

August 27, 2008

Dear Eighth Grade Youth and Parents:

For those of you who are returning and those of you who are new to our ministry, welcome to a new year of Fourth Church Youth! I hope you have had a relaxing and enjoyable summer. As you prepare to go back to school, I hope you are also thinking about the return of our full schedule of youth ministry at Fourth Presbyterian Church. We have had an incredibly busy summer. Between WorkCamps and other events, we have been hard at work planning a new and exciting year for you at Fourth Church Youth.

Eighth graders, you are about to rise to the top of the Junior High/Middle School world and a wide range of new experiences will soon be available to you at school and in the rest of your life. I'm hoping that church will also be a big part of this important year for you. Whether you have grown up in Fourth Church's Sunday School program or are brand new, you are now ready to join **Fourth Church Rising!**

Fourth Church Rising is the name of the confirmation program at Fourth Presbyterian Church. If you were baptized in the Presbyterian Church, you are not technically a full member of the church until you decide to join on your own, usually through a confirmation program like Fourth Church Rising. However, if you have not been baptized or even if you don't have any church background at all, Fourth Church Rising is for you, too. Even if you have no interest in joining this particular church, Fourth Church Rising is still a great opportunity for spiritual growth and fun fellowship.

Through small group discussions and other activities, you will be encouraged to question and develop your faith with other young people just like you. We talk about things that matter in your life right now and try to figure out together why faith is so important. You will have great leaders to help you along the way and be there for you when you need someone to turn to.

The core of Fourth Church Rising happens on Sunday mornings. As always, we encourage you to worship with your families at the 9:30 worship service. You could also consider participating in the Youth Choir during this time (for more information, please contact Beverly Escuder at 312.981.3595). After worship, we will **gather in the Page Smith Room around 10:30 or so for fellowship** with bagels and juice. Our gathering will **officially begin at 11:00**, so if you can't be there right at 10:30, don't worry.

In addition to this core, there are several other opportunities to participate in Fourth Church Rising. Once a month we will have a **fellowship or service opportunity** on a Friday or Saturday. This year we will continue our monthly **Youth and Families Lunches** which are for youth of all ages and their families to gather together in the Dining Room to share a meal in community. There are also numerous field trips and special events especially for Fourth Church Rising. You can find details about these activities in the enclosed information and calendar.

To help us get ready for the year, please fill out and return to us the included **Fourth Church Rising Youth Registration Form** and **Emergency Contact and Medical Information Form**. We need a new one of these each year to keep our records up to date. Please return these as soon as possible.

Please be sure to reserve **September 12-14** on your calendar for our **Fall Retreat** in Saugatuck, Michigan and fill out and return the enclosed registration form as soon as possible. This retreat helps set the tone for the rest of the year and is a great opportunity to get to know each other. It is very important to the success of the program to attend this retreat, so please do all that you can to attend (even coming to part of the

weekend is well worth it).

The **Fourth Church Rising Information Meeting** originally scheduled for August 24, was postponed until our first Fourth Church Rising gathering on **Sunday, September 7 from 10:30 to noon in the Page Smith Room**. This meeting is for both youth *and* parents—at least one parent needs to attend this meeting with each student. We will talk about the program and answer all of your questions about this program. If you can't attend this gathering, let us know as soon as possible.

We will open the year rockin' with our second annual **U2charist** from 7:00 to 8:30 pm on **Friday, September 5**. The U2charist is a communion worship service with live U2 music performed by the renowned U2 tribute band Elevation. You won't want to miss this unique worship experience...*all ages are welcome!!!*

The **Children and Youth Kick-Off on Sunday, on September 7** is for all youth, parents, and families of those involved in Fourth Church Youth. After our first regular Fourth Church Youth gatherings of the year, *everyone* should come to an **informational and celebratory lunch in Anderson Hall** beginning at noon. **At least one parent** should attend this lunch with their child to receive important information about Fourth Church Youth. In addition to lunch and brief presentations about our children and youth ministries, there will be music and entertainment for children of all ages. Come celebrate a new year of Fourth Church Youth and learn all about what we have to offer.

If you have any questions during the next few weeks, please don't hesitate to be in touch. See you soon!

John W. Vest
Associate Pastor for Youth Ministry

P.S. If you know of someone who might be interested in Fourth Church Rising whose name we might not have, please let us know. All of your friends are welcome to participate, whether they want to be confirmed or not. A connection to Fourth Church is not necessary to participate in Fourth Church Rising and confirmation at the end of the year is not required.

