

Dear 8th Grade Parents!

This is an exciting time of year for your students as they end their middle school days and prepare for the adventure of high school. I'm sure there is a mixture of nerves and excitement for everyone. We are eager to begin connecting with your students as they prepare to enter 9th grade here at Christ Church.

Our high school ministry is called Koinonia, which simply means "fellowship" in Greek. Koinonia is a vibrant and robust ministry experience, and we hope that your student will feel at home in this community. The format is similar to COW with a large group gathering followed by small groups. Many of your students will have the same small group leader as they move up to high school. To facilitate this transition, please consider the following opportunities and as always, reach out if you have any questions.

Koinonia Preview Night – 8th graders are welcome to come to Koinonia on Sunday evening, April 24th (7:00-8:45pm in the Student Center). This will be a special night to welcome them into our community and give them a preview of next year.

Summer Park Gatherings – Throughout June and July high school students gather to play volleyball, ultimate frisbee, and to just hang out and connect. Details on which parks and what dates can be found on the Christ Church website starting in May.

St. Louis Mission Project (July 17-22) -- Join us for a week of serving and fun in St. Louis. Students will participate in a variety of activities designed to open their hearts and minds to the realities of poverty and need in an urban setting. Our students consistently report that mission projects are some of the most transformational experiences on their faith journey. Register here: <https://www.christchurch.us/highschool>

Roca Y Agua (June 12-17) – Roca is our annual houseboat camp trip to Bull Shoals Lake, Arkansas for a week of water sports, worship, friendship, and an adventure that is aimed at deepening their faith. Roca is currently full but we historically have spots open closer to the trip date. To join the waitlist, click here: <https://www.christchurch.us/highschool>

Confirmation – During the Fall of 2022 we will launch our annual Confirmation experience, designed for high school freshmen. This is a significant milestone on the journey of faith for our students. Registration and information on Confirmation will be available late summer.

Fall Sabbath (October 28-30) – Our annual Fall Retreat is similar to the COW Stampede event. Joins us for a weekend at Phantom Ranch in Mukwonago, Wisconsin. Registration and details for this camp will be available in August.

Finally, welcome to our new Director of High School Ministry, Emily Mayumara! As most of you know by now, our previous Director, Aaron Foster transitioned to serve with our worship

department at the end of 2021. Emily will join us as the new Director starting May 15, 2022. Emily is a seasoned leader who currently serves with a local ministry in the Western Suburbs. She is a Wheaton College graduate and will be a wonderful fit for our community. We look forward to your students meeting Emily.

Thank you again for partnering with us to develop your student's faith. As a parent of an 8th grader myself, I know this is both an exciting but anxiety producing time. Enjoy these final days of their middle school adventure and we will welcome them warmly soon!

With peace and every joy,

Rev. Tracey Bianchi
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