

# **Fremont United Methodist Church**

## **Youth Ministry Handbook**

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# Contact Information

## **Youth Leaders:**

- Bethany Jordan	<i>Youth Leader/Senior High</i>	919-222-2107	<a href="mailto:bjordan0411@email.campbell.edu">bjordan0411@email.campbell.edu</a>
- Joy Vinson	<i>Leader</i>	919-273-0800	<a href="mailto:chelkmansmom@aol.com">chelkmansmom@aol.com</a>
- Jay Stewart	<i>Finances/Treasure &amp; Tech Support</i>	919-330-8799	<a href="mailto:jaylstewart@live.com">jaylstewart@live.com</a>
- Rebecca Hooks	<i>Recordkeeping &amp; Meal Coordinator</i>	919-922-2618	<a href="mailto:rhooks4@nc.rr.com">rhooks4@nc.rr.com</a>

## **Youth Council:**

- Kim Craig	919-242-5399 (home) 919-938-3857 (cell)	<a href="mailto:kcraig58@yahoo.com">kcraig58@yahoo.com</a>
- Elizabeth Rose	919-242-6360 (home) 919-222-6360 (cell)	<a href="mailto:Libba841@embarqmail.com">Libba841@embarqmail.com</a>

## I. Policy Explanation

*The purpose of this handbook is to provide youth and parents with what is expected of them and their leaders. It also provides leaders with guidelines on how to conduct events and what rules need to be followed. Many questions are answered in the following pages.*

### Policy Specifics

- Policies apply to all individuals involved in youth activities.
- Handbook should be provided to each family with young people falling in the 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade and/or up to 5<sup>th</sup> year high school students in certain schools.
- Changes to the handbook will be approved by the Fremont United Methodist Youth Council. Revisions will be made annually.
- Please bring suggested changes to the handbook to one of the Youth Council Members.
- Although this handbook was created to be comprehensive, it is impossible to cover every possible situation. If a situation arises and there is no policy in place, adults and youth alike are asked to use common sense, and also ask themselves, “What would Jesus do”, with youth council to follow up as needed to situations.
- Terms Defined
  - Youth Leader: Head of Fremont United Methodist Youth Group
    - Bethany Jordan – Youth Leader and Senior High Leader
  - Youth Counselor: Assistants to head Youth Leader
    - Joy Vinson – Assistant to head Youth Leader
    - Jay Stewart – Finances/Treasure & Tech Support
    - Rebecca Hooks – Recordkeeping & Meal Coordinator
    - Billy Hooks – Assistant to head Youth Leader
  - Youth Chaperone: Approved volunteer who assist Fremont United Methodist Youth with/on activities or trips when asked and needed to.

## II. Youth Member Eligibility

- Youth must fall between the grades of 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>, with the exception of those youth in special situations, such as:
  - A Super Senior at Wayne Early Middle High School/Engineer School.
- Once a youth has received their high school diploma and/or reached the age of 18 they unfortunately will no longer be able to attend UMYF as a youth member. Youth who have graduated may return to volunteer, if they meet the volunteer criteria and are needed.
- Visiting Youth
  - 1<sup>st</sup> time visitor:
    - Are encouraged to return to following UMYF meetings.
    - Do not have to have a on file copy of a signed covenant.
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> time visitor:
    - Are encouraged to return to following UMYF meeting.
    - Will be sent home with, Fremont United Methodist Church Youth Ministry Handbook and UMYF Covenant, to be read and signed by youth visitor and their parent/guardian.
    - Visitors are encouraged to return to any future UMYF meetings.

- 3<sup>rd</sup> time visitor:
  - Required to have Fremont United Methodist Church Youth Ministry Handbook and UMYF Covenant signed by the youth and their parent/guardian.
  - Visitors are encouraged to return to any future UMYF meetings.
- Visiting youth are still expected to follow all handbook and UMYF covenant procedures while visiting.

### III. Expected Youth Behavior

*The youth are expected to conduct themselves in a way that would be pleasing to God.*

- Youth are to refrain from using offensive language.
- Youth are expected to refrain from using all illegal substances, alcoholic beverages, and tobacco products.
- Youth are to build others up instead of tear them down (gossip).
- Youth are to show respect for all people, ideas, property and privacy of others.
- Youth are to participate in the full program (example: meeting or event) and remain at the event site, unless permission has been obtained from the Youth Leader(s).
- Youth are to leave facilities in better shape than found. Any damages for which a youth is responsible, that youth will make the payment for repair or replacement.
- Youth are not to use cell phones, pagers, walkie-talkies, iPods, or other electronic devices during programs and scheduled events.
- Youth are responsible for acting and showing Christian values at meetings/events, as well as, including but not limited to Internet social networking sites (example: Facebook and Twitter).
- Youth are expected to abide by meeting and events schedule times of arrival and departure.
  - Youth who cannot drive: Parents are responsible for dropping off and picking up their youth at correct times and location unless other prior (talked with Youth Leader before meeting/event started) arrangements have been made and parental consent is obtained.

