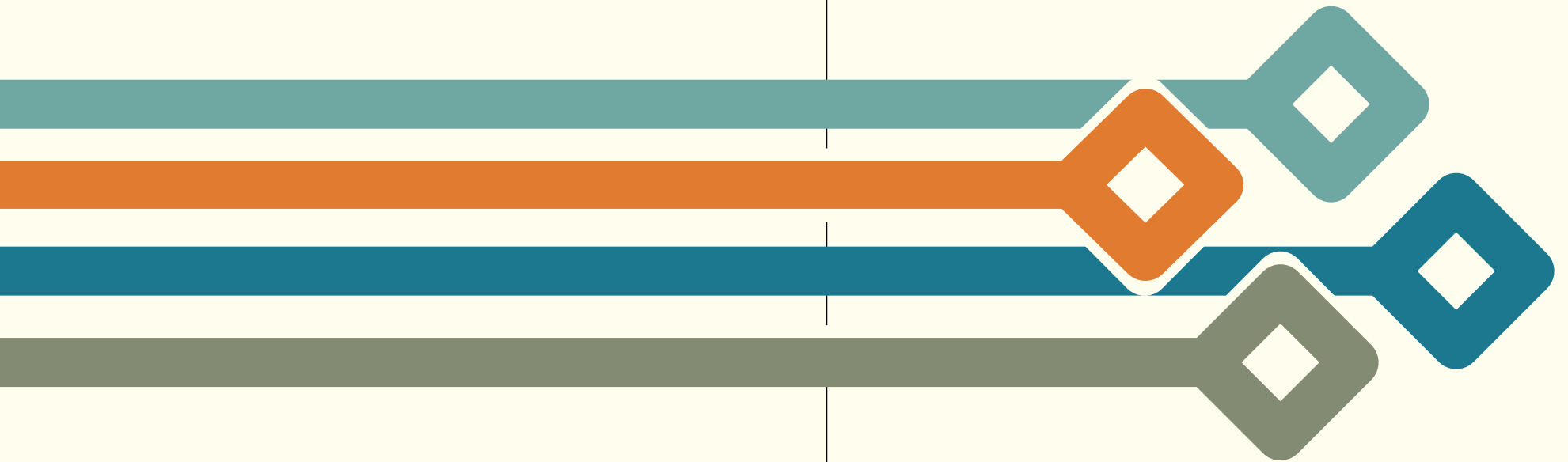




THE PACK
ST. THOMAS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



ST. THOMAS
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
REACH • NOURISH • SERVE

Youth
Discipleship



STUMC

Youth Ministry Milestones & Events

Milestones

6th: Joining Youth Group

7th: Celebrating 13th Birthday

8th: Middle School Graduation

9th: Dating

10th: Getting a license

11th: Exploring Vocation

12th: High School Graduation

Events

1. Confirmation

2. Birthdays

3. Mission Trip

4. Chrysalis (Retreat)

Other ideas to improve the Youth Ministry

- Develop a safe place for the students to call their home (Home away from Home)
- Student Leadership: formalized structure, president, treasurer, fundraising
- Empower the students to develop ideas and implement them
- Encourage the students to try out different kinds of ministry/committees (help them discover spiritual gifts)
- Encourage the students to invite their friends by using their own connection
- Keep the PACK Sunday School and gathering at a time when there is no other competing activities, such as the Joyful Noise Singers practice
- Provide training on life skills (taxes, budgeting, cooking, car repairs, job interview, etc)

Milestones: 6th: Joining Youth Group

What we want the students to achieve: Transition from Children's Ministry to Youth Ministry

- Core Competency
- God's Love: Help students feel a Sense of belonging to a community
- Help students feel loved by church

