

A photograph of a stone building with a grass roof, possibly a church or community center, set against a backdrop of green trees and grass. In the foreground, several students are seen from behind, walking towards the building. The image has a soft, slightly overexposed quality.

# STUDENT MINISTRY GUIDEBOOK



WILLIAMSBURG  
CHRISTIAN  
CHURCH

# **WCC STUDENT MINISTRY GUIDEBOOK**

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### A Word from the Family Ministers

Thank you for your interest in WCC Student Ministry and taking the time read through this Guidebook. As a faith community, WCC is committed to a shared life lived on mission with God. We are passionate about growing as and making disciples and joining God in loving this world as we follow Jesus.

We believe God's best for you- you are loved, you are made in His image, you are gifted, you are talented, you are valued, you have purpose and a calling, you are a vital member of the Body of Christ. We believe you are becoming the person God created you to be, the kind of person this community needs, the kind of person the world needs. As we commit to a shared life in this Body of Christ, we help each other grow, as we love our neighbor and join God in this new creation. Whether you are a student, a parent, or a volunteer- we are in this together, for each other, for His Glory.

If you are reading this it means you are a part of WCC Student Ministry, or thinking about joining us in some way; my prayer is that you grasp the importance, meaning, depth and beauty of your role and place in this community of faith- thinking deeply, prayerfully considering, carefully listening to God and others, open to what God is doing and might be calling you into. This will be fun, and joy-giving, but also serious and difficult. There will be great times of growth and beauty; there will be painful times of conflicts and struggles. And through it all we learn what it means to live in community, to have a shared life, to let God work in and through us.

So welcome to WCC! We humbly invite you to join us in Student Ministry asking for grace as we follow Jesus together.

Joined in His Service,

Erin Otis  
Common Life Pastor of Families

### We don't like this...

When Jesus encountered some leaders of His day who belonged to the religious sect of the Pharisees, he called them out on their legalistic codes and tendencies. They created a handbook, a 'fence post' to the law, that added boundaries around the Law, so that those following their handbook wouldn't even get close to breaking the Law. Jesus said this created a burden for the people and ultimately missed the point or the spirit of the law. These rules created rule followers rather than transformed lives. We chose the title of "guide" rather than manual or handbook because We don't want to be a Pharisee. We don't want to add to the law or create a burden. We want this to be a tool that helps 'guide' us, that removes burdens, that points to the highest ethic to love God and our neighbor (which transforms us and our neighbor), rather than prescribing morality or managing behavior.

### But we need this...

We live in a post-christian culture where our actions are scrutinized. In order to be responsible stewards of what God has given, and faithfully love those He's called us to- and since we take seriously these callings, responsibilities, and privileges- we must take time to agree to some things. This is for our safety, our neighbor's safety, and our hope is that it guides us into a deeper understanding of our shared life, God's mission, and our role in the world we find ourselves in.

### This is a Guidebook...

A guidebook is meant to be a guide, not a precise prescription, not a rule book, not an instruction manual. The highest ethic of love is our aim, and we are guided by the organizing values of WCC: Gracious Hospitality, Mission, Listening, Mutual Submission, Honesty, Proximity, and Restorative Justice.

The purpose of this Guidebook is to define the organizational structures, purposes, policies and procedures and be a helpful guide for Williamsburg Christian Church Student Ministry. This guidebook is designed for students who participate in WCC Student Ministry. As WCC grows and develops, policies and procedures contained in this guidebook are subject to change.

## Student Ministry is a part of Family Ministry

God gave us the gift of family; He gave us the gift of the Church. We want to harness the power of these gifts and use them the way God intended. At WCC we want to help families realize their place in God's Kingdom. Family ministry at WCC is joined in God's pursuit of restoring lives in and through families. We want to see all families become disciples who make disciples. We want to see families joined with God on His mission of restoring and redeeming all of creation.

We think God's Spirit is moving and wants to unlock the tremendous potential of families to shape lives that shape culture and bring about a better world. The good news is that you are a part of that story. You are a part of how God tells his story and works out his mission.

May God's redemptive unrest stir your heart as you pursue a life that loves Him, loves people and follows Jesus.

### 3 Relationships

#### PARENT | PEER | INTERGENERATIONAL

In Student Ministry, we believe relationships are central to making and strengthening disciples. We focus on 3 key relationships: Parent, Peer and Intergenerational. The relationship between students and parents is the main vehicle for passing on the faith to the next generation. The peer relationships are the vehicle to spreading the faith. Peer relationships are important because they are key influencers outside of the home. Intergenerational relationships are what God gave us when he united us in Christ and gave us the Church. There is knowledge and wisdom all around us in this community of faith- we need to open the flood gates of these resources.

Student ministry seeks to create opportunities for these relationships to start, grow and expand. You don't have to wait for a specific event or invitation- go meet someone you don't know, learn their story, glean their wisdom.

### 3 Environments

#### SUNDAY | HOME | LIFE CONNECTIONS

Life happens wherever you are and our hope is that you experience that full life that Jesus talked about in whatever environment you find yourself in. Our ministry focuses those places that life happens to 3 environments.

Sunday's are the day we get together- we worship and learn and share our life together. Middle and High school students participate in a worship gathering called Student Connect and gather on Sunday evenings for Games Worship and Teaching at various places in what we call, Rhythm.

Home is where the heart is, where your family finds itself most of the time. Student ministry hopes to join you in making the most of this time, equipping and encouraging you toward that full and beautiful discipleship life that can take place at home.

Life connections are all of the other places we find ourselves- our neighborhoods and networks, our schools, sports, and friendships. WCC's missional communities are a place where families join on mission together, for kids and students to join their family and faith community in God's story.

### 3 Movements

#### MISSION | DISCIPLESHIP | COMMUNITY

We want all students and their families to be on mission. This means understanding God's mission and joining Him where He is already at work all around us all the time. When students and families participate in Kingdom work together, the Spirit produces fruit beyond the work of our hands. We want students and families to experience the joy and growth that comes from serving and loving others as God has called us to do.