### IV. Dress Code

*This policy is to ensure that all youth dress in a modest and appropriate way for all youth activities. Our youth are exposed to sexually explicit material in the world, so as a church we should work together to create a safe, friendly environment for all participants.*

- Clothing should never contain profanity or vulgar words or images anything to do with illegal substances including smoking and alcohol.
- The torso should be covered (no belly shirts). Touch the sky, touch the toes – if anything shows, it doesn't go!
- Sleeveless shirts must have tight armholes; they should not be able to shift on the body.
- Pants, dresses, and skirts should fit properly.
- Undergarments should be worn at all times, undergarments should not be obvious (example: black under white) and let's keep the "under" in undergarments.
- Pants should be worn near waist.
- Clothing should be weather and activity appropriate.
- Bathing suits should be tasteful.
- If clothing is deemed inappropriate or distracting youth will be asked to cover up.

### V. Media Usage

- All electronic devices will be placed in basket at the beginning of each youth meeting/event.
- All music youth are listening to at a youth meeting/event should not contain offensive language; swear words, crude language, sexually explicit lyrics or misuse of God's name.
- Inappropriate use of media will result in:
  - o Being told to put it away (1<sup>st</sup> offense).
  - o Having it taken away until the event is over (2<sup>nd</sup> offense).
    - If an item is taken away parents will be notified.
  - o If it is taken away at two events the item will not be allowed at any more events.
- Video games that will be used as entertainment at some youth meeting/events should not contain violence. All games will be reviewed by Youth Leader(s) prior to use.
- Internet usage: Youth must be given permission to use internet on computers at meetings/events (example: hotel lobby computers).

*Devotional Materials:*

- Clips from PG-13 rated movies will be previewed by Youth Leader(s) before group viewing.
- Songs should follow the same guidelines as for personal media.

## **VI. Deadlines**

*Holding youth accountable and giving them deadlines helps encourage responsibility, helping them to be better equipped for middle school, high school, college, and adult life. Deadlines are in place also to show respect and consideration of the time of Youth Leaders and other members making a firm, (sometimes) non-refundable commitment for meetings/events.*

- Deadlines for registration materials are in place to ensure that materials are received by the deadline in time to register the group for an event and to increase the likelihood that the groups will be able to attend, receive hotel preferences, and allow fair opportunities for youth sign up for limited available positions in some instances.
- Deadlines for fundraisers to be turned in are in place so items will be received on time.

## **VII. Emergency Information/Permission Slips**

*Medical information and permission slips are required for events inside and outside of Fremont United Methodist Church.*

- Blanket Form
  - o Required to be filled out annually.
  - o Covers basic youth information, basic parent/guardian information, medical information, picture release information, event form, and permission for youth to ride with Youth Leaders to outside church events through the entire UMYF year.
- Youth Drive Form
  - o States if your child is allowed to drive to local events within the county and if they can carry other youth within their vehicle to the events location.
- Youth Rider Form
  - o State your child is allowed or not allowed to ride with a youth member to local events within the county.
- Emergency Plans and Procedures
  - o Parents will be contacted following an emergency as soon as it is safe to do so.
  - o In case of tornado:
    - Youth should leave youth room and proceed to hallway (by conference room).
  - o In case of fire:
    - Youth should evacuate building through the nearest door.

- Any other emergency situations will be handled in accordance with Fremont United Methodist Church's emergency management procedures.
- Trip Contact Information Sheet
  - This form will contain key information about a trip. It will include where the youth will stay, phone numbers, etc. Trip Contact Information Sheet is intended to be provided to parents at least one week before an event. This form will be accompanied by important information like packing list of suggested items for a youth to bring on trip.

### **VIII. Transportation**

*This policy sets eligibility requirement for those driving youth to and from events.*

- Drivers, driving youth outside of the county, must be at least 21 years of age and have a clean driving record.
- Youth Drivers
  - Youth may drive themselves to and from in county events with a completed and signed Youth Driver Form.
  - Youth may drive fellow youth to and from in county events with a completed Youth Rider Form.
  - Youth may only have one passenger in the front seat.
  - Youth drivers are volunteering to drive as a gift; therefore youth drivers will not be reimbursed for gas.
- Vehicles must be in good working condition.
- Drivers should follow traffic laws.
- Everyone must wear a seatbelt.
- Vehicle must be insured.
- Youth are not allowed to leave the vehicle when it is running unless they have received verbal permission.
- Passengers are not to hinder the driver's concentration in any way while the vehicle is in motion.

