



Student Ministries
Philosophy of Ministry

OUR PURPOSE

Parenting is one of the greatest callings and highest privileges one can have. The Bible calls children “*a heritage from the Lord*” and “*a reward.*” And those who have children are called “*blessed*” (Psalm 127:3-5). At Rothbury Community Church we view our student ministries as an aid to parents in their calling, which is the discipleship of their children. Deuteronomy 6:4-9 clearly lays the primary responsibility of discipleship at the parent’s feet:

⁴ “*Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.*” ⁵ *You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.* ⁶ *And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.* ⁷ *You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.* ⁸ *You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.* ⁹ *You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

(cf. Psalm 78:1-7, 127:1-4; Proverbs 1:8-9, 4:1-11, 22:6; Malachi 4:6; Luke 1:17; Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:20-21; 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12.)

The evangelical Church at large has notably struggled in recognizing the great role parents are called to play, resulting in ministries that replace or compete with parents in the discipleship of their children. Here at RCC we want our goals as a church and our methods for achieving those goals to be biblically driven. Scripture is clear that parents are the ones that are primarily responsible for the discipleship of their children, therefore **any ministry a church puts forward for teenagers must be founded on the principle of parents being accountable for the discipleship of their children.**

When we look at Scripture we see that part of the purpose of the teenage years is to grow “*in wisdom and stature*” (Luke 2:52). Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 13:11, “*When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways.*” This is true both in physical and, more importantly, spiritual terms: teenagers are expected to grow and mature. Moreover, Christians are expected to grow and mature (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:2; Hebrews 5:12; 1 Peter 2:2). Christian teenagers ought to be maturing, therefore **any ministry a church puts forward for teenagers must be promoting biblical growth in their students.**

Our motto at RCC is “becoming committed followers of Jesus Christ,” and the purpose of our Student Ministries is built off of that idea. **The purpose of RCC student ministries is to come alongside parents in the discipleship of their teenagers by teaching and encouraging students to be committed followers of Jesus Christ.**

OUR PRODUCT

The question should be asked, what does a student that is a committed follower of Jesus Christ look like? At RCC what we hope to help parents produce with their teenagers in student ministries includes:

1. *Students that believe the gospel*
The gospel is who Jesus is and what he has done. *“For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God”* (2 Corinthians 5:21). We desire to make the gospel clear to our students and to have students that have repented of their sins and placed their trust in Jesus Christ for salvation.
2. *Students that are biblically literate*
After extolling the value of the Scriptures, David writes *“More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb”* (Psalm 19:10). All that we are and do in student ministries revolves around the Word of God. We seek to not only teach what the Bible says to our students, but also how to read and study the Bible so that our students are equipped for further study and growth in their lives when they graduate.
3. *Students that are biblically discerning*
The believers that lived in Berea are called *“noble”* because *“they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so”* (Acts 17:11). It is one thing to study the Bible, it is another to apply it to our everyday life. This requires discernment, both in how to understand and how to interact with the world. We desire to foster teens that have a Biblical Worldview applied to all of life.
4. *Students that live godly lifestyles*
The purpose of our salvation is *“that we may bear fruit for God...”* (Romans 7:4). We believe that when the truths of Scripture have been internalized in our students, that part of the natural fruit will be godly lives. Our students will exhibit the Spirit’s work in their lives by growing in holiness and living lives that glorify God.
5. *Students that practice spiritual disciplines*
We can feel the Psalmist’s passion for God when we read, *“As a deer pants for flowing stream, so pants my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God...”* (Psalm 42:1-2). We desire to instill this passion in our students and teach them how to personally commune with God through the practice of the spiritual disciplines of the faith.
6. *Students that honor their parents*
Faithfulness to God begins with faithfulness in the home. Children are commanded *“Obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord”* (Colossians 3:20). We want our students to understand and embrace the God-given value of those in their lives that play parental roles.
7. *Students that are active in the church*
Jesus loves the church and demonstrated that by the fact that he *“gave himself up for her”* (Ephesians 5:25). Christians are expected to love the church as well, thus we desire to produce students that are actively involved in this local body of believers.
8. *Students that evangelize others*
Jesus’ mission on earth was *“to seek and to save the lost”* (Luke 19:10). More fruit of biblical commitment is the desire to see others come to Christ. We hope to produce students that are evangelistically active in reaching the lost through clear gospel proclamation.
9. *Students that serve*
Jesus said that his disciples would stand out because of their love for one another (John 13:35). When compared to the average adult, teenagers are uniquely able to serve God by loving others because of their time and energy. We want to create students that understand this and act on it.