Fourth Church Youth Staff

John Vest, Associate Pastor for Youth Ministry
jvest@fourthchurch.org, 312.981.4037

Kurt Esslinger, Youth Ministry Associate
kesslinger@fourthchurch.org, 312.981.4035

Anita Bright, Administrative Assistant
abright@fourthchurch.org, 312.573.3364

Fourth Church Rising

The Eighth Grade Confirmation Program of
Fourth Presbyterian Church

Fourth Church Rising is the confirmation program for youth in eighth grade at Fourth Presbyterian Church. In the Presbyterian tradition, children are baptized as infants but are not full members of the church until they decide to join on their own through a public profession of faith. Confirmation is a process by which young people are given the opportunity to make the faith of their baptism their own. At the end of the program, those youth who wish to do so make this public profession and join the church as full, confirmed members.

However, Fourth Church Rising is much more than “just” a confirmation program. It is open not only to members of Fourth Presbyterian Church but to *any* eighth grader who wants to learn more about faith, life, and themselves—regardless of their connection to Fourth Church or their intention to become a confirmed member of this congregation. Fourth Presbyterian Church cares about the young people of our city and we believe that it is important for youth to have an opportunity to develop faith, friendship and trust—a safe place where the best in each young person can be cultivated.

Fourth Church Rising seeks to lay a foundation of faith and trust in God that will help eighth graders throughout the challenging and exciting years of high school and beyond. The bonds of fellowship and fun provide each young person with values, goals, and friendships that will last a lifetime. Over the course of the year, the basics of Christian faith are discussed and applied to real life. Upon completing the program, we hope that youth will have a deeper sense of how faith and life intersect in meaningful ways.

This is accomplished through a combination of pastoral guidance and small group interaction led by adult volunteers. Through weekly meetings (Sundays from 10:30 to Noon in the Page Smith Room), participation in worship, visits to other churches and religious communities, retreats, and fellowship, we hope to raise up our church’s next generation in the faith of generations past, present, and future.

These are the responsibilities of a member of Fourth Church Rising:

- Attend the Fourth Church Rising Info Meeting on Sunday, August 24.
- Attend Fourth Church Rising on Sunday mornings.
- Attend retreats in September and March.
- Attend at least one Fourth Church worship service each month.
- Participate in Parents Days on November 2 and March 1.
- Attend two field trips to: 1) another Christian church 2) another religious community.
- Plan and lead worship at Vespers on January 25.
- Do a Creative Project.
- Write a Statement of Faith.
- Attend the Session meeting and dinner on April 3 (for those joining the church).

These are the responsibilities of a parent of a member of Fourth Church Rising:

- Attend the Fourth Church Rising Info Meeting on Sunday, August 24.
- Help your child make it to Fourth Church Rising, retreats, worship, etc.
- Participate in Parents Days on November 2 and March 1.
- Help at one Youth and Families Lunch at some point during the year.
- Be open about your own faith with your child.

Please see other side for more information...

Fourth Church Rising Sunday Gatherings

We meet each Sunday from 10:30 to Noon in the Page Smith Room for discussions about issues of faith and life. It is important that you attend as many of these meetings as possible. Each meeting will combine teaching from the youth staff and small group discussions.

Retreats

Attendance at the Fall Retreat (September 12-14) and the Spring Retreat (March 20-22) is expected. The cost for each retreat is \$200 (scholarships are available if you need one). Without the initial retreat experience in September, much of the emphasis of the program is lost. If necessary, we can help parents form car pools to get students up late or leave early.

Worship Attendance

Each student is expected to attend at least one Fourth Church worship service each month. Youth are encouraged to worship together or with their families at the 9:30 service.

Parents Days

On November 2 and March 1 from 10:30 am to 2:30 pm, there will be special programs for youth *and* parents to think about communication between parents and teens and other issues of faith and life. These events will include many fun activities and time for discussion and sharing.

Field Trips

An excellent way to understand why we do things the way we do them in the Presbyterian Church is to experience how other Christians practice their faith and think about the similarities and differences. It is also increasingly important in today's world to learn about other religions. Two Sunday field trips during the year will provide such opportunities. Attendance on these trips is expected.

Vespers

On January 25, members of Fourth Church Rising will plan and lead worship at the Sunday evening Vespers service.

Creative Project

In April, each youth is asked to choose a creative medium through which to express his or her faith in God. Creative Projects can include drawing, painting, music, photos, and more.

Statement of Faith

Youth are given guidelines to formulate for themselves a verbal expression of their faith in God as Fourth Church Rising comes to an end. Writing this statement helps each person to see how they have grown in their relationship to God through the course of the year.

Session Meeting

Youth who decide to join the church meet with the Session in April in order to be accepted into membership.

Easter Vigil and Confirmation

This year youth will be confirmed and welcomed into church membership at the ancient and sacred Easter Vigil, which takes place from 10:30 pm to Midnight on the night before Easter. Confirmands will also be recognized at the 9:30 am worship service on Sunday, May 17.

Senior Highs

After confirmation at the Easter Vigil, eighth graders will be welcomed into Senior Highs and are encouraged to participate in spring events as we prepare for our summer Senior High WorkCamps.