We believe all Christians are to be disciples who are making disciples. God has given the family as a tool for discipleship, placing parents to disciple their children. This means being a disciple by loving God, loving people, and following Jesus. When parents do this with intentionality with their students- families discover what it looks like to live this Kingdom life.

Families have community within themselves and we want to foster that community as well as connect students to a larger community of faith. This community means relationships which are key to Kingdom growth and deeper discipleship.

## WCC STUDENT MINISTRY

The teenage years are rough- everything is changing, life is getting real, and influences come from every direction. We don't want students to do life alone, so at WCC we value relationships with God, family, peers and other generations. In following Jesus together we hope to shape disciples.

We want to offer middle and high school students the help they need to find their way back to God. Our vision is to shape the lives of students into the life God has for them, teaching them what it means to love God, love people, and follow Jesus. Parents are the primary Christian influence in their student's life, so we strive to equip them to raise followers of Christ. We also want to build discipleship relationships between students, adult sponsors, and the rest of WCC. It is important for students to know and live the gospel now, not waiting for some time in the future.

Student Ministry Staff and Volunteers are committed to using their gifts, and pouring their lives out for the sake of our students and God's Kingdom. We love God and share his passion for the heart of every student.

### **STUDENT MINISTRY PROCESS**

WCC Student ministry exists to lead students into a full discipleship experience- for students to become disciples who love God, love people and follow Jesus. (these 3 areas might be called up, in , and out- or worship, community, and mission- etc.) We believe each student must grow in these three areas in order to attain a holistic understanding of what it means to be a disciple. It is our goal to offer 'environments' where students experience and grow in these 3 areas.

#### **3 Areas of Discipleship:**

##### **Love God (UP/Worship)**

The purpose of the LOVE GOD student ministry environment is to develop opportunities for students to love and worship God through singing, bible study, prayer, and other spiritual practices- in order for them to grow in their love for God.

- **Weekly** (Sunday worship gathering called Student Connect other)
- **Quarterly** (trips events activities)
- **Yearly** (overnight-week long trips / retreats, or large events at WCC or nearby)

##### **Love People (IN/Community)**

The purpose of the LOVE People student ministry environment is to develop opportunities for students to grow and develop in community. This means activities, programs and ideas that help students build relationships with each other and the WCC family as a whole. Love people environments seek to build authentic biblical community with honesty, accountability, compassion, and love for one another.

- **Weekly** (Student Connect, Rhythm)
- **Quarterly** (trips, retreats, events, activities)
- **Yearly** (large scale community building events, trips, retreats, etc.)

##### **Follow Jesus (OUT/Mission)**

The purpose of the FOLLOW JESUS student ministry environment is to develop opportunities for students to participate in the work of the Kingdom, serving our community and world in order to become passionate followers of Jesus. This leads us into the places others might not go, into lives others might ignore, in order to bring light love and hope to the lost last and least of society. We want students to find Jesus in the margins of society loving the marginalized as they love Jesus.

**Weekly** (Community) We support Brighton Kipleteng, an AIDS orphan living in Kenya, through CRF. Students are invited to give of their money to help. There are other seasonal ways students are invited to join God on Mission in our community.

**Quarterly** A trip or larger scale service or mission could be planned quarterly.

**Yearly** (out of state or country) A short term mission trip, and/or ongoing collection, etc.

## **Student Ministry Spaces & Programs**

### **Student Connect**

Student Connect is a worship gathering for middle and high school students! This is an engaging time of fellowship, worship and Bible discussion based on the conversation for that Sunday. Students gather in The Student Center for this Sunday worship experience in order to learn, engage and be transformed by the Spirit toward a deeper life of discipleship. We worship and pray together, then divide into age separated discussion groups as we seek to grow in our life of loving God, Loving People and Following Jesus.

### **Rhythm**

We don't 'go' to church; we are the Church! In order to help students live together joined in God's mission, we live for Christ together outside of a church building and on days other than Sunday. This happens all over town in coffee shops, restaurants, schools, parks, rivers, homes, or random spots on D.O.G. street.

Currently we gather Sunday evenings to grow deeper as a community through table fellowship, group games and activities, and times to get real about life and faith.

### **theMISSION**

When students live out the mission of the kingdom of heaven, they catch a glimpse of Jesus. They learn by doing, serving, working, being with the least of these- things that can't be learned through study. It's this participation in service for and relationship with others where faith meets works and heart and mind and body align to worship the God of creation. WCC Student ministry offers students this opportunity through, family Life Connection Groups, summer mission trips, weekly activities, and special events.

### **WCC Student Ministry Covenant**

Since we are committed to doing life together- with God and with one another, we invite students into a covenant relationship. A covenant is a promise, an agreement of what it's going to take to make this relationship work. We crafted a covenant from the WCC values to describe the kind of life God calls us into and the life we agree to work toward. (See Appendix)

### Student Ministry

#### A Safe Environment

In world where students experience cruelty, bullying, being left out, feeling friendless, fear of failure, fear of not being accepted, loneliness, etc. We want our gatherings and our group to be a safe place where they experience a different reality called God's Kingdom- where there is no cruelty or bullying (verbal, emotional, or physical), it's a place where we find friends, where there is no loneliness, and everyone is accepted and included and loved. This means we act differently from our culture, whether we are together at a church building, in a vehicle, or on a trip- or apart, at home, school, work or anywhere we find ourselves.

### Relationships

#### Inclusive Cliques

We believe in cliques- that they exist and that they can be healthy. Within this church and youth group there will be friendships, best friends, acquaintances, people who see each other everyday, and people we only see when we gather each week. There will be natural friendships that develop because of shared interests, close families, proximity, etc., where students will feel a connection to others. Jesus had these relationships: there were the crowds, the disciples, the 72, the 12, and his inner 3. Jesus teaches us to navigate these relationships. He invites others in and leaves no one out. Therefore, as the body of Christ, all are included. **Exclusivity (implied or explicit) will not be tolerated** because we are all members of one body- and that is a deeper connection than shared interest or proximity. We will be intentional about including others, becoming aware of when we exclude others and learn to be better.

