

St. Stephen  
United Methodist Church

# YOUTH NEWS

February 2010

## Can I Follow Christ Without Being Weird?

## The Principal's Office

BRANDON DIRKS, MINISTER WITH YOUTH

*Let us approach God with a true heart in full assurance of faith. — Heb. 10:22*

These articles are devoted to answering *practical* questions on how to be a faithful follower of Christ. Now, "How do I draw close to God?"

A principal of a school once asked me, "Do you know how to tell the difference between principle and principal? The principal of a school is always ends in P-A-L." Do you see your principal as your "pal?"

I can remember it like it was last

— continued on next page

## Important Dates

### Sunday, February 7 - No UMYF

'SOUP'erbowl Sunday

### Friday, February 12

Kirk Martin Parent Workshop

### Sunday, February 14

Boy Scout Sunday (11:10 Traditional)  
SAC Sunday

### Wednesday, February 17

Pancake Supper for Youth Missions

### Sunday, February 21

Parent Seminar about Social Media

### Friday, February 26

Confirmation to Laser Quest

### Sunday, February 28

Brandon preaching in Hickory, NC

# Sunday Night UMYF

## United Methodist Youth Fellowship in February

Our regular UMYF schedule is:

- 5:00** Snack Supper (bring \$5) in the Youth Café
- 5:30** Youth Worship/Large Group in the Youth Ministry Center
- 6:30** Senior High, Middle School, Confirmation (meeting rooms)
- 7:30** Closing

## Large Groups

February 7 – NO UMYF

February 14 – **SAC Sunday\*** – note different schedule (No Large Group)

February 21 – TRUST in God through pain?

February 28 – Faith HEALING?

### \*SAC Sunday, February 14

\*Special schedule\*

**5:00** Snack Supper (Youth Café)

**5:30** Sr. Hi, MS, Confirmation (meeting rooms)

**6:30-7:30** SAC Groups

*"Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us to be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat." —Soupier Bowl of Caring Founding Prayer*



## Sunday, February 7

**We'll be collecting donations outside all worship services (look for youth carrying soup pots!) to benefit the Children's Home.**

One church with one prayer in 1990 has now grown to 15,000 churches nationwide, raising over \$10 million in 2008 to help those in need in their local communities. Join the Soupier Bowl of Caring and experience God's love in union. Please Contribute.

## Jessie Camp Memorial Pancake Supper

Wednesday, February 17 from 5:00-6:30pm

All youth and adult volunteers for YouthWorks and ASP are needed to assist in this very important fundraiser in two ways: 1) Invite at least two families who have never come before to come to the meal; and 2) Help set-up, serve, and clean-up at the supper. This is one of the most fun and important events to help us have a successful summer missions program. All money raised goes to youth missions.

Come to the Fellowship Hall (Gym) on Wednesday, February 17 as soon as you can after school. We should be done by the time the service starts at 6:45.

## Garden City Beach Retreat

July 11-16, 2010

Registration forms are available in the church office and at [www.ststephenumc.net/youth.html](http://www.ststephenumc.net/youth.html).

For up-to-date Garden City news, join the GC 2010 Facebook group.

# Get Ready for Youth Sunday!

## March 21 at 10:50am

On March 21, the youth will host 10:50 worship in our Youth Ministry Center! The service will be very special for us and the congregation as we incorporate everything we do during Sunday night UMYF. Think of it as a chance to really show St. Stephen what an awesome youth group we have!

The theme of the worship service will be centered upon the “1<sup>o</sup>” philosophy that Brandon talked about at Garden City and in UMYF. Because the service will be youth-style and youth-led, we need *every single one* of the youth to help out in some way.

- **Greeter** (2-4) — before service, stand at the door and pass out bulletins. Must be energetic, positive, and represent the loving atmosphere of the youth group
- **Welcomer** — announce Youth Sunday
- **God Moments** — lead God Moments and offer a prayer
- **Scripture Reader** — read the scripture (duh!)
- **Testimonies** (1-3) — in place of a sermon, we want youth to share how they are making an impact in the community (putting their 1<sup>o</sup> into effect).
- **Music (Soloist or Small Group)\*** — would need to prepare something for the offertory. \*May require an audition
- **Usher** (4) — pass offering plates
- **Closing** — lead “Circle Up,” Lord’s Prayer

Think about which role you would be comfortable doing or want to try. If you have questions, contact Andrew Tait at [atbratesfan44@earthlink.net](mailto:atbratesfan44@earthlink.net). Spots are first-come, first-serve, so e-mail Andrew with your name and the role you want ASAP. Let’s make it one of the most memorable Sundays in St. Stephen’s history! — *the Youth Emphasis Cmte*

### Practical Questions, from front

week. One day in 6<sup>th</sup> grade at recess on the playground, we made up a game where the boys would chase the girls until we caught a girl; and then we would grab one of the boys, and push them together to make them kiss each other! Of course, neither the boys nor the girls wanted to kiss each other ... that’s what made it so fun! When we finally made the “couple” kiss, we let them go and went after the next one ... until it was my turn ... in which I did a pretty swift display of my growing martial arts skills, and successfully defended my lips ☺! It was so much fun.

