



General Ministry Philosophy

The Student Ministries exist as an expression of the vision of The Fields:

To see God grow people into passionate followers of Jesus Christ.

While we aim to see that vision come to fruition, we are also keenly aware that the youth leaders are not the primary shepherds in your students' lives. By God's grace and sovereignty, you are - as his or her parents - the first earthly shepherds he or she has.

Therefore, we exist to **HELP** you shepherd your student - not to take your place.

Values

The Student Ministries hold to the values of The Fields, which are as follows:

Truth :

We believe that truth first exists with God and that He has communicated His truth to us through the Bible. We also value truth, or authenticity, in our relationships with each other.

Within the Student Ministry, truth is communicated to the students in the avenues of:

- our weekly Wednesday Night Gatherings (WNG)
- our Sunday Middle School class, working through the morning's sermon
- on our bi-annual retreats, there are always teaching times where the students are led into God's Word and into times of worship, through music
- One-on-one hangouts (coffee/ice cream/burger, *always gender appropriate)
- intentional integration of God's Word into our relationships with your students

Grace :

We recognize God's grace in our lives. He has forgiven us and so we freely share that forgiveness with others. That translates into being people who are learning patience, flexibility, compassion and acceptance with others. Grace doesn't ignore sin, it deals with it and forgives it.

In line with the desire of The Fields to live life together for God's glory, our lives become dirty with sin. Whether it's sin of commission (where an individual actively sins against another) or of omission (where one does not actively pursue God's desire in a particular relationship) there needs to be repentance, confession, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

In these situations, we deal with sin not by punishing your students (as that is not our role in your students' lives) but by instructing them in the Gospel and by applying the Gospel through confession and walking with them through repentance and restitution.

In these moments of grace, we will always seek to point your students to the Gospel but we will never replace or undermine your role and your decisions as parents.

Community :

God has created us for relationship; for relationship with Himself and for relationship with each other. Our desire is to help people get connected with God and with each other. We believe community is doing life together for God's glory.

We see the Student Ministries as an opportunity for the students to engage with one another and mentor-type leaders; "doing life together", through studying the Word, enjoying fellowship, and serving The Fields and the community, to the glory of God.

Community in Student Ministries is achieved in a number of ways:

- our weekly WNGs and during our Middle School class on Sundays
- bi-annual retreats (the average retreat sees students together for at least 36 hours - which is the equivalent of 18 WNGs)
- Local events - service projects, game nights, pool parties, Laser Tag, etc.
 - * *these local events also exist as missional opportunities for your students to invite their unchurched/de-churched friends to experience the community and fellowship of the Body of Christ and, hopefully, experience the love of Christ firsthand.*

Participation :

God has called each one of us to use the talents and gifts He has given us to bless him and others. That means we are participants in, not merely consumers of the gospel. Every person is a player on the team, not just a spectator.

We encourage the students to participate in:

- **our Wednesday Night Gatherings**

- answering questions and participating in discussion
- sharing prayer requests and praying for one another during (and outside of) our gatherings
- serving one another in practical needs (i.e. needing a ride)
- serving on the music team

- **our Sunday worship services**

At The Fields, we don't see your students as merely students - but as redeemed, Spirit-filled individuals who are more than capable of engaging with adults.

- serving in Children's Ministry, the Lighting Team, Communion Set-Up, or the Meal Team
- Middle School class participation through answering questions, praying and reading the Scriptures aloud

- **in their daily lives**

As Jesus was sent, so are we sent to proclaim the Good News.

We encourage the students to be participating in God's mission in their homes, schools, sports teams, and neighborhoods.

Faith :

God is pleased when we have faith in Him, when we learn to trust Him. Faith expresses our dependence upon Him. Prayer is one way we demonstrate our faith; action is another.

As expressed previously, prayer is definitely a priority during our gatherings. We include prayer during our Wednesday Night Gatherings; praying both for our time in the Word, as well as for requests that the students have shared. We also encourage the students to be actively praying for one another and for their home and schools. Faith is also expressed by the focus on living life together, through our successes and failures. Faith is needed to live out the love that God has commanded us to have for one another.

What Happens on a Sunday Morning?

After meeting with the rest of the congregation for worship through music, our Middle School students will join a Leader for a Middle School class, both 8:30am & 10:30am services

- Our Sunday class functions a little like a Bible study, with lots of participation. This is intentional for two reasons: to help the students as they prepare to fully join the Sunday gathering in its entirety, and to prepare them for adult Community Groups when they eventually transition out of Student Ministries.
- 2 - 4 times per year, we will forgo our Middle School class to participate in family worship as an undivided body. This is typically during special occasions and celebrations (i.e. Anniversary Sunday, Easter) & the odd 5th Sunday in a month, again as a training piece to develop their understanding of their complete belonging to the Body of Christ.

Final Word

The Fields Student Ministries exists to help encourage your student and assist you as their parent in growing them in their understanding of and walk with Jesus Christ.

Neither our youth leaders, nor our pastors - not even you - can change your students' hearts. Only God can *and does* change hearts.

Therefore, we will consistently point the students to the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ, and to those whom God has entrusted with His image-bearers here on the earth: you.

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