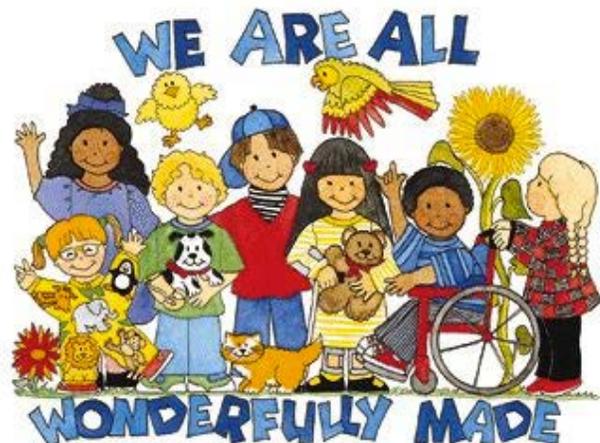




Children & Youth Program Survey Results

Overview

In July, we conducted an online survey to obtain more information about the needs of our families and the programs they would like to see. We asked 10 questions and the results are found within this document. Please note that some respondents skipped questions or chose more than one answer. As a leadership team, we are responding to many of the suggestions found within this survey with changes this season. We thank everyone who participated in the survey. St. James' has a long history of strong children & youth programming and we will continue to reach out to our kids and do our best adjust to the ever changing requirements and challenges facing them. The two things that never change are the need for programs for kids and people to volunteer to run them. Should you have any questions or wish to become more involved with our youth, please feel free to contact Laura Posecznick, Children's Ministry Team Leader.



Question 1: Contact Information

Results: 40 People conducted the survey online & 6 provided hand written surveys

Question 2: Do you have children younger than 18?

Results: 23 Replied YES 23 Replied NO

Question 3: What program(s) do they (your children) participate at St. James'?

Results: Nursery-4, Sunday School-9, Middle School-9, High School-7, Youth Band-7, Pageant-12, None of the Above-10, Other included Acolytes, Family Usher, Confirmation Class, Camp Scholarship Fundraising, and Diocesan Events

Question 4: If you answered yes to any of the programs, what is the best part of the program your child or youth attends?

Results: Fellowship-12, Learning about God-11,

Other answers included;

- **Belonging to something bigger than ourselves!**
- **Fun Events**
- **Volunteerism, learning leadership skills, getting questions answered by other adults**
- **Meeting other kids**
- **They do not like to go without knowing a friend will be there.**
- **Also developing relationships with other supportive adults**
- **Leadership**
- **Being a part of church family**

Question 5: What time would be best for a program for your child or youth to attend?

Results: Sunday 9:00 am or earlier-2, Sunday 9:30 am-13, Sunday 10:00 am-4, During the Service I Attend-6, Sunday Afternoon or Early Evening-8, Weeknight-3, If during a service, please write in the time of service or best time if not in choices above.

- **10:30 am-5 respondents primarily younger nursery aged families**
- **Already have several obligations, they do not like missing activities because they have to serve. Seems not fair to schedule activities when they are otherwise serving.**

St. James' Actions: Since the majority of responses stated they would like something at 9:30, our SS, Middle and HS Youth programs will continue to be at 9:30 Sunday mornings. In response to the request for programming at the 10:30, we have moved the nursery to that time and will have families rejoined at the Peace. Additionally, older Sunday Schoolers Grades 3-5 will have a program once a month at the 10:30 time and rejoin families at the Peace.

Question 6: Are you currently receiving information on weekly youth programs?

Results: YES-24, NO-13, No, but I would like to-5

St. James' Actions: We will be including the 5 individuals to our weekly e-blasts regarding children and youth activities.

Question 7: What prohibits your child or youth from participating in a program at St. James'?

Results: Sports-7, School Work-7, Not Interested-3, Family Commitments-10, Other;

- Age
- Dual Custody
- Other Activities
- All of the above are conflicts for them but we try to be as involved as possible.
- I often have to make them go. If it is a Sunday when they are acolyting I don't make them participate in Sunday school as well.
- anything that starts early in the morning is a tough sell
- Travel distance
- Naps/schedules.
- Do not live here
- Job
- Too young at this point
- As you know, teenagers can have very full schedules
- School & social functions
- Children are grown

St. James' Actions: We are adding more "one off" type programs. These smaller programs will hopefully fit within our families' busy schedules. Programming will include Fellowship Nights such as Movie Night, Lenten Programming for Kids at 5pm, Fundraising Dinner Event and Kids' Communion Afternoon Classes (3 Wednesdays at 4:30).

