

August 10, 2009

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. There are numerous field trips and special events especially for Fourth Church Rising, as well as events that introduce you to our high school youth. 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. 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 18-20** 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** will take place during the Children and Youth Kick-Off on **Sunday, September 13 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. If you can't attend this gathering, let us know as soon as possible.

The **Children and Youth Kick-Off on Sunday, on September 13** is for all youth, parents, and families of those involved in Fourth Church Youth. After the Fourth Church Rising Information Meeting (and the first gatherings for Elevation and Senior Highs), *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.

Finally, we will once again open the year rockin' with our third annual **U2charist** at 8:00 pm on **Friday, September 11**. The U2charist is a communion worship service with live U2 music performed by the renowned U2 tribute band Elevation. With U2 opening their North American tour at Soldier Field the next night, Bono himself may even show up!

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 at the Children and Youth Kick-Off, September 13.
- Attend Fourth Church Rising on Sunday mornings.
- Attend retreats in September and March.
- Attend worship visits and field trips.
- Participate in the Homelessness Immersion in December
- Participate in Parents Days on November 1 and March 7.
- Plan and lead worship at 4:00 on January 24.
- Write a Statement of Faith and create an Icon of Faith.
- Have an individual meeting with John in early April
- Attend the Session meeting and Confirmation on April 11 (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 at the Children and Youth Kick-Off, September 13.
- Help your child make it to Fourth Church Rising, retreats, trips, etc.
- Participate in Parents Days on November 1 and March 7.
- 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 18-20) and the Spring Retreat (March 19-21) 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.

## **Parents Days**

On November 1 and March 7 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. Sunday field trips during the year will provide such opportunities. Attendance on these trips is expected.

## **4:00 Worship**

On January 24, members of Fourth Church Rising will plan and lead worship at the Sunday afternoon 4:00 service.

## **Icons of Faith**

In April, each youth will be asked to create an Icon of Faith, based on ancient practices of sacred art. This is a creative way to explore and express faith in non-verbal ways.

## **Statements 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 on the morning of April 11 in order to be accepted into membership.

## **Confirmation**

This year youth will be confirmed and welcomed into church membership at a special Confirmation Service at 11:00 worship on Sunday, April 11. Following this service, there will be a brunch for family and friends.

## **Senior Highs**

After Confirmation, eighth graders will be welcomed into Senior Highs and are encouraged to participate in Sunday Gatherings and spring events as we prepare for our summer Senior High WorkCamp.

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](mailto:jvest@fourthchurch.org)), Kurt Esslinger (Youth Ministry Associate; 312.981.4035; [kesslinger@fourthchurch.org](mailto:kesslinger@fourthchurch.org)) or Anita Bright (Administrative Assistant for Youth Ministry; 312.573.3364; [abright@fourthchurch.org](mailto:abright@fourthchurch.org)).



Fourth Church Youth  
**Fourth Church Rising**  
 (Eighth Grade Confirmation)  
 2009-2010 Calendar

*Fourth Church Rising meets from 10:30 to Noon in the Page Smith Room*

<b>September</b>	11	U2charist	<b>February</b>	7	Sunday Gathering
	13	Children and Youth Kick-Off			Youth and Families Lunch
	18-20	Fall Retreat		14	Inter-Religious Field Trip*
	27	Sunday Gathering		21	Sunday Gathering
<b>October</b>	4	Sunday Gathering	28	Sunday Gathering	
		Youth and Families Lunch	<b>March</b>	7	Parents Day 2 (10:30-2:30)
	11	Sunday Gathering			Youth and Families Lunch
	18	Sunday Gathering		14	Sunday Gathering
	23	Halloween Fellowship		19-21	Spring Retreat
	25	Sunday Gathering		28	Statements of Faith and Icons Due
	Worship at 4:00 service				
<b>November</b>	1	Parents Day 1 (10:30-2:30)	<b>April</b>	4	Easter: No Gathering
		Youth and Families Lunch		5-9	Meetings with John
	8	Sunday Gathering		11	Confirmation and Brunch
	15	Sunday Gathering		18	Senior High Gathering
	21	All Youth Service Project		25	Pancake Breakfast
	22	Sunday Gathering	<b>May</b>	2	Senior High Gathering
	29	Worship visit to Wicker Park Grace*			Youth and Families Lunch
<b>December</b>	4-5	Homelessness Immersion*		WhirlyBall	
	6	Sunday Gathering	7-8	AWOL	
		Youth and Families Lunch	9	Senior High Gathering	
	12	All Youth Bowling	16	Senior High Gathering	
	13	Sunday Gathering	23	Last Sunday Gathering	
	20	Sunday Gathering	<b>June</b>	4-6	Family Camp
	27	No Gathering		TBD	Bake Sale
				TBD	Car Wash
<b>January</b>	3	No Gathering	<b>July</b>	20-24	Presbyterian Youth Triennium
	10	Worship at 11:00 service			
		Youth and Families Lunch		<b>August</b>	7-14
	15-16	Lock-In			
	17	Choir Rehearsal at 9:30			
		Sunday Gathering			
24	No Morning Gathering				
	Lead Worship at 4:00				
31	Sunday Gathering				

\*These dates are tentative, contingent on the calendars of our hosts, who are not always able to plan this far in advance.

Fourth Church Youth  
**Fourth Church Rising**  
(Eighth Grade Confirmation)



**Save these Dates!!!!**

*The following are the dates you should put on your calendars now and plan around. These events are critical to the confirmation experience. Youth should make every possible effort to attend these important activities.*

**September**

**13:** Children and Youth Kick-Off  
**18-20:** Fall Retreat

**October**

**25:** Worship at 4:00 service

**November**

**1:** Parents Day 1 (10:30-2:30)  
**21:** All Youth Service Project  
**29:** Worship visit to Wicker Park Grace\*

**December**

**4-5:** Homelessness Immersion\*

**January**

**15-16:** Lock-In  
**24:** Lead Worship at 4:00

**February**

**14:** Inter-Religious Field Trip\*

**March**

**7:** Parents Day 2 (10:30-2:30)  
**19-21:** Spring Retreat  
**28:** Statements of Faith and Icons Due

**April**

**5-9:** Meetings with John  
**11:** Confirmation and Brunch  
**18:** Begin Gathering with Senior Highs  
**25:** Pancake Breakfast

**May**

**2:** WhirlyBall  
**23:** Last Sunday Gathering

**June**

**4-6:** Family Camp

**July**

**20-24:** Presbyterian Youth Triennium

**August**

**7-14:** Senior High WorkCamp

\*These dates are tentative, contingent on the calendars of our hosts, who are not always able to plan this far in advance.



**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](mailto: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](mailto:jvest@fourthchurch.org))  
Kurt Esslinger, Youth Ministry Associate  
312.981.4035 ([kessinger@fourthchurch.org](mailto:kessinger@fourthchurch.org))  
Anita Bright, Administrative Assistant for Youth Ministry  
312.573.3364 ([abright@fourthchurch.org](mailto:abright@fourthchurch.org))

**2009-2010 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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