After recess, my class regrouped in our classroom. Not two minutes later I heard over the intercom ... “Mr. Brandon Dirks, please come to the Principal’s office. Brandon Dirks ... come to the Principal’s office.”

My first thought was, “Uh-oh! What did I do?” Because I was called to the principal’s office, I must have done something wrong. I never once thought that I might be called to the principal’s office because of my outstanding scholarship or behavior or that the principal wanted to consult me on my thoughts about student matters. I never thought that a teacher may have recommended me for a time of warm sharing with the principal.

On the contrary. I knew I was in trouble. I knew I was in trouble without ever being told I was in trouble.

But isn’t this the same way we sometimes approach God? As if God is “out to get us” for all the bad stuff we’ve done and thought about. We tend to think of God as the great-big-mean-judge-in-the-sky just trying to catch us doing something wrong.

The good news is that God has ALREADY forgiven us because of what Jesus did on the cross and in the tomb. Jesus has made it possible that we can go to God’s office (His presence) without fear and realizing that God wants a loving friendship with us. Therefore we can approach God as a friend who knows better than we do and can teach us; we can approach God as a friend who can remind us when we are not living right; we can approach God as a friend who can counsel us in times of trouble or confusion; we can even approach God as a friend when we have rebelled against God.

The bottom line, if the principal was our best friend, instead of getting *sent* to the principal, we would willingly *go* to the principal. So, don’t be afraid to go to God. His door is always open.

*Wherever you will go. — Brandon*

## Youth Ministry Staff

Brandon Dirks ..... Utes Minister  
 Julia Hubbard ..... Muzik Minister  
 Kelly Keesling ..... Info Minister  
 Nancy Baum ..... Administer



## Contact Information

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 Website ..... [www.ststephenmc.net](http://www.ststephenmc.net)

You can get this newsletter, registration forms, health forms, picture galleries, updated information about our youth and recreation programs by going to the website and clicking either “YOUTH” or “RECREATION.”

If you would like to help us keep this website exciting and current, talk with Brandon Dirks or e-mail Kelly Keesling at [kellykeesling@ststephenmc.net](mailto:kellykeesling@ststephenmc.net).

# Confirmation

Mark Casper - Coordinator

Get ready...the next few months are the "hyper-speed" portion of our Confirmation year! We had a fabulous lock-in experience and our class lessons are now asking us to search deep into our faith to discover who is God? Who is Jesus? What is Sin? What is Salvation? What is the Garden City Beach Trip like? Not easy questions for anyone! Take note of what's coming up in the weeks ahead...

## Sunday, February 7

No UMYF or Confirmation. Enjoy some family time watching Super Bowl XLIV... and the commercials!

## Friday, February 26

**Fuddruckers and Laser Quest!** This is a fun outing for Confirmands, teachers and mentors! We'll meet at the church at 5:30pm and take the bus to Fuddruckers. We'll eat dinner and then get back on the bus to Laser Quest! You'll need money for dinner (about \$7 - \$10) and \$14 cash for 2 games of Laser Quest. We will be back at the church around 9:30 pm.

## March 5-7: Lake Junaluska Retreat!

Lake Junaluska is the absolute highlight of our Confirmation year. Everyone needs to plan on attending! St. Stephen will join with other Confirmation groups and learn what it means to keep our promise to support the body of Christ with our prayers, presence, gifts, service and our witness. Get your registration forms turned in ASAP. Start saving a little spending money for some souvenirs and the infamous trip to the Candy Barrel in Waynesville! Details for the trip will be covered in upcoming classes.

**Reminder...** Don't forget to complete your mission project with your mentor. Keep up the good work and enjoy the ride!

# Middle School

Mary Owen - Coordinator

We started the year with our WOW experience and it really was WOW! Moving into February, we will begin thinking about ice and soup.

## Saturday, February 6

We're going ice skating! Details will be coming home soon.

## Sunday, February 7

We will not meet for UMYF Sunday night, but remember this is Souper Bowl Sunday and the seniors will be collecting money after services Sunday morning.

## Sunday, February 14 - SAC Sunday

This is also the Sunday we introduce the 2010 30-Hour Famine to the congregation in all services Sunday morning! You should wear a former Famine Shirt to worship service and ask EVERYONE to sponsor you. If you don't have a Famine shirt, see Mary Owen!!

## Sunday, February 21

Cristy will be leading our program.

## Sunday, February 28

Lars ~n~charge

## March 5-6

The 2010 30- Hour Famine! What's Your Hunger Zone?

# Senior High

Kelly Keesling - Coordinator

It's another busy month, with a lot of great things to look forward to! Don't forget to check your e-mail and the Facebook group (**St. Stephen UMC - Senior High UMYF**) for up-to-the-minute information.

## Sunday, February 7 - NO UMYF

This is also SOUPER Bowl Sunday, where our Seniors will be collecting money in big soup pots outside of the worship services. This money will go to help the Children's Home.

## Sunday, February 14

We're doing SAC Sunday like we did last month - so make sure you get to youth group on time! Senior High will meet at 5:30pm.