#### Romantic Relationships / PDA

Students will be asked to refrain from public displays of affection. When we are a group, we are brothers and sisters in Christ. This means that any boyfriend/girlfriend relationship and the displays that go with them are put aside during meetings and on trips in respect to the higher ethic and relationship of learning to be the body of Christ. This is rooted in mutual submission and gracious hospitality. Some specifics: Side hugs, not front hugs. No sitting on laps. No holding hands or arms around each other or piggy back rides. No kissing. No leaving the group to be alone.

#### Respect Self, Adult Sponsors, Each Other, and All Property.

**Self:** Students must treat themselves with respect, this applies to modest and appropriate dress, no inappropriate language, or behavior. Students must make an effort to keep themselves safe, not participating in dangerous activities or behavior from self harm to anything inappropriate.

**Adult sponsors:** Students must listen to and follow instruction and direction from adult sponsors.

**Each other:** Students must treat each other with love and respect. Bullying, name calling, words of hurt, unwanted physical contact, exclusion (leaving someone out, ignoring, etc.), will not be tolerated. Conflict will be resolved with kingdom ethics and God honoring resolutions that lead to reconciliation.

**All property:** Students will respect all personal property, public property, or private property including buildings (hotels, convention centers, stores etc.) and grounds, vehicles we ride in, or

houses and all its contents. This includes stealing, damaging, littering, using property inappropriately, etc. We are committed to leave things better than we found them.

**Since we respect self, adult sponsors, one another, and property, and uphold the WCC values, here are some rules we follow:**

- Electronics, Toys, sports equipment are not to be used or played with during class/gathering time unless the teacher/leader gives permission. *WCC is not responsible for lost or broken toys, equipment, or electronics.*
- Students must ask permission to leave the classroom or gathering.
- No outdoor actives inside - running, throwing, etc.
- No games that pose a choking risk are allowed (We.e. Chubby Bunny, Hot Dog Eating Contest)
- No bullying, excluding anyone, hurtful words or actions, disrespectful behavior will be allowed.
- No possession or use of alcohol, drugs or tobacco etc. Anyone arriving under the influence of drugs and alcohol will be separated from the group. (parents called to pick them up, or spend the time supervised by an adult apart from the group)
- No fighting, weapons (guns, knives etc.), fireworks, lighters or explosives etc.
- No sexually inappropriate behavior is allowed.
- No offensive or immodest clothing.
- Students must raise their hand and wait to be called on, or participate appropriately in discussion settings, not yelling out or being disrespectful. When someone is speaking, students must listen.
- Keep hands and feet to yourselves (Hands/feet off each other and property/if it's not yours, don't touch it).
- Language matters, hurtful, dismissive or attacking words are not tolerated. Encouragement, affirmation, and love is expected.
- No revenge, grudges, or exclusive cliques.
- The Stop Rule: If students are asked to stop (by a peer or adult) they must stop whatever it is they are being asked to stop.
- The Quiet Rule: If students are asked to be quiet, they must be quiet.
- Leave spaces better than we found them. Clean up after ourselves. Report accidents and damages to appropriate adults.

### **Some Specifics:**

**Forms:** an Activity Participation Agreement form is required for students to attend events and activities. Other permission forms and release agreements may be required for each event.

**Not permitted:** Guns, Knives, weapons, Alcohol, Tobacco, Drugs, lighters, fireworks, etc.

**Indoors:** No running, jumping, rough housing, throwing things, standing/climbing on chairs, tables etc., no outdoor equipment/activities etc.

**Outdoors:** No dangerous play (tackling, wrestling, etc.).

#### **Swimming:**

-Swimming attire is to be modest.

-Swim in groups together, be cautious, only swimming if you are a confident, strong swimmer.

**On trips:** Students must agree to Student Ministry policies, including rules, and listening to and obeying adult leaders. Students must stay with the group. Be where you're supposed to be when you are supposed to be there. No leaving main sessions. Students must get permission

from adult leaders to leave the group- informing them where they will be- they must take an adult with them, if not an adult, then another student. No bringing prohibited items (drugs alcohol tobacco weapons explosives and any other prohibited items according to our destination or event).

-Hotels/lodging: Respect property rules apply. Respect the hotel rules, and other guests by being considerate, keeping noise low and having respectful behavior. No running, jumping, games, wrestling in rooms or common areas. No girls in guys areas, no guys in girls areas. Dress code is always in affect, changing into pjs should still follow modesty rules.

-Transportation:

- Students must wear a seat belt.
- No headphones (this isolates, and the point of being together is to be together).
- No inappropriate music or other entertainment.

**Over Night:** Students must stay in rooms or appropriate sleeping areas. There will be separate areas for guys and girls, where there will be no one from the opposite gender allowed. Students must obey lights out and quiet times.

**Movies Music Entertainment:** Use of television will be limited to PG and G rated programs that are not in conflict with Kingdom values. Movie channels with shows other than PG or G are also not acceptable. Ordering of movies or video games in the rooms is not allowed.

Movies shown in the Student Ministry will be PG or G rated only. All movies will be screened in advance by staff or designated adult leader.

If there is a special movie presented that is outside of these ratings- there must be written parent permission to participate.

Music must be appropriate, not condoning or encouraging things contrary to Kingdom values or ethics. Student ministry leaders will be allowed to make judgments as to what is appropriate.

## **Means of Discipline**

What follows are considered appropriate means of discipline that may be administered by Family Ministry team:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Verbal reminder of our covenant, rules and/or policy
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Taken aside, removed from situation, still in room/event.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Student is temporarily removed from meeting/event. Parents is contacted.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: Student is asked to leave / sent home. A decision will be made as to their return for the next meeting/event.

