

YOUTH MINISTRY

ANNUAL REPORT, 2020

Submitted by Pastor Bryan

As I stated in my annual pastoral report, finding ways to minister to the children and teens in our congregation was one of our greatest challenges. Once our building closed our youth programs pretty much shut down altogether. Our youth participation was quite minimal even before the pandemic, and we've been struggling to regroup both for younger kids and teens.

I'm happy to say that while it took longer than I would have liked, we finally got some things going again for our younger youth (12 and under). There are about a dozen kids in this age group now participating in a virtual Bible Stories and crafts hour from 5-6 p.m. every other Tuesday. I am particularly grateful to some of the other youth in this age group (Lydia Mikelbank & Danielle Hoffmann) who have volunteered to help lead crafts online for the younger kids. This has been lots of fun and I'm excited and grateful to continue this until we are able to meet in our building again. I also want to thank all the moms and dads who have been helping their kids be part of these zoom meetings.

Ministry With Teens: Again, as stated in my pastoral report, providing some kind of programming for teens during the pandemic and staying in contact with them feels like the one obvious thing that I simply was not able to help make happen during 2020. That has weighed heavily on me because I really love this age group and I'm a huge believer in the power of youth ministry, youth camping, etc. I think this age group has been more "zoomed out" than most, and so it's been a challenge to try to come up with a way of interacting virtually that would be of interest to our teenagers. I will be in touch with parents and youth in early January 2021 to see what kind of virtual meeting we can establish that would be fun and meaningful for this age group. I'm really looking forward to putting some time and energy into youth ministry and to creating more opportunities for teens to stay active with the church, continue to explore spiritually, and to have opportunities to do fun and meaningful activities together. Once we're able to meet in person again, which I hope and pray will be sometime in 2021, we will make plans for some service opportunities and adventures together and to rebuilding programs for this age group.