Question 8: What type of program would you like to see at St. James' for your child or youth?

Results: Nursery-aged read & craft-8, Bible Study-9, Vacation Bible School-8, After-School Program-7, First Communion Training-8, community Service Resource Center-15, Fellowship Group-21, Mission Project Led by Youth-17, Tutoring Resource-9, Theater Group-6, Other;

- **Acolyte training Consider offerings and programs with Young Life in area so YL and churches are working together**
- **Honestly she really enjoys The Middle**
- **Children's chorus**
- **Variety brings enthusiasm...especially if the desire comes from the kids themselves.**

St. James' Actions: Reading and crafts will be provided in the nursery for those of appropriate age. We are now offering a once a month Expanded Sunday School focused on learning more about the Bible for grades 3-5. Kids' Communion classes will be offered in Spring. The office of Volunteer Ministries is gathering resources for our youth and parents to explore the mission opportunities in our community and the appropriate contact information. We are scheduling more "one time" fellowship gatherings for our youth such as Movie Night, Bowling, Laser Tag, or Game Night. The Team Leaders for each age range will be working with their kids to determine what type of mission project they would like to participate in. The Sunday School kids will have a donation box in their room and each month a different charity/cause will be the focus. The Volunteer Ministries office is seeking out individuals who would like to tutor and will be creating a resource library for our families. We will be performing a new Pageant for the youth service on Christmas Eve. We hope to re-energize all ages to participate with multiple speaking/acting parts.

Question 9: If there was additional children or youth programming, would you be willing to help?

Results: Teach Part-Time-5, Watch Nursery Aged Children-2, Assist in any class-4, Other;

- **Whatever I can do**
- **Already do**
- **Tutoring, Theater**
- **No**
- **My kids are usually more comfortable when I'm not there but I would be happy to assist when needed.**
- **Weeknights would be very hard, so it would have to be a Sunday**

- **Unfortunately, because of all the volunteering and board commitments I have I already "drag" my children to participate in events.**
- **Any "behind the scenes" help**
- **I need to wait and see.**
- **Not at this time; maybe when the boys get a little older.**
- **Whatever the Rector asks.**
- **Maybe**
- **Adult supervision if needed**
- **Chaperone, etc.**
- **Yes, if it was age appropriate for my daughter to attend.**
- **Unable**
- **My daughter would love to help with the little ones.**

St. James' Actions: We will be following up with those interested in assisting in our programs.

Question 10: Below is an opportunity to provide any feedback you would like us to hear.

Results: No feedback-19, Other; Comments

- I am concerned about the fluctuation in numbers from one week to the next, esp. regarding preparation of materials.
- I think it would be a benefit to consider other activities, including wildlife and diocesan events when scheduling group activities. There have been many conflicts in "church related " activities. When my girls can't attend a "bishop sponsored" picnic because they are already going to a Wyldlife event it is, I believe, confusing. Activity opportunity is rare enough for the teen /pre teen age group, I want them to have the chance to experience as much as possible.
- Previously coordinated the Sunday School program and taught Sunday School at St. James. Before coming to NY I was the Male Youth Lay Advisor for the Diocese of Southern Virginia and later the Male Youth Lay Advisor for the Diocese of Virginia.
- I was impressed with the confirmation process this year. Seemed a bit more structured than in the past and it was very nice to see confirmands in church as a group on certain Sundays. I think middle school and high school kids can benefit from a church fellowship group that sometimes is just a good place to come and hang out ...in other words not always a formal activity, but instead a comfortable youth space or game room (ping pong, video games) where over time youth leader builds rapore and it can become a place for discussion of issues they are facing in school etc. My child used to attend a Thursday night gathering with pizza (led by Ann Sherwood) which worked for him - I think it met at 6pm so he could go after track practice. I've only been an empty nester for one year, but I already feel a little out of touch with what would work best but these are just some quick thoughts! Good luck and thanks!!
- I am so thankful for the time and efforts given by those who run the youth programs. It's difficult to motivate and create interest in activities for the high school youth. It's nice to see so many middle school you participating but I wish more high school youth would attend activities as well. I don't have a problem with combining the 2 groups either. The younger ones learn from the older ones.
- Kids activities at the 10:30 service
- I think the Sunday school, youth programs, do a wonderful job of keeping in touch and organizing. It is often not easy with kids' and parents' schedules! I also think it is far easier to have programs Sunday morning, especially during the service times as we have a longer drive and it is harder to get in again during the week.
- Great idea to conduct this survey to hear from the congregation. Are the youth being directly surveyed themselves I wonder? Maybe a shorter survey geared just for them? Would love to hear their ideas for both in church activities and especially how they may want to be involved in the community.
- The programming is working well for my family at the moment. As my child gets older it might be nice to be able to leave him in the nursery at the 10:30. At one-point Colleen had some family fellowship events. It would be nice to do that again. Family yoga? Potluck?