## **Safety**

We want WCC Student Ministry to be a safe place, so here are some policies we follow.

### **Wellness Policy**

1. Students may not attend Student Ministry activities if he or she has:

- An elevated temperature of more than 100 degrees or has had a fever, diarrhea or vomited in the last 24 hours
- Unexplained rashes or welts
- Red or discharging eyes or ears (e.g., matter in the eyes, green or yellow discharge from the nose, etc.)
- Repeated and severe coughing
- Our measures of comfort cannot help them after considerable effort

2. If a student at WCC is found to have head lice, the parent will be required to remove the child immediately. When the infected student is found to be nit free, he/she may be allowed back into the classroom and group activities.
3. Parents will be notified if a communicable disease is developing in the Church. If a student develops a communicable illness, notify the Family Minister as soon as possible.

### **Allergies and Medical Conditions**

1. All parents are required to fill out an Activity Participation Agreement for each student. Please include all allergies and medical conditions.
2. Teachers and Ministry Leaders are not allowed to administer medication while on site. Only parents and approved caregivers may administer medication. Off site, a written note must be given to the approved Ministry Leader. This note must include the correct dosage, time, and instructions. You must also provide a way to be contacted for any questions the volunteer may have.

### **Food/Snacks**

There will be times when meals and snacks are provided for your child. All allergies must be listed on your child's medical form. Please discuss any food allergies and/or dietary restrictions with the Family Ministers or Student Ministry Leaders.

### **Dangerous Activities**

WCC Student Ministry will take precautions and not put students in unnecessary danger. Students will not put themselves or others in danger or they will be sent home.

### **Outdoor Activities & Sunscreen**

When appropriate, Student Ministry Staff will recommend to students that they wear sunscreen, and will offer sunscreen to them. However, putting sunscreen on is ultimately the responsibility of the teenager. If a student refuses sunscreen, WCC will not be held responsible for the consequences of such an action.

**Appendix:**

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21	Student Ministry Covenant
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As a non-denominational church family "joined in God's pursuit of restoring lives," we deeply believe that in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God began His work of restoring all things and making all things new. In other words, all things and all people can be redeemed and restored because of what God has done in Jesus Christ. Not only can this reality profoundly shape our lives as community learning to live joyfully with God in the here and now, but it can make His Kingdom tangible to all.

To be this kind of community--a missional church--we arrange our lives around the following guiding values:

### **GRACIOUS HOSPITALITY**

Hospitality is at the heart of Christian imagination because we believe in a triune God (God the Father, God the Son, God the Spirit). In Himself, God demonstrates faithful and hospitable community. In the gospel we see God making room for us to share in His life through Jesus Christ. Therefore it becomes the heart of Christian worship and mission. By practicing hospitality we break down cultural and social barriers and find surprising friendships as we learn to set aside differences or embrace them, and "welcome one another just as Christ has welcomed" us. In gracious hospitality we seek to be present with others as gracious hosts. Our missional communities, shared meals, and Sunday worship liturgy is shaped by the practice of gracious hospitality as it orients our lives in God's love, and postures our hearts for mission.

### **MISSION**

Whereas in gracious hospitality we invite others to join us in our life with God, in mission we go where others are and join what the Spirit is already doing among them. Mission is a way of seeing people, being genuinely interested in them, and wanting their lives to be made whole. But unlike Jesus, most of us have homes, jobs, and families. Therefore we must be intentional and habitual as we bear witness to God's kingdom and step out as every day people living in every day places to meet those who want God's peace. In mission we are sent to be present and this requires missional rhythms that teach us to be attentive to God's work among the places we live, work and play.

### **PROXIMITY**

Our American culture tempts us to keep to ourselves in isolation or keep others at a comfortable distance. Consequently, we live among people in close proximity but lack neighborliness. We have come to realize that for our lives to flourish we must live in close community as good neighbors to all who live among us. God has demonstrated this to us by taking on flesh in Jesus Christ, living among us, and gathering us into one community of faith. As the first disciples learned by following Jesus, proximity creates greater space in our lives for gracious hospitality, meaningful community and mission.

### **LISTENING**

If we are to embrace any of our values we must learn to listen, both to God, one another, and our neighborhoods and city. If we are to join Him in what He is doing and bear witness to His presence with our lips and lives, we must turn one ear up to God and one ear out to others. To embrace a posture of listening is to embrace a life of prayer and wise discernment.

### **HONESTY**

In meaningful community and an awareness of our common need for God, we can eventually take the risk of exposing our hearts. We believe that "admitting our sin" is not the first step in a one-time transaction for salvation, but a life-long practice of opening oneself to God for healing.

Because being honest is more important than being right, we seek to practice this kind of vulnerability in our life together as God's children.

Sharing life together inevitably brings conflict, but conflict can be healthy if we deal with it openly, as Jesus teaches. We are committed to a discreet yet direct approach, with the aim to restore peace and wholeness as we learn to practice forgiveness, repentance and reconciliation.

### **MUTUAL SUBMISSION**

Disagreement is an opportunity to set apart Jesus as Lord. Because His Spirit lives within each believer, we "submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." As a community of faith we turn one ear up to God as we turn one ear out to each other; as pastors, we practice shared leadership; as a church, we practice communal discernment. We are not a corporation or a well-managed club. We are the wounded-but-healed, scarred-but-beautiful body of Christ. And each person in our faith community is important.

### **RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**

In Jesus as King, God is restoring all of creation making right all that has been made wrong due to sin, rebellion, violence and fear. As we live and bear witness to God's kingdom, we find ourselves in the midst of ugly powers, systems of greed, and political posturing. God's kingdom doesn't always align with these powers and therefore to promote peace and restoration we must sometimes humbly confront these broken systems and set ourselves to make right what has been made wrong.