During the PACK years,

- Identity in Christ: Christian Beliefs (Who is God, Names of God, What God does)
- Bible Knowledge: How to navigate the bible
- Action: What actually happens
- PACK promotions at the upper elementary students gatherings (Sunday school, Kids Care 2 ministry)
- Dedicated PACK meeting for bridging
- Welcome Lunch/Dinner with bridging families
- Family Game Night
- Big Brother/Sister system: Mentorship of younger with older youth (need special boundaries and guidelines), Personal invitation, Fostering (like Boy- and Girl Scout)
- Gift the 6th graders a PACK T-shirt
- Parent Component
- Mentor for parent of bridging youth
- Parent group: fellowship + information + parenting wisdom + prayer
- Habits: Skills/Practices we want students to learn
- Attending Church/Sunday School/ Pack regularly
- Prayer

Milestones: 7th: Celebrating 13th Birthday

What we want the students to achieve: celebrate becoming "teenagers"

- Core Competency
- God's love: Help students feel a Sense of belonging
- Identity in Christ: Human traits/Tradition
- Action: What actually happens
- Have a session on managing increased privilege and responsibilities (including cell phones, regular chores, etc.)
- Parent Component
- Form a parent's group
- Equip the parents, so the students feel free and comfortable in talking to their parents
- Offer parent's resources (tool, app to monitor the student's cell phone for safety)
- Offer Internet/Phone safety workshop (from Police): make this as a community event
- Habits: Skills/Practices we want students to learn
- Have confidences, so they can face difficulties



Milestones: 8th: Middle School Graduation

What we want the students to achieve: Marks another step of maturity toward adulthood

- Core Competency
- God's Love: Belonging to a community
- Identity in Christ: Human traits/Traditions
- Action: What actually happens
- Special celebration for graduates
- A party only for the middle school graduates (fun activities such as ice cream party, bowling, etc.)
- Gift them with a book or other resources to help them discern God's call for their life
- Start mentor relationship with high school students
- Teach the student how the bible character overcame fears
- Parent Component
- Gift the parents with resources to help guide them
- Offer a space and time for the parents to share experiences and feedbacks
- Habits: Skills/Practices we want students to learn
- Feel confident



Milestones: 9th: Dating

What we want the students to achieve: feels deeply loved by God

- Core Competency
- God's Love : Belonging to a community
- God's Love: Unconditional Love and Forgiveness
- Identity in Christ: Start developing a personal relationship with Christ
- Bible Knowledge: Begin to know how to apply, Theological reflections
- Christian Living: Everyday Application
- Action: What actually happens
- Talk relevant issues during the PACK gathering (Sunday School and PACK Night).
- Give a message that is different from what the world gives. Offer a teaching about biblical alternative (Intimacy \neq sex)
- Divide into boy-only and girl-only groups for them to share their experiences and concerns
- Encourage to continue and grow the relationship with the mentor whom they had for confirmation, so the students feel comfortable with sharing their experiences with their mentor
- Regarding gender identity issue, help the students feel loved, accepted and worthy, help them find who they are as a person, and help them know the identity that never changes, a beloved child of God, and
- Parent Component
- Form a parent's group either during Sunday School hour or the PACK Night hour
- Equip the parents to have a conversation regarding the dating issue, so the conversion becomes natural and occurs more often
- Offer a parenting workshop (bring an expert to talk on this issue)
- Habits: Skills/Practices we want students to learn
- Have a time to think about what they want from a relationship
- See the bigger world than they think. One person cannot define them.
- After a break up, learn about what they like and dislike then move on.

