! UMY is a fellowship group offered to middle and high school aged youth where they can learn and practice Christian principles and participate in fun activities. It is my goal to provide a safe and structured environment where the youth feel welcomed and loved by the Lord, myself, their Leaders, and each other.



There are two youth fellowship groups offered at Kennewick First. Jr. UMY is offered for youth in 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grades and Sr. UMY is offered for youth in 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grades. Both groups generally meet on Sunday evenings either virtually on Zoom or in person for limited socially distanced events to participate in a wide variety of activities. In an effort to keep everyone safe, our youth will be meeting virtually on Zoom and for limited socially distanced events until further notice. During every UMY activity, devotion, prayer, and opportunities for the youth to grow closer to the Lord and to one another are included.

### Out of Town Trips and Fundraisers

**\*Due to COVID-19, we will discuss our out of town trips and fundraisers in more detail at a later date.**

UMY is a self-supporting program, which means that we do fundraisers for both groups in order for these fun activities and trips to happen. Traditionally, both UMY groups have a main fundraiser as well as smaller fundraisers throughout the year. The main Jr. UMY fundraiser is the Rock-a-Thon, which is held in January. The main Sr. UMY fundraiser is an auction, which is held in April. Traditionally, some activities are done at the church, including activities such as games, dances, and overnights, and some activities are done away from the church, including activities such as bowling, miniature golf, and ice blocking.

Traditionally, there is a weekend retreat and ski trip to look forward to that takes place later during the program year! In addition to weekly activities during the school year, each group goes on a trip in the summer. Traditionally, Jr. UMY group goes on a five-day Middler Trip, a trip that prepares the youth for the Mission Trip, a seven to eight-day trip that the Sr. UMY goes on. **The youth are required to have regular attendance and participate in the fundraisers to be eligible for the out of town events.** Some activities throughout the year will require that the youth bring money. I will make every attempt to give you a lot of notice and to not

schedule too many money-related activities in any given month. **Finances should never be a reason to not participate. Please contact me if it is.**

### **Safety and Expectations**

Activities are the most fun when no one gets hurt. Unfortunately, accidents can happen at UMY when we are having fun. It is required that each youth have a medical and liability release form on file. These forms are taken on all activities and are used in the case of an emergency. If the information changes during the year, please inform me. It is also required that all youth and at least one parent or guardian signs a form that explains the rules and expectations of UMY. Youth are highly encouraged to bring friends to UMY, however, all youth are required to have appropriate paperwork on file prior to attending UMY activities that are away from the church.

### **Volunteer Youth Group Leaders**

It is my belief that successful groups are led by a strong leadership team. Therefore, the two UMY groups are led by adults who are nurturing to the youth, share their faith with the youth, who are positive role models, and who like to play and have fun in the UMY activities! All of our Leaders are trained and have had a Washington State Patrol or National background check completed.

### **Additional Kennewick First UMC Activities**

I believe that in addition to UMY, it is important for the youth to be involved in other opportunities that allows them to grow closer to the Lord and to be in fellowship with one another. Kennewick First offers several opportunities for the youth to grow spiritually, including worship on Sundays at 10:30 AM on our Kennewick First UMC YouTube channel and Cornerstone Bible study on Tuesday nights on Zoom. I encourage the youth and their families to be involved in some or all of these activities or to be involved with activities at their family church.

### **How to Reach Rachel**

My church office hours are Monday-Thursday, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM, with flexibility due to late night meetings, visitations with youth, and attending youth activities. There may be some mornings I come into the office late or leave early due to such events. Please leave a voicemail at the church office, (509)582-2163, and I will get back to you as soon as I can. You may also communicate with me via e-mail at [rachel@kennewickfirst.com](mailto:rachel@kennewickfirst.com) or through Facebook. Due to not having unlimited data to use direct message options on social media all the time, my cell phone is available for texts and calls. Please note that I will respond at my earliest convenience and only at reasonable times of the day, unless it is an emergency. I do this in an effort to be

more available and a positive support to you! Please text me with prayer requests as you are walking into a difficult math test, call me if you have a crisis in the middle of the night, text me with questions the day of UMY when I am not in the office and busy running around the church. I have learned that 2020 Youth Ministry is not solely done from a landline in an office and it is time to move forward! I only ask that you respect this privilege and are patient with me!

Please let me know if you have any questions. I look forward to spending this year with you!

Yours in Christ,

Rachel Loomis

Director of Youth Ministries

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