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## **WCC PRACTICES**

As individuals and as members of a community, we both shape and are shaped by the activities that make up our lives. Therefore we seek to be attentive to these activities, especially when we come together as a community of faith. Practices are the intentional, purposeful and social (communal) activities that create our shared life together as a Church. These practices form us as people of particular habits, language, behaviors--a way of life. Below are the communal practices that shape us and help us both act and respond to the world in light of our identity as God's people through Jesus our Lord, who are loved by the Father and empowered by the Spirit.

### **WORSHIP**

Each Sunday we are called together, as one people, to hear God speak; after we are sent back into the world for His mission. Our worship is dialogical and both determines and reinforces our identity and mission through our liturgies of praise, ritual and symbol; it is, in a sense, a rehearsal of what should happen in and through our lives Monday through Saturday. In our worship gatherings we seek to nurture a faith that leads us away from merely working for God to working with God; from merely gathering for God to gathering with God. Worship forms our imaginations with a kingdom-shaped perspective. Our Sunday liturgy, what we do when we come together, seeks to model our way of life--the way of blessing, the culmination of the common life rooted in our true identity, and the preparation for mission. As we participate in these larger weekly gatherings, rather than sit back as spectators, our lives are transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ and we are ready to once again participate in what He is doing in the world through His Church. Worship becomes more of a lifestyle rather than merely an event.

### **EUCARIST**

Eucharist means "thanksgiving," and is also called "Communion" or "the Lord's Supper." Eucharist is the weekly rehearsal of the gospel narrative that prepares us for mission: the practice of receiving the welcome of Christ. As we partake of the bread and wine with an attitude

of faith and self-examination, we remember and proclaim the death of Christ, receive spiritual nourishment for our souls, and signifies our unity with Christ's universal Church. It is in this practice we acknowledge both our need and common belonging, which becomes our training for life in the world; the same kind of welcome extended to us by Christ becomes the same kind of welcome we extend to others. If we understand the Eucharist this way, our personal tables become an extension of the Lord's table; our lunch tables become extensions of the Lord's table; our cubicles become extensions of the Lord's table--because we remember that we are to be as welcoming to the person who cleans our trash as to the person who writes our checks.

### **SHARED MEALS**

As God extends hospitality to us through the bread and wine of Eucharist, so we are learning how to extend it to each other in the on-going sharing of meals. During the week our missional communities often enjoy a meal together where we chat about our lives and share how God is at work in and through us. On any day of the week, we hope to share a meal with our neighbors. As a larger gathered community we hope to enjoy a meal together every three months.

### **MISSIONAL RHYTHMS**

We are learning to cultivate ways of living that get us out of our homes and comfortable spaces and into the lives of our neighbors. For some, this is as simple as frequenting the same restaurants while asking for the same servers, staying with the same hair stylist, offering tasty treats to those who live next door, or hanging out in the break rooms a few extra minutes. For others, this means committing to a "third place."

A "third place" is an informal public area where people socialize, such as a coffee shop, cafe, pub, park, hobby group, homeschooling co-op, etc. We enter these places of mission with genuine interest in what is happening there. Relationships form naturally, and if we find what we call "a person of peace" who is open to the gospel, then we can invite them into friendship with other Christ-followers, in whose company they might see King Jesus.

### **SHARED LEADERSHIP**

There is no "Head Pastor" in our community, just several co-pastors, elders and many ministers. We structure ourselves this way partially in reaction to hierarchical abuses of power, partially to emphasize that Jesus alone is Head of the Church, but mostly to stay faithful with what we see in Scripture and to incorporate a wider range of gifts among our leaders, mutually submitting to the Spirit's guidance over us all. Everyone, not just the identified leaders, is encouraged to initiate ideas as we discern God's work together.

Some of our pastors serve as their full-time occupation, some bi-vocational, and some in an "unpaid" way as they work in a different occupation.

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### **CORE BELIEFS**

What we believe is ultimately grounded in the narrative of Scripture. It is a true story about a Creator and His creation, a rebellion, a redemptive love, a Divine Incarnation of the Creator, a Kingdom, a Gospel, a rescue, a new humanity, a mission, a church, a Divine judgement, and a new heavens and new earth. But in order to give you a more specific idea as to what we hold as core we offer you this statement of core beliefs to summarize what we teach as a church. Our theology is not innovative - anyone familiar with historic Christian doctrine will find that these statements fall in the center of orthodox biblical theology. We want our core beliefs to be centered in Christ and His message as found in and supported by the clearest passages of Scripture. We try not to be dogmatic about matters on which "Bible-based believers" have long held divergent views. More obscure doctrine or teachings with less support are left for us to

continually engage in biblically informed, gracious and honest, on going conversation. Therefore we adhere to the historic principle of the following:

In essential beliefs - we have unity. In non-essential beliefs - we have liberty. In all things - we show love. Please read through the WCC Core beliefs and feel free explore the Scripture references.

### **About The Bible**

We believe that God divinely inspired human authors to write the sixty-six books of the Bible. He communicated through these writers the values, principles, and ideals, which please Him and are in our best interests. Because God is infallible, we believe the Bible is entirely trustworthy and is our guide for truth, faith, reality and life. In it God reveals His character to us, increases our faith, clarifies our view of the world and humanity, and directs our lives. We hold a very high view of the Scriptures and its authority in our lives. We believe that all of Scripture, both the Old Testament and New Testament, tell us of God's story of redemption, reconciliation and restoration of all creation in and through Jesus the Christ, as well as our role in His redemptive work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Hebrews 4:12-13; Matthew 5:18; John 16:12-13; Psalm 19:7-11, 119:105)

### **About The Trinity**

We believe that there is one God who is the loving Creator of all that exists, both seen and unseen. God is eternal and completely good, knowing all things, having all power and majesty. We believe God exists eternally in perfect co-equal community as three separate persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This doctrine is called the Trinity and though we cannot fully comprehend His nature, we believe that we can know each person of the Trinity in a personal way. Throughout human history He has expressed His desire to be our God and to have a personal, eternal relationship with us. We believe that God loves us and wants what is best for us. (Genesis 1:26-27; Deuteronomy 6:4; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:8, 2 Corinthians 13:14)