### **IX. Leader Information**

*Youth Leaders have a tremendous responsibility when working with the youth.*

- Leader Responsibilities
  - Leaders must be approved by Pastor and Youth Council.
  - Leaders should model respect for parents and other adults at all times.
  - Leaders should be available to youth who need to "vent" while not taking sides and seek ways to build bridges not walls.
  - Confidentiality is important except in cases where a youth may be in any form of danger. Youth should know that they may confide in a youth leader, but that the leader has a responsibility to report any serious situations to parents/legal guardians.
  - Leaders should be aware and willing to seek outside help when situations reach beyond their knowledge. Serious situations such as rape, drug abuse, suicide threats, etc. require skilled assistance.
  - Leaders need to understand their role in the youth's lives. They can often act as "guide" to help the youth navigate life's path and help a youth succeed in life.
  - Leaders are responsible for youth's safety, welfare and behavior during meetings and events. They should be aware of various situations including:
    - Attitude changes
    - Romances
    - Discipline problems

- Spiritual searching
- Etc.
- Contact Information
  - Youth Leaders are volunteers and have other work and family responsibilities. Please do not expect replies to phone calls, emails, etc. the same day. Leaders will do their best to reply to all messages in a timely manner.
    - Bethany Jordan      919-222-2107      bjordan0411@email.campbell.edu
    - Joy Vinson            919-273-0800      chelkmansmom@aol.com
    - Jay Stewart          919-330-8799      jaylstewart@live.com
    - Rebecca Hooks      919-922-2618      rhooks4@nc.rr.com
  - There is also a Facebook group (Fremont UMYF), youth and parents may request to join. Events and activities will be listed here as well as pictures from various events. Youth are also able to start various (appropriate) discussions. Youth who are old enough and have parental permissions are encouraged to create a Facebook profile and join the Fremont UMYF Facebook group.
    - Once a youth has graduated high school/or is no longer a member of UMYF, they are responsible for removing themselves from the Facebook group, but can still remain friends with UMYF members.

## **X. Adult Volunteer Person Criteria**

*Volunteers must meet certain personal criteria before they are allowed to work with the youth. This policy is to help protect the youth of individuals who may wish to harm them.*

- Volunteers must be at least 5 years old than the age youth group they are wishing to assist.
- No one who is known to have a substance abuse problem, a recent police record or criminal activity (within the last 3 years), or mental health problems, which might affect judgment and reliability may work with the youth.
- A background check will be conducted with each volunteer prior to his or her assistance with youth.
- Volunteers are to have completed the Safe Sanctuary course prior to their assistance with youth.
  - Contact the pastor for Safe Sanctuary's course dates and times.
- Volunteers are to be members of Fremont United Methodist Church for at least six months.
  - The Youth Council must approve volunteers who are not members of Fremont United Methodist Church.
- All adult volunteers should use common sense, good judgment, Christian principles, and a loving attitude when working with youth.
- Adult volunteers should be provided with a copy of the Handbook.
- Volunteers may only assist with UMYF when and if assistance is needed.

## **XI. Adult Youth Ratio**

*Appropriate supervision is important to ensure youth safety at meetings/events.*

- A minimum of 2 adult Youth Leaders should be present at every youth meeting or event.
- Every effort will be made to have a male and female adult youth leader at every meeting/event.
- For larger events a ratio of 1 adult to every 7 youth will be in place (example: Pilgrimage).

## **XII. Youth Trips/Outings**

*Youth Trips/Outings require a commitment of time and money. Youth and adults are expected to take these commitments seriously. Failure to complete the commitment will result in various consequences.*

- Youth are to be quiet enough so as not to bother others who may be ready to sleep.
- Youth are to abide by set curfews.
- Youth are to refrain from making noise in hallways or from windows.
- Youth are to be respectful to the property and privacy of others and their belongings.
- Youth are to leave facilities in better shape than found. Any damages for which a youth is responsible, they the youth will make the payment for repair or replacement.
- Youth are to abide by indicated arrival and departure times for trips/outings. Parents of non-driving youth are responsible for dropping off and picking up their youth unless prior arrangements have been made and parental consent obtained.
- Visiting Youth
  - o Visiting youth on trips/outings must have all required forms returned prior to attending the youth trip/outing.

### **XIII. Finances**

*Some youth events are more costly than others. Every effort will be made to help young people attend the events they choose to be a part of regardless of personal financial means.*

- General Youth Account
  - o Funds designated for use for general youth activities and needs.
- Personal Youth Account(s)
  - o Funds donated for use by individual youth member.
    - May only be used for trip/outing registration, lodging, and transportation.
  - o Specific/Honor Donations
    - Specific/Honor Donations will be placed in the specified/honored youth(s) personal account.
- Donations
  - o Donations made to Fremont UMYF will be put into the General Youth Account.
- Fundraisers
  - o 10% off money raised will be given to the church as tithe.
  - o 90% off money raised will be given to the General Youth Account unless other wise noted in fundraiser policy.
- Leader Cost
  - o Without the leaders the youth would be unable to attend trips/outings.
  - o Youth Leader and Youth Counselor's registration and lodging fees will be paid equally throughout the youth members attending the event.

### **XIV. Consequences**

*Youth who do not meet or hold to the qualities asked of them will face consequences.*

- Three strike Rule:
  - o First infraction results in a conversation with the youth by one of the Youth Leaders.
  - o Second infraction results in a phone call home to the parents/legal guardian.
  - o Third infraction results consultation with youth, parent youth, Youth Leader and pastor.