

GAC YOUTH

PARENT/GUARDIAN GUIDE 2025-26

Hi, my name is Pastor Rigel and I have been serving as the student ministries pastor at Greensburg Alliance Church for over 17 years. In this time, we have endeavored to build a healthy youth ministry to serve any of the teens who walk through our doors at GAC Youth! We believe that at GAC Youth we offer both a very active and stable youth ministry with a variety of fantastic opportunities designed to intentionally help teens grow in their relationship with Jesus.

We hope that this guide will be helpful to you as a parent or guardian as you take a look at what our ministry has to offer. You can find this handout at www.greensburgalliancechurch.com

Youth Ministry Overview

Our mission statement is “to introduce students to Jesus and make disciples of those who come to know Him”! We do this by putting together a variety of engaging youth ministry elements for your teens including Youth Group meetings, Sunday School lessons, trips, events, retreats, and service projects. Our youth ministry is active throughout the year with a relatively predictable rhythm and schedule.

Thursday Night Youth Group

Our Youth Group meets on Thursday nights from 6:30-8:15pm throughout the year. Our meetings are called “The Well” and both Middle school and High school students are invited to participate. To be eligible for Youth Group a student will have to be both in 6th grade and at least 11 years of age by September 6, 2025.

At our Youth Group meetings there are usually snacks, a group game, and lesson based on the Bible. 25-35 students show up on a typical Youth Group meeting. The lesson is a big part of the night and we try to work through a series so that there is some consistency in the teaching from week to week. The weekly message is designed to help teens mature and navigate the trials and temptations of the teenage years with success and understand how to study Scripture.

People have described Thursday nights as being casual enough to hang out and develop lasting friendships, yet structured enough to learn about God and the Bible in a way that changes lives. And on top of all of the fun you will have at Youth Group, every student who walks through our doors gets a free Youth Group T-Shirt on his or her first day!

Youth Sunday School

During the 9:30am service we offer Sunday School in the youth room off of the fellowship hall for both Middle school and High school students. A light breakfast is served each week. Typically, our Sunday School lessons are a mixture of video and discussion and can cover a wide variety of topics.

During the 11:00am service we would love to see the majority of our youth ministry students attend the service in the sanctuary or serve in one of the various ministries that our church has to offer (Ex. children’s ministry, coffee crew, welcome team).

Events and Trips

Throughout the year we have numerous events and trips that range from fun and relationship building, to events that challenge students to step out of their comfort zones and grow in their faith. In general, there is at least one event a month and a major trip or two in the summer. Information on these events will be in our handouts and announced in Youth Group and youth Sunday School. The two most important documents announcing our events are our seasonal schedules (which provides an overview of 4 months of ministry) and our monthly handouts (which provides details about the current month's activities). Both of these are handed to our students and posted in the youth section of the church website.

Keeping Up with Important Information

In this world of information overload, it's easy for things to get lost in the shuffle. At GAC Youth one of our goals is to provide you with the information that you need when you need it about our upcoming activities. Below are the 3 most important documents concerning the youth ministry.

- 1- Monthly Handouts (A detailed monthly overview with details about youth events)
- 2- Seasonal Handouts (A 4 month overview of our 3 seasonal semesters of ministry)
- 3- Trip Info Packets (A packet that outlines registration and information for a larger trip)

After these documents are handed out to the teens they are posted in the youth section of the church website the next day. They are also posted in the church app, and can be physically picked up at any time in the youth room.

A few other ways to stay connected are downloading the Greensburg Alliance Church App and turn on the "Youth" push notifications in settings. Each week we send out a reminder about Youth Group and reminders about events.

You can also sign-up for the youth texting service at Youth Group or by emailing your information (Name and Number) to gacyouth@gmail.com. Upon receiving the email, Pastor Rigel will enter the data into our texting service and you will be sent a text invitation. Once you reply "yes" you will be signed up for the texting service and you will begin receiving notifications.

Registration and Fundraising

Registering for our trips and events is easy. Most events that require preregistration will have an event poster and a clipboard on the youth bulletin board in the youth room. These lists help us plan for these events (tickets, transportation, adequate supervision, etc.). Some of these events don't require a deposit. For the events that do, there is a black box attached to the bulletin board where students need to place their deposits. For trip payments we take cash and check. If an event requires a deposit, please refrain from putting your name on the list until a deposit is turned in.

We also offer a variety of fundraising opportunities for our trips and events. The largest one that we offer is the opportunity to make and sell caramel apples around Christmas. We also have pepperoni roll sales and a bowling fundraiser that we regularly offer. Our fundraising efforts vary from year to year based on the trips that we offer. Any credit that a student earns can be used to cover the cost of their events and trips.

Our Adult Leaders

In a world where people are increasingly aware of the need to protect our children, we want to assure you that we share that concern and take that concern seriously. At GAC Youth we do our

best to recruit fantastic leaders who have a heart for teens and want to see them become mature followers of Christ. All of our leaders have passed a PA state background checks and have been approved by our church's elder board to work with minors. If you get a chance take some time to talk with one of our leaders. We are confident that you will see the passion that they have for working with our teens.

Miscellaneous Questions

What is the best way to contact Pastor Rigel?

Feel free to call or text Pastor Rigel at (724) 575-2862 if you have any questions. If you prefer email, you can reach him at gacyouth@gmail.com.

If my teen doesn't know anyone at Youth Group should they still go?

Yep! There are a lot of people who go to Youth Group on Thursday nights that didn't know a single person their first day. Just remember that friendships are almost never instant and they take time to develop. Make sure that if they come on your own they give it a few weeks. Another way to help with this is to show up with a friend. We love getting to meet new people.

Can my teen bring friends to Youth Group and events?

Please do. We absolutely love visitors. We love it when people bring friends so long as they are Youth Group eligible (6th grade and at least 11 by September 6th 2025). We believe that it helps the student be comfortable and also gives the friend an opportunity to hear about Jesus.

Do I need to come inside to drop off or register my student?

The short answer is no. Feel free to come in if you wish to meet Pastor Rigel or the leaders but once a teen reaches youth group age feel free to just drop them off. There is a medical release form that your student will come home with and that you can find in the youth section of the church website that we encourage you to fill out. But this does not need to be done before they show up or can return.

What if my teen goes to Youth Group or Sunday School and doesn't like it?

If your teen is having a rough time, we would love to help them work through it. Please reach out to me or one of my leaders and we'll talk. We understand that a new environment can be intimidating and sometimes getting used to something different can take time. If we are aware of the specific issue at hand then it is much easier for us as leaders to help your teen work through the issues that they might be having.

There are students currently involved in the youth ministry who weren't comfortable their first year but stuck with it and are now in the center of what God is doing at GAC youth. We believe that there is a lot of great stuff happening here and we would hate for you to miss out! God is doing a great thing with this Youth Group and it is worth your time and energy even if it doesn't seem like it right away. Stick with it. We'll try to get you through.

We look forward to getting to know your family better!!!

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Rigel Holmes

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