### **About Jesus**

We believe that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary and mysteriously and wonderfully is God in the flesh. He is the perfect reflection of God's heart, character, beauty and love for people. Therefore He is revealed in Scripture as fully God and fully man, Son of Man and Son of God, who inaugurated and proclaimed the full availability and tangible presence of the Kingdom of God through what He called "the Gospel" (good news). He lived a sinless life, performed many miracles and gave direction to His followers. Jesus voluntarily offered Himself as the only perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on the cross, thereby paying the penalty for the offenses of humanity against God. His death satisfied the demands of God's holy justice, while demonstrating God's unconditional love, unfailing mercy and abounding grace. He died and was buried. However as prophesied throughout the Old Testament, He rose from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit three days later, and appeared to over 500 people during a period of 40 days before ascending to Heaven. He sits at the right hand of the Father as Lord and King where He serves as Mediator between God and humanity. We believe that the Lord Jesus will come again to earth in power and glory to judge the world and bring an end to injustice as He brings into completion the redemption and restoration of all of creation to God's original intent.

(Matthew 1:18-25; John 1:14, 8:40, 58, 11:33; Mark 1:14-15; Luke 17:21; Acts 1:9-11; Romans 3:21-26; 5:6-17; Philippians 2:6-11; Colossians 1:13-17; Hebrews 1:8, 4:14-16; Revelation 21-22)

### **About The Holy Spirit**

We believe that the Holy Spirit, sent from God to live in all who put faith in Jesus, teaches, comforts, convicts and empowers us, giving each person diverse gifts for serving in the church

and serving others in the world as He leads us to join God in His mission. We believe that it is through the Holy Spirit that we have the power to change and develop a holy and righteous Gospel-centered Kingdom-shaped life that loves God, loves people, and follows Jesus. We believe He enables us to make the Kingdom of God more tangible to the world. (Genesis 1:1-3; John 16:8-11; Acts 1:8-9; 2 Corinthians 3:6, 17; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; Romans 8:5-17, 14:16-17; Galatians 5:16-17, 22-24; Ephesians 3:14-21, 5:18; Hebrews 13:20-21)

### **About Humanity & Sin**

We believe that all people are created with dignity and great value in the image of God and that people were created to live in a thriving relationship with God. However, through our sin (failing to live God's commanded way of life and moral standards as revealed in the Old Testament), we break our intended relationship with God and experience the tragic consequences of that broken relationship, both spiritually and socially. We all fail to please God and are open to Satan's deception. Our failure to please God, unless a relationship is re-established with Him, results in condemnation under God's judgment and would cause us to spend eternity in hell. There is nothing we can do on our own to re-establish our relationship with God. (Genesis 1:26-3:24; Romans 3:23, 5:12-17; Ephesians 2:1-5; Galatians 3:10-11)

### **About The Gospel**

The word "gospel" is the greek word "evangelion," from which we get the word evangelism. It literally means a pronouncement of "good news." We believe that the Gospel is most simply summed up in the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. We believe this is why each of the first four books of the New Testament are called "Gospel." In life-giving detail, we believe the Gospel is the pronouncement that Jesus lived, died and resurrected according to the Hebrew Scriptures (what many call the "Old Testament") and as revealed in the New Testament Scriptures. And in His life, death, resurrection and ascension, Jesus Christ fulfills Israel's story according to the Hebrew Scriptures, and becomes the only hope for the world as the King and Lord of all. This means that God's Kingdom has come and will fully come at the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ, according to the Scriptures. This Kingdom was inaugurated by Jesus in His ministry, and the legitimacy and power of this Kingdom was affirmed by his eventual (thorned) crowning (redemptive) death and (new creation-birthing and restorative) resurrection. Therefore God's victorious rule, righteousness and love is available to any and all who repent and believe in Jesus Christ as Redeeming, Reconciling and Restoring King. In Him alone forgiveness of sins is found and in Him alone eternal life lived in the presence of Holy God is found. For Christ-followers, this life lived in the presence of God can begin now. Therefore all power and victory found in Jesus Christ is available to all who trust Him for His glory and our good. We believe this is good news. This is Gospel. (Isaiah 9:6-7; 1 Corinthians 15:1-6, 20-28; Mark 1:14-15; Luke 4:16-19, 11:20; Colossians 1:3-8)

### **About Salvation by Grace Through Faith**

Because God is faithful and His love for us is great, He sent His Son, Jesus, to rescue us from those consequences and make us citizens of His Kingdom, which is the "good news" (the gospel). Our broken relationship with God is restored through Jesus' death on the cross, a perfect act of redemption for each of us. In Jesus Christ, God has begun His work of redeeming and restoring all of humanity and creation, making all things new. Jesus declared that no one comes to the Father except through Him. We receive the free gift of forgiveness by grace through faith, meaning that we cannot earn salvation or through our own works make ourselves righteous before holy God. In Jesus Christ, God has done for us what we can never do for ourselves. We believe that the bible teaches that saving faith compels us to repent (changing our mind and

heart) of our sin and be buried with Christ in baptism by immersion. (Ephesians 2:8-10; John 1:12-13; 14:1-6; Ephesians 1:7; Romans 3:22-26, 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 15:1-7, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Acts 3:18-26; Acts 2:36-38; Romans 6:3-6; Galatians 3:26-27; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Peter 3:21-22)

