

NORTH  RIVER

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

*One generation commends your works to another;
they tell of your mighty acts. (Psalm 145)*





WHO ARE WE?

The Youth & Family Ministry is one of North River's five Life Stage Ministries that serves our middle and high school families. We strive to have everything we do flow from the church's mission and vision:

Mission: To partner with God's Spirit, helping all people grow into fully devoted followers of Jesus.

Vision: Walking the way of Jesus, together, in his spiritual family.

WHO'S IN THIS MINISTRY?

The Youth & Family Ministry is built around four groups of people working together:

- Parents
- High school students
- Middle school students
- Youth Leaders — our team of young professional and college-aged volunteers who serve as mentors for our students.

MEET OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Our staff and elders are here to walk alongside your family. Don't hesitate to reach out to any of us.

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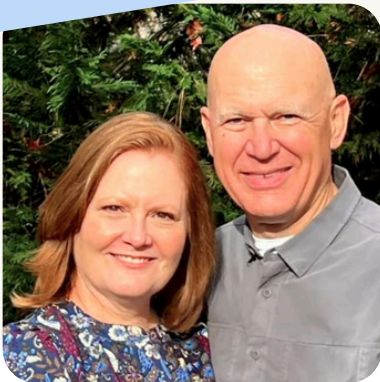


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OUR YOUTH MINISTRY

Within our Youth & Family Ministry is our Middle and High School Ministries – or **Youth Ministry**. Our goal in the Youth Ministry is to partner with our families to help our students see, experience, and follow Jesus.

Everything we do is built on **four core pillars**, outlined on the following pages.

EQUIP PARENTS



We believe parents are the primary spiritual leaders of their children, and we equip and strengthen them to faithfully pass on their faith.

BUILD VILLAGE



Parents aren't meant to do this alone—we build a village of friends, mentors, and family who walk together because we're stronger as a team.

EMPOWER STUDENTS



We believe teens are capable of more than most realize, and we empower them to take ownership of their faith and lead within our ministry.

MODEL JESUS



Our goal is to lead students into a genuine relationship with Jesus—not just attendance in a youth program.



YOUTH MINISTRY PILLAR 1: EQUIP PARENTS

God has ordained parents to be the primary spiritual leaders in their children's lives. He calls them to teach His Word diligently and pass down their faith (Deuteronomy 6:6–7; Psalm 78:1–7). Research affirms what Scripture has long taught: parents have the most significant influence on a child's long-term faith.

God desires restored, heart-connected relationships within families (Malachi 4:5–6; Luke 1:17). When families walk in the light together (1 John 1:5–7), it builds intimacy with God and one another and helps parents represent Him accurately, demonstrating that being a disciple is not about perfection but about living honestly before Him. This fosters trust, safety, and openness in the home, positioning parents to shepherd their children's hearts (Proverbs 1:8–9; Ephesians 6:1–4; Proverbs 22:6).

Through the Spirit's leading, parents can cultivate homes marked by humility, reconciliation, love, and spiritual intimacy, regardless of their own upbringing. Intentional, consistent, grace-filled guidance allows parents to influence the condition of their children's hearts more deeply than cultural narratives suggest.

We recognize that parents are at different places in their spiritual journey. In these seasons, the church family comes alongside them to encourage, equip, and support (Galatians 6:1–2; Hebrews 10:24–25), offering additional support for children when needed but never replacing parents.

We practice this value by including parents in student Bible studies, having parents teach various lessons, and equipping parents with the tools and support to build their own faith and skills in teaching their kids.



YOUTH MINISTRY PILLAR 2: BUILD VILLAGE

We were never meant to do this alone. Scripture paints a picture of faith passed down not just from parent to child, but through an entire community of people walking together (Ps 78:1–7; Deut 6:20–25). Our students don't just need their parents but by aunts and uncle figures, grandparents, and older brothers and sisters in the faith who love them, know them, and point them toward Jesus.

Research confirms that having at least one spiritual mentor outside the home is one of the strongest predictors of a young person developing a resilient faith. 9 out of 10 young people who stop attending church never had a mentor. 7 out of 10 never had a meaningful adult friendship within their church. (*Barna Research Group*)

At the center of all of this is trust. For most people — and especially for teenagers — trust in relationships comes before trust in Jesus. This is why we pour so much energy into building real, consistent, unhurried relationships with students. Not just programming and events but *relationships*.

We believe deeply in the power of intergenerational worship and community. Our students need more than a youth group — they need to sit alongside adults who are faithfully following Jesus, to see what a life of faith actually looks like over decades.

We practice this value by building a team of mentors (our Youth Leaders) that can be resources for our families, partnering with the campus ministry, giving space for family groups to meet and build relationships with each other's kids, and having student/parent services where students and parents can interact together.



YOUTH MINISTRY PILLAR 3: EMPOWER STUDENTS

Society often sets a low expectation for teenagers, but Scripture tells a different story. God has consistently used young people in significant ways to advance His Kingdom (1 Samuel 17; Jeremiah 1:6–8; 1 Timothy 4:12). We believe students are capable of extraordinary things when rooted in Christ and empowered by His Spirit.

Because of this, we do not want to form passive consumers of ministry, but active participants in the life of the church—students who serve, lead, create, and contribute. As they invest in community, they grow in belonging and ownership.

