

Everything You Need to Know about WPCYG

We hope. But we probably forgot something.
Grace abounds.

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Grounding Scriptures

How very good and pleasant it is
when kindred live together in unity!
It is like the precious oil on the head,
running down upon the beard,
on the beard of Aaron,
running down over the collar of his robes.
It is like the dew of Hermon,
which falls on the mountains of Zion.
For there the Lord ordained his blessing,
life for evermore.

Psalm 133

If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

John 15:7-12

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 2:5

Staff



The Reverend Mary Kathleen Duncan,
Associate Pastor for Youth
mkduncan@wpc-online.org

Mary Kathleen grew up in Anderson and has been at Westminster for eight years. MKD loves Jesus, the Clemson Tigers, reading, Montreat, working with teenagers, and adventures with her family. She is married to David and has two kids – Mary Eliza (12) and Teddy (9). She also has two lovable Boykin spaniels named Maggie and Sassy. She lives in Gower and loves working at Westminster.



Anna Hanor, Youth Ministry Coordinator
ahanor@wpc-online.org

Anna is a born and bred PC(USA)er from Columbia. Before moving into a staff position, Anna was a volunteer youth advisor for nine years while she was working as a science teacher at JL Mann High School (Go Pats!). She loves spending time with her family (David, Sheppard, and Cason) and her dogs (AdaMoose and Towhee). She believes teenagers are particularly special and loves being a part of the Westminster community.

Yes, you read that right!

We are both married to Davids,
and we both have 2 kids and 2 dogs;
we even used to be neighbors!

We mirror each other in many ways,
and we really love being a team.

Youth Advisors

Middlers

Leigh Miller

Lisa Mullis

Chase Randolph

Paige Cole Randolph

Krista Smith

Will Smith

Lynne Willis

Sr. Highs

Ben Edwards

Jack Hudgens

Meryl Hudgens

Corey Sanders

Laura Williams Sanders

Jordan Smith

Flex

Ruthie Bultz

Kate Edmondson

Maddie Hopkins

Donn James

Kell Runnion

Sarah Williams

Meeting Times

Sunday Nights, September—April

5:00-6:00p Youth Choir

6:00-6:30p Dinner

6:30-7:45p Youth Group

Communication

We use a four-prong mode of communication.

1. Monthly email newsletters

These come via MailChimp. We subscribe everyone on our rolls when youth matriculate into 6th grade and we update these rolls on a yearly basis based on our registration forms. We are happy to add non-members by request. You may opt out of these emails at any time and sometimes you need to check your junk box for them.

2. Texting Service

We will be using Simple Texting to share reminders occasionally throughout the year. You can subscribe by clicking on the QR Code below.



3. Instagram

Follow us @wpc_yg

4. The Harbinger, our worship bulletin

Individual communication

In an emergency, please text Mary Kathleen or Anna. Otherwise, email is best.

Covenant/Expectations

Covenants are mutually agreed upon expectations that we make that help ground and guide us in our life together. When youth register, we ask them to sign the following covenant. We also make covenants one of the first Sunday nights of Youth Group each September. We expect that the families of registered youth will support us as volunteers, meal providers, and chaperones. We cannot run a youth group of this size without lots of help and support!

I will be an enthusiastic and participating member. I will use appropriate and inclusive language in person and online. I will listen when others are speaking. I will show kindness and respect to my leaders and fellow youth. I will welcome new people with openness. I will not bring or be under the influence of anything except the Holy Spirit. I will be fully present at WPCYG by limiting my use of isolating technology.

Parent Involvement

Sunday Night Dinners

We expect parents will help with dinners throughout the year. A good rule of thumb is to help with the number of dinners as you have kids in the youth group (if you have three kids in youth group, you'll help with three dinners during the year). We know this can be a financial burden so we have a team of families helping, and we will supplement some of the cost. Be prepared to spend up to \$75-100 per family per meal.

Chaperoning Trips

A huge part of youth ministry is going on trips together. We love taking our youth to experience new things! Our trips follow a pattern each year so you can plan ahead. Our church child protection policy requires us to take one adult for every seven youth on overnight trips; this means we need your participation! We ask that you chaperone at least one trip during your child's tenure in WPCYG. (See the list of yearly trips in this book.)