### **About the Eucharist**

Eucharist means 'thanksgiving.' As we gather around the Lord's Table each week we bring all of who we are to God in gratitude and we receive God's gracious gift of Christ's presence. We are formed by the presence and reign of Christ and we extend this Kingdom hospitality out into the world. We believe in the weekly sharing of eucharist as a demonstration of our faith in Christ. As this ordinance brings us to the sacrifice of Christ's body and the shedding of His blood on our behalf, it is a sign of continued participation in the atoning benefits of Christ's death. As we partake of the Lord's Supper with an attitude of faith and self-examination, we remember and proclaim the death of Christ, receive spiritual nourishment for our souls, and signifies our unity with Christ's universal Church. It is in this practice we acknowledge both our need and common belonging, which becomes our training for life in the world; the same kind of welcome extended to us by Christ becomes the same kind of welcome we extend to others. If we understand the Eucharist this way, our personal tables become an extension of the Lord's table; our lunch tables become extensions of the Lord's table; our cubicles become extensions of the Lord's table--because we remember that we are to be as welcoming to the person who cleans our trash as to the person who writes our checks. Eucharist is our ongoing rehearsal in the gospel story. (Matthew 26:26-30; Luke 22:13-30; 1 Corinthians 11:17-26; Acts 20:7)

### **About The Mission of God**

We believe that the Mission of God is the mission to glorify Himself. God does so in this world by redeeming sinful humans and, in the future, fully restoring sin-corrupted creation. God the Father is the Author of this mission. God the Son is the incarnation of this mission in the person of Jesus Christ and accomplishes redemption. God the Spirit applies redemption to the hearts of men and women. We believe that God's mission has the Church, which becomes the instrument of His mission of Gospel redemption and restoration, finding power and guidance to engage this mission through the Spirit. Mission comes from God, through the church and to the world where God's redemptive work results in people of every tribe, language and nation responding in lifelong worship and enjoyment of God. Ultimately the mission of God will encompass all of creation when God creates a new heaven and new earth. Therefore, we believe that the mission of God is not merely an activity or program to be arranged into our lives, but rather becomes what our lives are to be arranged by. We seek to be joined with God in His mission as everyday people who live in everyday places who demonstrate His Gospel in everyday ways, making His Kingdom tangible and His mission known. And since Scripture reveals the nature of God and His redemptive plan and purpose, we believe that a proper understanding of God's mission is found only in what Scripture reveals. (Genesis 12:1-4; John 1:1-5, 10-14; 17:18; 20:21; Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Corinthians 5:11-21)

### **About the Church**

We believe that God's mission has a church and the mission of God remains the church's organizing principle. As the sent people of God, loved, redeemed and cared for by Him in grace, we have been entrusted with His mission and called to participate in the world as He does. We believe that the church does not exist for itself, but exists as a Gospel-centered community of worshippers sent as everyday people in everyday places to offer tangible expressions of love, grace and compassion to a fallen world, as we proclaim the Gospel and make His Kingdom known in everyday ways. The church is comprised of any person, anywhere in the world who

puts faith in Jesus. The church is one global community of people, but has smaller, local expressions, such as our church community. Each local church expression has a unique personality and we see beauty in that diversity. In order for God's people to live as ones "sent" by God, or live missionally, His missional church must be directed by God's revealed Word in Scripture, both individually and communally. (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:3-8, 2:1-47, 4:32-35; Ephesians 1:22-23, 4:11-16; 5:25-30; 1 Corinthians 12:27; Galatians 5:13-14)

### **About the Afterlife and End Times**

We do believe that life continues after physical death and that there is a literal heaven and a literal hell. We do believe that Jesus will one day physically return and bring complete justice, restoration and judgment to all of creation. There are so many metaphors and so much ancient apocalyptic language used in the Scriptures about these mysterious topics, and we approach them with great humility and wonder. (Matthew 24-25; 1 Corinthians 15:1-25; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 20-22)



## WCC STUDENT MINISTRY COVENANT

**-Gracious Hospitality-** Hospitality is at the heart of Christian imagination because in gospel we see God making room for us to share in His life through Jesus Christ. Therefore it becomes the heart of Christian worship and mission. By practicing hospitality we break down cultural and social barriers and find surprising friendships as we learn to set aside differences or embrace them, and “welcome one another just as Christ has welcomed” us. In gracious hospitality we seek to be present with others as gracious hosts. Our missional communities, shared meals, and Sunday worship liturgy is shaped by the practice of gracious hospitality as it orients our lives in God’s love, and postures our hearts for mission.

- *We will be gracious hosts- we will help set up, clean up, and give warm genuine welcome to members and strangers. We will serve one another- considering others’ needs- we’ll give up a seat, get someone a drink or food or a Bible. We will go beyond our comfort to welcome others. (We will be gracious hosts.)*

**-Mission-** Whereas in gracious hospitality we invite others to join us in our life with God, in mission we go where others are and join what the Spirit is already doing among them. Mission is a way of seeing people, being genuinely interested in them, and wanting their lives to be made whole. But unlike Jesus, most of us have homes, jobs, and families. Therefore we must be intentional and habitual as we bear witness to God’s kingdom and step out as every day people living in every day places to meet those who want God’s peace. In mission we are sent to be present and this requires missional rhythms that teach us to be attentive to God’s work among the places we live, work and play.

- *We will not be spectators, rather we will participate in God’s Kingdom. This means living a life awake to God and his work in the world, joining Him in those places, and living a life on mission in our daily life at school / home / work / play. (We will join God in His mission.)*

**-Proximity-** Our American culture tempts us to keep to ourselves in isolation or keep others at a comfortable distance. Consequently, we live among people in close proximity but lack neighborliness. We have come to realize that for our lives to flourish we must live in close community as good neighbors to all who live among us. God has demonstrated this to us by taking on flesh in Jesus Christ, living among us, and gathering us into one community of faith. As the first disciples learned by following Jesus, proximity creates greater space in our lives for gracious hospitality, meaningful community and mission.

- *We will not pass by. When God surrounds us with opportunities to share His love with those all around us, we will be a people who notice the ones in need, and serve them with all that we are and all that we have. (We will love those around us.)*

**-Listening-** If we are to embrace any of our values we must learn to listen, both to God, one another, and our neighborhoods and city. If we are to join Him in what He is doing and bear witness to His presence with our lips and lives, we must turn one ear up to God and one ear out to others. To embrace a posture of listening is to embrace a life of prayer and wise discernment.