If you have any questions about Fourth Church Rising or other youth programs at Fourth Presbyterian Church, please contact John Vest (Associate Pastor for Youth Ministry; 312.981.4037; jvest@fourthchurch.org), Kurt Esslinger (Youth Ministry Associate; 312.981.4035; kesslinger@fourthchurch.org) or Anita Bright (Administrative Assistant for Youth Ministry; 312.573.3364; abright@fourthchurch.org).



Fourth Church Youth
Fourth Church Rising
 (Eighth Grade Confirmation)
 2008-2009 Tentative Calendar

*Worship at 9:30 in the Sanctuary
 Elevation meets from 10:30 to Noon in the Page Smith Room*

September	5	U2charist	February	1	Regular Gathering
	7	Children and Youth Kick-Off			Youth and Families Lunch
	12-14	Fall Retreat		8	Inter-Religious Field Trip
	19-20	Elevation Lock-In		13-14	Homelessness Immersion
	21	Regular Gathering		15	Regular Gathering
	28	Regular Gathering		22	Regular Gathering
 October	5	Regular Gathering Youth and Families Lunch	 March	1	Parents Day 2 Youth and Families Lunch
	12	Regular Gathering		8	Regular Gathering
	19	Regular Gathering		15	Creative Projects Due
	25	Halloween Fellowship		20-22	Spring Retreat
	26	Regular Gathering		29	Statements of Faith Due
 November	2	Parents Day 1 Youth and Families Lunch	 April	3	Session Meeting and Dinner
	9	Regular Gathering		5	Regular Gathering
	16	Regular Gathering		11	Easter Vigil and Confirmation
	22	All Youth Service Project		12	No Gathering
	23	Regular Gathering		19	Senior High Gathering Youth and Families Lunch
	30	Regular Gathering		26	Regular Gathering
 December	6	All Youth Bowling	 May	3	Pancake Breakfast
	7	Regular Gathering Youth and Families Lunch		8-9	AWOL
	14	Regular Gathering		10	Senior High Gathering
	21	Regular Gathering		17	Last Sunday Gathering
	28	No Gathering		29-31	Family Camp
 January	4	No Gathering	 June	7	Bake Sale
	11	Field Trip to Another Church Youth and Families Lunch		TBD	Car Wash
	18	Regular Gathering		TBD	Senior High WorkCamps
	25	No Morning Gathering Lead Worship at Vespers			

Parent or Guardian Information
(At least one set of information is required)

Mother's Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____
Street City State Zip

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Member of Fourth Presbyterian Church? YES NO

Father's Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____
Street City State Zip

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Member of Fourth Presbyterian Church? YES NO

Please return this form, along with the *Emergency Contact and
Medical Information Form*, to:

Anita Bright
Administrative Assistant for Youth Ministry
Fourth Presbyterian Church
126 E. Chestnut Street
Chicago, Illinois 60611
abright@fourthchurch.org
Fax: 312.787.4584

For more information, please contact:
John Vest, Associate Pastor for Youth Ministry
312.981.4037 (jvest@fourthchurch.org)
Kurt Esslinger, Youth Ministry Associate
312.981.4035 (kessinger@fourthchurch.org)
Anita Bright, Administrative Assistant for Youth Ministry
312.573.3364 (abright@fourthchurch.org)

2008-2009 Emergency Contact and Medical Information for a Child

Child's Name	Date of Birth	M	F
		Sex	
Parent's/Guardian's Name	Parent's/Guardian's Name		
()	()	()	()
Home Phone	Work Phone	Home Phone	Work Phone
Address	Address		
City, ST ZIP Code	City, ST ZIP Code		

Alternative Emergency Contacts

Primary Emergency Contact	Secondary Emergency Contact
()	()
Home Phone	Work Phone
()	()
Home Phone	Work Phone
Address	Address
City, ST ZIP Code	City, ST ZIP Code

Medical Information

Hospital/Clinic Preference

Physician's Name	Phone Number
Insurance Company	Policy Number

Allergies/Special Health Considerations

I authorize all medical and surgical treatment, X-ray, laboratory, anesthesia, and other medical and/or hospital procedures as may be performed or prescribed by the attending physician and/or paramedics for my child and waive my right to informed consent of treatment. This waiver applies only in the even that neither parent/guardian can be reached in the case of an emergency.

Parent's/Guardian's Signature	Date
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I give permission for my child to go on field trips. I release Fourth Church and individuals from liability in case off accident during activities related to Fourth Church, as long as normal safety procedures have been taken.

Parent's/Guardian's Signature	Date
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I give Fourth Church permission to include my child in photographs relating to Fourth Church activities (photos used for publicity purposes only).

Parent's/Guardian's Signature	Date
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