## Monday, February 15

This is President's Day, so everyone is off of school! We're going to go see the movie *To Save a Life* (see the trailer at <http://tosavealifemovie.com>). Plan on around 1pm - we'll send out more information closer to the date. *Note that the movie is rated PG-13. We recommend that parents review the information online — see the website above or go to Focus on the Family's PluggedIn.com for movie reviews — or contact Kelly Keesling if you have questions.*

## Sunday, February 21

We're doing a program based on the movie *To Save a Life*, centered around the concept that we reflect and share God's love the best when we are reaching out to the hurting and lonely.

## Sunday, February 28

8th grader Emily Barger will be joining us to talk about her struggle and experience with Juvenile Diabetes and about the JDRF Walk. Come support one of our youth!

## Senior High Planning Teams

The Senior High teams (Programming, Outings, and Retreat) will have our next monthly meeting on Wednesday, February 10 at 5:45pm in the Senior High Room.



# Missions

## 30-Hour Famine 2010

Mark your calendars for February 14 — it's not *just* Valentines, it the day we kick-off The Famine 2010 to our congregation at all morning worship services. Wear a former Famine shirt and ask EVERYONE to sponsor you. (No shirt? See Mary Owen.)

We are making some changes in Famine this year. Remember the cardboard box habitats? They're back! Watch for information and be ready to be hungry March 5-6!

## YouthWorks

Mark Casper – Coordinator

For YouthWorks, summer of 2010, 27 youth and adults will be traveling to Charleston, WV on June 27 through July 2 for a week of relational mission work. Note: There is one open slot that will be returned on February 11.

YouthWorks Training is Saturday, June 5. Details to be e-mailed or call Mark Casper at 704-846-6088.

## ASP

Clonnie Lambert – Coordinator

Rookie training will be Sunday, April 11. All-Volunteer Training dates will be announced shortly.

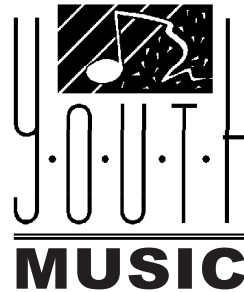
Your \$300 registration fee is **due by Sunday, February 21**. Make checks to St. Stephen UMC, with memo: Habitat for (your name). Give checks to Clonnie or put in the ASP box at church. Questions? Call Clonnie--704-542-9809

### AGAPE BELLS 6-6:45pm, room 6

This beginning bell choir teaches the fundamentals of handbells, note reading skills and techniques. We play in worship many times during the school year.

### YOUTH CHOIR 6:45-7:30pm, choir rm

All youth (6-12 grade) are invited to be a part of our growing program, as we lead worship and provide music for special youth events. Bring a friend!



### ALLELUIA RINGERS 7:30-8:15pm, room 6

This advanced handbell choir plays often in worship. Music reading skills are required.

### YOUTH MUSICAL

ALL YOUTH are invited to participate in our annual youth musical. This year it's *Rescue in the Night*, based on the story of Daniel in the lion's den. Rehearsals are Sunday afternoons at 3:30pm, beginning Jan. 31. The presentation will be Sunday, March 14.

## Walk with Emily's Entourage!



The JDRF Walk to Cure Diabetes is Saturday, April 17 at Carowinds, beginning at 8:30 am (arrive by 7:45).

After the JDRF Walk to Cure Diabetes ends, we'll enjoy a complimentary lunch from JDRF sponsors underneath the Emily's Entourage Tent, and then we'll use the tickets you've earned or purchased and spend the day at Carowinds!

Questions? Contact Elizabeth Barger at [bbarger@carolina.rr.com](mailto:bbarger@carolina.rr.com) or 704-841-8936.

## YOUTH RECREATION

### Girls Softball Registrations

Registration for all girls, grades 3-12, who are interested in playing softball **ENDS FEBRUARY 21**. Practices begin February 21. Games are mid-March through the end of May. Bring your friends! Registration forms are online (Recreation Page of our website) and in the church office.

### Sports Ministry BBQ

**Sunday, March 7 (5-6:30pm)**

It is time we celebrate the children, youth, coaches, and parents in our Sports Ministry and all the great things that it does. If you participated in one of our St. Stephen Recreation programs (softball, basketball, soccer), wear your jersey and join your team in an unforgettable time in honoring what God is doing through our Sports Ministries. (No UMYF that evening.)

### Nominations Requested for Special Recognitions

Submit now your nominations for the Paul Gilgo Coaching Award and the Lars Lippard Sportsmanship Award by emailing [brandondirks@ststephenumc.net](mailto:brandondirks@ststephenumc.net).



Matt Anderson	Feb. 1
Haley Enten	Feb. 2
Kate Wilson	Feb. 3
Marshall Courtney	Feb. 3
Patrick Casper	Feb. 4
Meghan Rhoad	Feb. 6
Spencer Davidson	Feb. 15
Christa Mullis	Feb. 18
Katie McWeeney	Feb. 18
Briana Coggin	Feb. 20
Mitchell Kute	Feb. 21
Civanna Gibby	Feb. 22
Gordon Kosak	Feb. 26
Chase Shuford	Feb. 28