- I have a hard time providing feedback for something I don't have more time to give to. I will say that my girls are not engaged in activities beyond acolyting and that I often have to put my foot down (so to speak) to get them to come to Sunday school. If they don't bring a friend, they won't go.
- My children are plugged into Young Life, and I'm wondering if there was more cross-over with YL and CYA that more high schoolers might participate.
- I pray this survey provides us with creative ideas and energy. Each new venture with our youth brings such great rewards to all the St. J family. I am very eager to hear how the ideas for our youth evolve! I would like to gather the Confirmation kids together in the fall to talk ideas.
- What about a summer musical camp for elementary age (prepare a musical Monday - Friday mornings, with a performance for parents and St. James' on Friday night) and/or a summer mission week for teenagers - meet at St. James' each day of a week like from 8 - 9 and have some fellowship and prayer time together, then go out each day and do a different mission project in the community until noon I would help lead either or both opportunities
- I think the kids would get more out of Sunday school if they were separated by grade. When you have preschool to 5th grade in the same lessons the older kids are not engaged. It is too large of an age span. My boys didn't feel they learned or had fellowship so they didn't want to go. Since they didn't go it made it much more difficult to go to the service. I have heard great things about the middle school class so I will have
- The competition for time is huge in this postmodern age.
- I think a bible study group would be excellent- perhaps for grades 4&5, 6-8, 9-12. Perhaps it could be once a month during regularly scheduled church school / youth group. It is challenging to have PreK-5th grade all together for church school. I have a soon to be 4th grader who is very ready for more. He is like a sponge and I want him to learn as much as he can about the Bible and church especially while he is interested.
- Once MS youth group starts, I feel there is more resistance and less interest.
- I would like to get more children and teenagers involved in the CROP walk. The event takes place in October. I would like to be able to attend a youth event and talk to the kids about the walk and try to recruit new families to become involved.
- I think it would be good for the kids to be involved in more of the appropriate adult programs or helping. More service (taking communion to others, praying for others during service, etc.)
- I would very much like my daughter to be more involved with the church or even attend more services. She is resisting going, and pushing her usually pushes her away. I think if she had others her age asking her to attend, she'd be more likely to go. She attended the last Young Life gathering and enjoyed herself.
- I think the programs we now have are impressive but always room for improvement.
- When we moved here, our younger son was very involved in the youth program (activities such as apple picking, game night, movie night, service projects, etc.) and played in the band (this was before there was a "youth" band) as well as participating in New Beginnings and Happening. These programs were wonderful and, although he lives in another part of the diocese most of the year, he volunteers with New Beginnings as an adult leader so that other youth can have the experiences he had.
- I think that the older elementary kids need to have a different / separate opportunity for Sunday School or even better, Bible Study. Being the older Sunday School kids, they need to have lessons and discussion that are geared toward them. The middle school youth group is growing and we look forward to becoming more active with that. It is a very important time for the kids to be connected to St. James! We definitely miss having VBS at St. James! We love the pageant but my kids are not excited about participating any more. I am not sure how to balance the tradition of it with the reality that it can become monotonous for the kids after many years of being in it. Thank you for all you do for the kids at St. James!
- Thank you

St. James' Actions: We will begin to take attendance in all levels to begin to track involvement. St. James' wants to offer as much as we can for every age range but need to be thoughtful in regards with our volunteers and resources. We may need to request donations to help offset craft/resource costs. St. James' will work more closely with Diocese and Young Life when planning activities at the church. We can not control those two entities as they follow their own timelines. The MS & HS will be asking their groups about specific activities for fellowship. As schedules are so busy, "one off" events will be the focus. The back corner of the church has been designated

a family area where children and families can do quiet activities. Each week there will be activity sheets located in the back that reflect the Sunday sermon topic. Additionally, the nursery will be staffed from 10:15 to the Peace of the service along with a once a month Bible Study for grades 3-5. St. James' continues to support all ages in church and feel these offerings give families options each week. The additional class dedicated to just grades 3-5 will offer this older Sunday School level a chance to dive deeper into the Bible lesson and have discussions at a higher level. As stated above, each age level will conduct some form of mission work. Team leaders will be challenging their youth groups to identify charities and ministries that mean something to them. Our hope is this will energize kids about mission.

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO TOOK TIME TO FILL OUT A SURVEY

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