

Dear Youth and Parents,



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 our goal to provide a safe and structured environment where the youth feel welcomed and loved by the Lord, myself, their Leaders, and each other.

We have two separate age groups: 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade & 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade. Most nights we combine together to worship, learn, and play, however other nights and weekends we have separate activities. 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. There is also a weekend retreat and a 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. Jr. UMY group goes on a four-night Middler Trip, a trip that prepares the youth for the Mission Trip, helping them grow in their faith, and learn to fellowship with each other for a longer period. The mission trip a seven-to-eight-day trip that the Sr. UMY can serve the community we travel to while growing in their faith. During every UMY activity, devotion, prayers, and opportunities for the youth to grow closer to the Lord and to one another are included.

UMY is a self-supporting program, which means that we do fundraisers for both groups that make these fun activities and trips happen. 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 a dessert auction, which is held in April. **The youth are required to have regular attendance (attend 50% of calendar events) 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 not to participate. Please contact me if it is.**

UMY also makes it a goal to complete one service activity a month, as we believe we are called to be in service to others. Our first three service activities of the program year are the Community Carnival, Trunk or Treat & Rake and Run. While we work hard during these events, we ensure that there is time to have fun as well. Remember many hands make light work, not just because it is done quicker, but because fellowship makes the service enjoyable.

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 sign 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 a medical consent form on file prior to attending UMY activities that are away from the church.

It is our belief that successful groups are led by a strong leadership team. Therefore, the 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 our Leaders are trained and have had a background check completed.

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, and Youth Sunday School. 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. We have ways to help them feel more involved in Worship, and would like to have youth start volunteering on Sunday mornings during the service.

My church office hours are Tuesdays & Thursday, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM, you can also reach me through Remind or the church office can get me a message (Church Office Hours: Monday-Friday – 9am-4pm; Phone: (509) 582-2163). You may also communicate with me via e-mail at [clairessa@kennewickfirst.com](mailto:clairessa@kennewickfirst.com) or through my cell at (208) 971-1879.

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

Yours in Christ,

Claressa Elvik  
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Kennewick First United Methodist Church  
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*"For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."*

*-Matthew 18:20*

As the body of Christ, the Lord calls us to gather together. So what does that look like? Here at UMY it looks like laughter, playing games, sharing a meal, learning from each other and growing with each other. It looks like welcoming each other with open arms and being kind and understanding to one another. Not only does the Lord call us to gather together, but He tells us to gather together in *His* name. To sing and to praise Him, to talk to Him, and to tell others about Him. Community wasn't made to be confined; it was meant to be shared so that others would learn about the Lord and sing praises to Him, talk to Him, and tell others about Him. So please, invite your friends! Tell them about the loving kindness of the Lord, about the fun we have at UMY, and extend the opportunity to your friends to have a youth group and church family experience!

If you have concerns about bringing a friend of another religion, I am open to talk to you about how that would look. I want everyone to feel welcome, and share Jesus' love.

*When you bring a friend to UMY, please introduce them to your Leaders so we can help them feel welcome. If your friends would like to attend UMY on a regular basis, we will send the permission forms home with them to be filled out and returned. This will allow them full participation in UMY activities, fundraisers, service projects, and with good attendance the trips. We can't wait to meet your friends!*

# Remind



kfumc-umy

We will continue to use Remind for communications. This allows us to update you quickly on changes, and keep you informed.

If you have not set it up, it is easy. Download the Remind app from your chosen app store. Enter your phone number. Remind will text you with a 4-digit code to confirm your account. Next add your birthday. This is a security measure as there are age restrictions. If your youth has a personal phone and is under 13, they cannot initiate communication with us. They will only be able to receive the Remind notices. (There are extra steps to confirm that you, as the parent, are allowing your child to sign up for Remind if you need any help please ask.)

Once you enter your birthday, you will be asked to join a class. Enter kfumc-umy to join our Youth Group "class". You will then be prompted to add your name, so we know who you are. That is it, you are done.

We are moving away from texting to make communicating with families easier and safer.

Remind is not taking place of monthly calendars. It will be used for weekly reminders and emergency notifications. It will also be a place where we can post the monthly calendar, so you have access to it when needed.

You will also be to send comments and questions to us through the app. If you have detailed questions or need immediate assistance, please give me a call so we can talk in person.

Church Office (Monday-Friday: 8:30am-4pm): (509) 582-2163 (Youth Director Ext. 105)

Claressa Elvik at (208) 971-1879

# Discord



This year I will be adding youth communications on Discord. I went this route because it offers lots of parental control and has a lot of tools I can use to communicate directly with the youth. I would like to have all the youth added to the channel. I will not be the only adult in the room, Starlite is already added, and you as parents are also welcome to join.

I am hoping most youth have discord already, but they are simple to make and find the channel.

I will be sharing similar information on here as Remind, but also posting bible studies in the middle of the week. We can share prayer requests. I want to create a safe place to have open conversations and continue our community growth.

The same rules that apply on Sundays will apply in this space as well. Bullying will not be tolerated. Conversations will be kept kind, and welcoming.

The Discord server is: **KFUMC Youth**