- *We listen with respect and compassion, seeking to understand, grow, and discover more about what God is doing. We listen to God, to each other, and our world to see where we might join God in loving each other, our neighbor, city, and world. In teaching environments we participate by listening to the one teaching and joining the conversation when appropriate. (We will listen.)*

**-Honesty-** In meaningful community and an awareness of our common need for God, we can eventually take the risk of exposing our hearts. We believe that “admitting our sin” is not the first step in a one-time transaction for salvation, but a life-long practice of opening oneself to God for healing. Because being honest is more important than being right, we seek to practice this kind of vulnerability in our life together as God's children. Sharing life together inevitably brings conflict, but conflict can be healthy if we deal with it openly, as Jesus teaches. We are committed to a discreet yet direct approach, with the aim to restore peace and wholeness as we learn to practice forgiveness, repentance and reconciliation.

- *We will be a community of confession and forgiveness. In order to heal and get better we will give permission to each other to speak into one another's lives. We will hold confidentiality in the highest regard, not sharing the personal things discussed and confessed. We will not allow 'drama' or bullying to be a part of our community- speaking only encouraging words, and handling conflict with humility, grace, and forgiveness seeking reconciliation. (We will confess and forgive.)*

**-Mutual Submission-** Disagreement is an opportunity to set apart Jesus as Lord. Because His Spirit lives within each believer, we “submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.” As a community of faith we turn one ear up to God as we turn one ear out to each other; as pastors, we practice shared leadership; as a church, we practice communal discernment. We are not a corporation or a well-managed club. We are the wounded-but-healed, scarred-but-beautiful body of Christ. Each person in our faith community is important.

- *We understand that we are in this together seeking God's glory, not our own. We will submit to God and one another out of reverence for Christ- respecting our time together, our space, our relationships, and our vision as a people joined with God on mission. This means focusing on the purpose of the meeting, leaving off topic things for later. It means letting go of our way, for the good of others. (We will seek God's glory; not our own.)*

**-Restorative Justice-** In Jesus as King, God is restoring all of creation making right all that has been made wrong due to sin, rebellion, violence and fear. As we live and bear witness to God's kingdom, we find ourselves in the midst of ugly powers, systems of greed, and political posturing. God's kingdom doesn't always align with these powers and therefore to promote peace and restoration we must sometimes humbly confront these broken systems and set ourselves to make right what has been wrong.

- *We try to live out God's justice in the world- not participating in systems of injustice (violence, revenge, bullying, lust, prejudice, racism, gossip), using our words and actions to heal not hurt, participating in God's Kingdom which makes right what is wrong in the world- meaning we join him where we see injustice to bring peace and healing, making right what has been made wrong by sin and death. (We will embrace restorative justice and oppose injustice.)*

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As a part of WCC and Student Ministry I, \_\_\_\_\_, commit to enter into this covenant relationship.

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*Student Signature*

*Date*

As a parent/guardian I/we, \_\_\_\_\_, commit to support our student(s) as they enter into this covenant relationship.

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*Parent/Gaurdian Signature*

**Participation Agreement**

*Date***Activity**

# Williamsburg Christian Church Family Ministry

## Medical Information and Release Form

### Student Information

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Other Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Other Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

In case of emergency call:

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### Medical Insurance Information

Allergies, medicines, or medical information that needs to be known about the student:

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Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Insured Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Insured Parent Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Policy Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Company Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Insurance Company Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

We understand that in the event of a medical emergency every effort will be made to contact the parent or guardian listed above. However, in the event that the named parent or guardian cannot be reached, We hereby authorize the church minister(s), youth sponsors, present on such trip, activity or event to select such physicians, nurses, medical authorities, and/or hospitals to administer proper treatment for my child and/or to order and administer to him/her such injection, medication, anesthesia, surgery, hospitalization, or such other medical practices as they deem necessary.

Parent or Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# **Activity Participation Agreement**

## **Williamsburg Christian Church Family Ministry**

### **Consent, Media and Liability Release**

We, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby acknowledge that it is my desire (for my child) to participate in church-sponsored activities at *Williamsburg Christian Church* including activities on and/or away from the church premises as well as transportation to and from such activities.

My child is voluntarily participating in these activities, including transportation to and from such activities, with knowledge of dangers involved and hereby agree to accept any and all risks of injury as a result of such participation and transportation.

As lawful consideration for permitting my child to participate in such activities, including the transportation to and from such activities, We hereby release and discharge *Williamsburg Christian Church*, its leadership employees, volunteers, and members from all actions, claims or demands resulting from the negligence or other acts, howsoever caused, by such church, leadership employees, volunteers, and members, before or during my child's participation in such church sponsored activities on and or away from the church premises, including transportation to and from such activities.

We give permission to use media, images, and videos of my Child(ren) for webpages, publications and other formats for Williamsburg Christian Church use.

### **Student Transportation**

We, \_\_\_\_\_, approve of and authorize the transporting of, my child \_\_\_\_\_, to and from church sponsored events in a private vehicle. We have carefully read this agreement and fully understand its contents. We am aware that this is a release of liability and an assumption of risks, and sign it of my own free will.

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Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

### **Conduct & Consequences**

All students will be expected to be obedient to all Ministry Leaders and Volunteers at all times within reason. Also, students will be expected to adhere to the law at all times. No student will be allowed to put themselves or others in danger at anytime. Offenses will have consequences corresponding in severity, and shall be determined by the staff on location. No physical discipline will be used unless in effort to restrain for the sake of safety. Consequences may include, but are not limited to, verbal reprimand, loss of privileges while on trip, or being sent home. Should a student be sent home it will be at their own expense. Parents, and the student, will be expected to immediately reimburse the church for expense incurred in sending a student home. If a student is sent home, they will not be refunded their fees for an event.

We, \_\_\_\_\_ the parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ understand and accept the above policy of conduct and consequences. By signing We agree that my student will be subject to these policies, and empower the Staff of Williamsburg Christian Church to act as it is appropriate in regards to my child.

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Parent/Guardian Signature

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Student Signature