Milestones: 10th:

Getting a license

What we want the students to achieve: connects Christian faith/character to driving

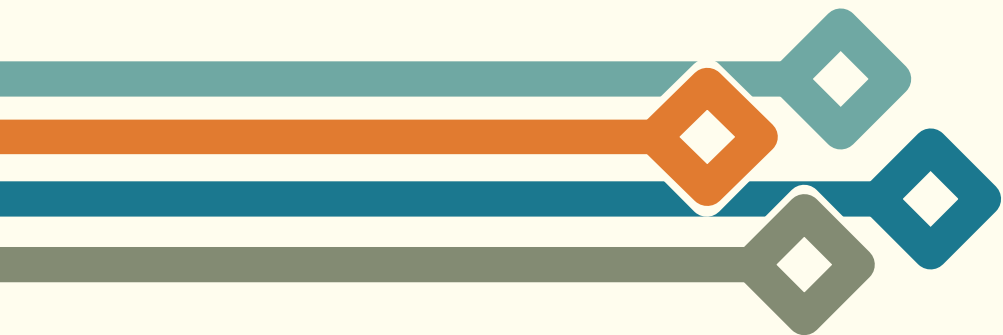
- Core Competency
- God's love: belonging to a community: feel loved
- Christian Living - Community
- Identity in Christ - Human traits (kindness, forgiveness, humility, gratitude)
- Action: What actually happens
- Pray for their safety, wisdom and patience on the road
- Invite police to give advice and discuss safety
- Gift bumper stickers
- Volunteer for helping the students earn driving hours (they can earn hours to take foods from the stores for the Food Pantry, or give a ride to doctor's appointments)
- Offer a class on auto maintenance
- Make church's parking lot available for practice
- Parent Component
- Encourage the parents to volunteer to offer a class on auto maintenance, tire change, jump start, check in fluids, car registration, inspection, etc.
- Habits: Skills/Practices we want students to learn
- Life skills
- Driving with grace (Fruit of the Spirit. "What would Jesus do on I-95?"

Milestones: 11th:

Exploring Vocation/Getting their first job

What we want the students to achieve: discovers their spiritual gifts and strengths

- Core Competency
- Christian Living - Call/Vocation
- Christian Living - Everyday application
- Identity in Christ - Spiritual Journey
- Action: What actually happens
- Offer a small group to help the students find their spiritual gifts, teach how that translates to skills and types of jobs, and how to put that on application
- Offer opportunities to the students to be "exposed" to many possibilities/options/career paths
- Give less pressure, and help the student build confidence (You CAN do that)
- Career Day/Month before the peak of hiring time - Winter or early Spring
- Identify professions of our church members and connect with the students
- Offer a practical session on filling out application, interacting with people (eye contacts, hand-shakes, etc), and interview
- Introduce public resources (the county resource, vocational assessment, college board)
- Parent Component
- Encourage the parents to offer an information session on their career track
- Encourage the mutual support among the parents
- Habits: Skills/Practices we want students to learn
- Knowledge and information of career opportunities
- Find something they would like to try, that they can use their gifts and talents
- Learn social skills



Milestones: 12th: High School Graduation / Going to College / Leaving Home

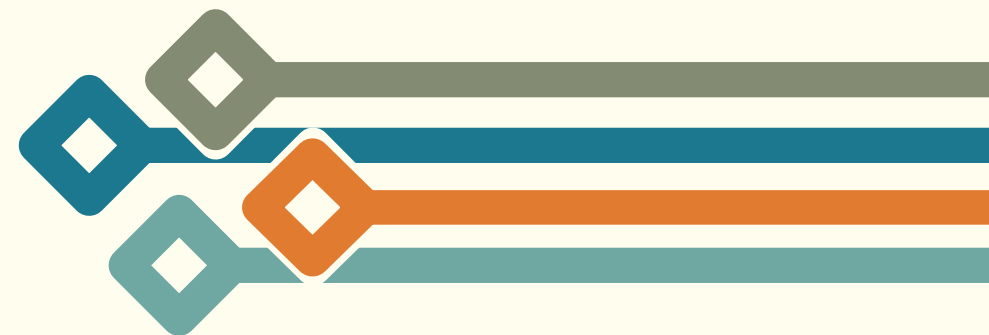
What we want the students to achieve: celebrates a big milestone in their life and transitions to adult discipleship journey