OUR PLAN

How do we practically plan to do this? Our strategy is two-fold. The first way we hope to help parents produce students that are committed followers of Jesus Christ is by **developing a team of sponsors** that is gifted in ministry to students. These people will:

1. Be able to teach and model what we desire to produce in our students (Ephesians 4:7-13).
2. Consistently and constantly evaluate their own lives and everything they do (2 Corinthians 13:5; Ephesians 5:15-16).
3. Teach the Word of God clearly, concisely, and with power in multiple ways and formats (2 Timothy 4:2).
4. Seek to build a discipleship relationship and pray for every student that goes through this ministry (2 Timothy 2:2).

The second way we hope to help parents produce students that are committed followers of Jesus Christ is by **providing opportunities for them to grow and to apply what they learn**. This includes:

1. *Sunday School Classes*
Junior High and Senior High meet at 11:00 AM in their respective classes. These classes are primarily in depth studies of various books of the Bible.
2. *Wednesday Evening Ministries*
Junior High meets at church from 6:00-7:30 PM where purposeful teaching (usually topical), prayer, worship, and games occur. Senior High meets at church from 7:30-9:00 PM where the students split up into small groups and study, pray, and grow.
3. *S.N.O.S.H and S.N.O.J.H*
“Sunday Night Out for Senior/Junior High” are once a month events generally in somebody’s home that promote fellowship and are usually used to address a select topic.
4. *Camps & Retreats*
These are chances to get away and uniquely focus on our relationship with the Lord. These take place at various times through the year.
5. *Outreach Events*
These are events designed to present the gospel clearly to unsaved students. These take place at various times through the year.
6. *Special Events*
There are other various events that occur each calendar year, some that promote fellowship, some that promote family ministry, some that promote missions, and some that promote service opportunities.
7. *Resources*
Books, articles, classes, and other resources for spiritual growth are offered and promoted for students. Resources are also promoted among parents to aid them in their roles.

OUR POLICIES

To aid in our purpose, product, and plan we must have some policies in place.

1. *Parental Involvement*

We have an “open door” policy in regards to parents whenever our students are gathered. We desire for parents to be involved in their teenagers’ lives and therefore invite them to any/all of our activities and events.

2. *Ages/Promotion*

Students finishing 5th grade may enter the Junior High program at the end of the school year. Students finishing 8th grade may enter the Senior High program at the end of the school year. Students finishing 12th grade are expected to leave the Senior High program by the beginning of the next school year. For exceptions parents may contact the pastor of student ministries.

3. *Modesty*

We take sin and temptation seriously. Therefore all students are to dress modestly and appropriately for all activities. When swimming, girls must wear modest one-piece or tankini suits.

4. *Relationships*

No physical affection is allowed at church sponsored activities, this includes but is not limited to kissing, holding hands, back rubs, etc.

5. *Weapons/illegal substances*

No weapons or illegal substances are permitted at or during any activity. For exceptions (i.e. prescriptions) contact the pastor of student ministries.

6. *Electronics/Music*

No personal music devices (CD players, MP3 players, etc.) are permitted at church activities unless the pastor of student ministries provides an exception. Only Christ-centered music may be played at church activities. All music played must be approved by a member of the youth staff. Phones are to be turned off or, if necessary, kept in “silent mode” during church activities.

7. *Authority*

All students must respect and comply with all decisions or instructions that a member of the youth staff gives.

OTHER INFORMATION

A Statement about Education

With the goal to promote unity and peace and to follow the biblical pattern for the discipleship of children, RCC does not endorse any one means of educating our children – including homeschooling, public school, or private/Christian school. We believe that the parents are to take the primary responsibility in the spiritual development of their children within any form of education.

Youth Staff

Though we rely heavily on the involvement of parents, student ministries uses “sponsors” that make up a regular youth staff to provide direction and biblical leadership. Sponsors are:

- Committed to this philosophy of ministry and meet the requirements delineated under “Our Plan,” “Youth Staff” above.
- Members of RCC and are in good standing.
- Invited and appointed by the elders and pastor of student ministries.
- Asked to make a one year commitment to the ministry and to attend regular youth staff meetings.