We believe every student has unique God-given gifts meant for service in His church (1 Peter 4:10). Students are not “junior disciples,” but full members of the body of Christ, invited now into participation in God’s mission. Our vision is for them to become adults who are equipped, confident, and committed to building the church for life.

We also want students to develop a faith that is truly their own. While we value family faith deeply, each student must personally know and follow Jesus—not simply inherit belief. We aim to move them from borrowed faith to rooted conviction.

We believe students grow best when both believed in and challenged—not only called to belong, but to step into service, leadership, and maturity.

We practice this through regular opportunities for student leadership, including teen training gatherings, serving in worship services, leading small groups, teaching Bible studies, and facilitating Bible discussions in schools.



YOUTH MINISTRY PILLAR 4: MODEL JESUS

Our goal isn't to raise kids with good moral values or correct Christian beliefs — as good as those things are. We want more than that. We want your son or daughter to actually know Jesus. To trust Him. To experience Him. To make Him their hero. A student can grow up checking every box and still never have a real, personal encounter with Jesus. We're after transformation, not just information.

We live in a cultural moment where trust in institutions is declining — but people are still open to Jesus. When He is presented as He actually is — not a rule enforcer or religious mascot, but a living, risen Savior who knows and loves them — students respond. Everything we do is filtered through one question: will this help students see Jesus more clearly?

Personal Bible studies sit at the core of how we pursue this. One of the most powerful ways students encounter Jesus is by opening Scripture together in an honest, relational setting and letting Him speak.

We will not rush students toward decisions about their faith before they've had the chance to genuinely experience and walk with Jesus. Our job isn't to pressure students across a finish line — it's to walk alongside them and trust that Jesus is more than capable of capturing their hearts in His own time.

We practice this value by leading personal one-on-one and small group Bible studies with students, designing every lesson and discussion around the question of whether students can see Jesus more clearly, and creating space for students to ask honest questions and encounter Jesus at their own pace — not ours.



We have an amazing group of young professionals, young marrieds, and college students called our “Youth Leaders”. They generously volunteer in the Youth Ministry as mentors and small group leaders.

Here are a few notes about our Youth Leaders

- **Get to know them!** Invite them over for dinner! One dinner at your house connects you with them and your kid(s) more than years of youth events at the building. Together we can serve them as they serve the kids in this ministry.
- They go through a **screening and interview process** to ensure safe, positive, and strong-charactered mentors in the lives of our youth.
- They have **monthly training meetings** to learn how to better serve the families and youth.
- They are **encouraged to pursue mentoring** and hang-out times with the students outside of church events.
- They are required to **communicate clearly with the parents** about mentoring times, Bible studies, rides, and more.
- **Our mentors need mentoring too.** Find out ways you can serve them and pour into them as they pour into your kids.



ANNUAL

- Teen and Middle School Retreats at the Swamp (Fall)
- Summer Camp at the Swamp Camp
- Y&F End of Year Celebration (December)
- Teen Prom (Spring)
- Parenting Workshops

MONTHLY

This is what a typical month looks like.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1st	Youth Service			All Church MW			
2nd	MS Class			Y&F MW			
3rd	Y&F Service					Fun Event	
4th	MS Class			Y&F MW			



CALENDAR

YOUTH SERVICES

Our Youth Services are for both our middle and high school students. The goal of this service is to give our youth a place to learn about Jesus in relevant ways to them and to lead and serve in various ways.

YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES

Our Youth & Family Services are for both our students and their parents. We want kids and their parents to worship, learn, and serve alongside each other. These services are always a little different. Sometimes we have a big discussion, split into groups, have a lesson all together, have a class about parenting, have fun, etc. This is a great opportunity to build our village.

MIDWEEKS

We create as many opportunities as possible for the students to be with each other. While the students are having their own midweek, their meet together as well. For our students, we have a short lesson followed by small groups. Similarly, the parents come together for a discussion and split into groups to pray and connect.

CAMP SWAMP

We have an amazing partnership with [Camp Swamp](#). Take advantage of all the retreats and camps to get away and experience God.

HOW CAN YOU CAN START STRONG?

How you start is so important! Here are some ways you can get involved in the life of the Y&F Ministry.

01 Pray!
Pray for all of our youth and our families – that “the eyes of their heart would be flooded with light...” (Ephesians 1)

02 Invite a Youth Leader over for dinner.
One dinner can make you feel connected for years!

03 Teach a Middle School Class Rotation.
Come get to know the middle schoolers by serving during one of the four-month rotations in the middle school class. You teach twice a month for only four months but you give a lifetime of faith and memories.

04 Host a Fun Event.
What does your child like to do? Host an event at your home or at the park and invite the rest of the middle school or teen ministry.

05 Ask the Y&F Staff ways you can serve.
Talk with the Shoffs or Tchirs about ways you can get involved. Volunteer to bring snacks, help with worship, share your story, etc.

06 Pursue relationships with other families.
It takes time to build relationships. It might be tough at first but the more opportunities you create, the more likely those seeds grow.





THANK YOU!

**We can't wait to walk the way of Jesus
together in His Spiritual family!**

Please reach out with any questions!



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