- Core Competency
- God's Love - Belonging to a community
- Identity in Christ - Spiritual Journey
- Christian Living - Spiritual Disciplines/Practices
- Action: What actually happens
- During the senior year, support as decisions are being made (less pressure about college)
- During the senior year, assign a prayer partner and form a small group of the seniors
- A special recognition of the graduates during the worship services
- Dinner/Party celebration with the family
- Gift an essential kit and a Yard sign
- Offer a list of connection (local churches and young adults groups) to go off to college
- Include the students who are not in the PACK or JNS
- Follow-up activity after graduation
- Don't forget about the students who don't go off to college
- Stay connected with college students beyond care packages to support their faith journey
- Parent Component
- Small group of the parents in dealing with transition (how to "release" your child)
- Offer a family session (what to expect at college or when they leave home)
- Habits: Skills/Practices we want students to learn
- Lean on God in good or bad times
- Know God has a purpose for them
- Know why it's important to stay active in a church
- We are always there for you.

Events: Confirmation

What we want the students to achieve: marks joining a faith community & decision to walk with Jesus over a lifetime.

- Core Competency
- Identity in Christ: Christian Traditions, Christian Beliefs
- Christian Living: Church (United Methodist church)
- Christian Living: Spiritual Disciplines/practices with Everyday Application
- Action: What actually happens
- Christian faith "Boot Camp"
- Gift a study bible
- Mentor system (relationship building with adult church member)
- Visit different denominations to experience different worship styles
- Write their own confession of faith (Individual creed - what I believe)
- Plug the students into various ministries of the church
- Have a celebration and reception with a cake
- Parent Component
- Communicate early about the schedule, mandatory meetings, expectations
- Small group for the parents of confirmands (prayer group)
- Habits: Skills/Practices we want students to learn
- Feel Confident in their beliefs;
- Feel Deeply loved by God;
- Feel Inspired to Serve;
- Know basic Christian beliefs;
- Know how to have Personal relationship with God;
- Know why it's important to stay active in a church;



Events: Mission Trip

What we want the students to achieve: participate in the first mission event

- Core Competency
- God's love: Unconditional Love
- Bible Knowledge: Big Picture of God's story and how I fit in
- Christian Living: Service to community/others/God's calling/using your gifts
- Christian Living - World
- Action: What actually happens
- Offer multiple opportunities
- Local options, such as Food Pantry, PWC local, running errands for the elderly or the shut-ins)
- Include the students' input in planning
- Fundraise to bring down costs
- Join other churches to leverage numbers and connect with other students
- Parent Component
- Advanced planning and information session for the parents
- Encourage the parent's involvement, such as Parent/Youth START trips
- Family mission trip
- Habits: Skills/Practices we want students to learn
- Joy of serving
- Relationship building
- Learn how Christians can be - hands and feet of God to make a world a better place
- Lots of ways to help people, Needs are everywhere
- Confidence - "I" can make a difference. They are a part of something greater than themselves
- Witnessing by actions
- Connecting what they believe with what they do (service is a form of worship, glorifying God in the act of service)

Events: Birthdays

What we want the students to achieve: feels they are loved

- Core Competency
- God's Love: Unconditional love, Belonging to a Community (Feel loved)
- Action: What actually happens
- Recognize their birthdays in Newsletter
- Send a card and gift (currently giving out \$10 Sweet Frog gift card) to their home
- Parent Component
-
- Habits: Skills/Practices we want students to learn
- Know their walk with God is a lifelong endeavor

Events: Chrysalis (a youth version of Emmaus Walk) / Retreat

What we want the students to achieve: feels God's unconditional love and grounded in identity as a child of God

- Core Competency
- God's Love
- Christian Living - Spiritual Disciplines
- Identity in Christ - Personal relationship with Christ; Spiritual Journey
- Action: What actually happens
- Recognition of youth and testimonials during the worship service
- Ceremony
- Parent Component
-
- Habits: Skills/Practices we want students to learn
- Know and grasp of spiritual disciplines