We understand that chaperoning for an entire week may not be possible for you or your family; we can typically pair parents up to chaperone half a trip and "tag in/out" with another parent.

Volunteering on Sunday mornings/ Sunday nights/special events

Occasionally we need volunteers on Sunday nights when our advisor number is low. With our new model for Middler Sunday School this year we also need parent volunteers to host gatherings on campus. Sometimes we also have special programs or events outside of our normal schedule and we might ask for your presence and help! Examples include service projects, class dinners, fellowship outings, etc.

Yearly Calendar Flow

You can expect our youth group calendar to flow in this pattern every year. We will always communicate changes to our normal schedule via email.

First Sunday of August: 6th grade day and “move up”

August: Back to School Retreat

Sunday after Labor Day: First Youth Group

January-May: Confirmation (9th graders)

Super Bowl Sunday (typically February): Youth Sunday

Mother’s Day: Confirmation Sunday

Last Sunday in April: Last Youth Group

Wednesdays in May: 8th grade Bible study

When Greenville County Schools has a holiday on Monday, we typically cancel youth group as many families choose to travel.

Trips

Back to School Retreat to Look Up Lodge

A one night retreat for all 6th-12th graders one Saturday-Sunday in August. Featuring keynotes, music, break-out groups, and lots of fun and fellowship, this is a great way get ready for a new year of WPCYG.

Middle School Presbytery Retreat

This two-night retreat each November is open to all Middlers. We join with other Presbyterian churches in the Upstate for a time of rest, reflection, and faith development. It is normally held at Asbury Hills Retreat Center.

Winter Senior High Trip

Even Years – Fun & Fellowship Trip

Odd Years – Follow & Serve Retreat

In 2025, we participated in a Follow & Serve weekend over Presidents' Day in Greenville.

In 2026, our Fun & Fellowship trip will be to Dollywood (January 2-4).

Witness and Service Trips

Each summer both our Middlers and our Senior Highs are invited to participate in a week-long Witness and Service experience. These trips focus on service with mission partners, learning about new cultures, and spiritual development. Middlers typically participate in more regional experiences (Asheville, Charlotte, Camp Fellowship, at home in Greenville). Senior Highs typically travel further afield. Past trips include New Mexico, Florida, and Jamaica. We try to take these trips during the first full week of June.

Montreat Youth Conference

Each summer Senior Highs are also invited to attend the Montreat Youth Conference. We go in the latter part of July. We stay in dorm-style housing and participate in all the conference has to offer – keynote, recreation, small groups, worship, free time, and back home group time. This is a highlight of the summer for many of our youth!

There will be two mandatory meetings held for Montreat parents and participants; one before you can register and one in the summer prior to the trip. These are to ensure all parents and participants are up to date on information and expectations.

Sunday Mornings

We encourage all youth and their families to be an active part of the worship life at WPC. We worship at 9a & 11:15a in the school year and at 10a only from the first Sunday in May through the Sunday of Labor Day Weekend.

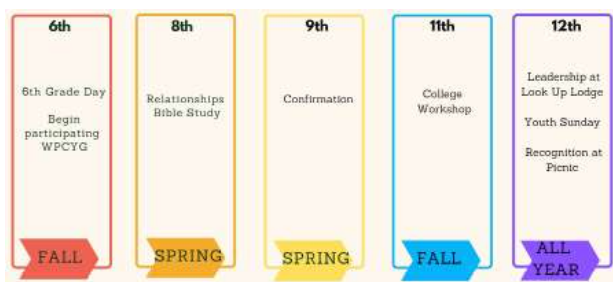
The Sunday School hour is an ever-evolving model for our youth.

Senior Highs are encouraged to fill out the Time & Talent Survey that is published every fall. This enables us to plug them into volunteer positions on Sunday mornings (Children's Sunday School, Children's Church, Nursery, etc.).

Each semester we also run a Senior High WestConnect Group that meets during the Sunday School hour and is facilitated by our Youth Elder(s).

Middlers will be meeting for Sunday School each week in the youth suite. This class, led by Claire & Mac Gilliland, will study the Feasting on the Word curriculum. Sr. Highs not participating in WestConnect are always welcome to join.

Faith Milestones



Confirmation

Confirmation is the Faith Milestone for 9th graders. We typically begin Confirmation in January and lessons run through the end of April. Meetings take place during the Sunday School hour in Room 309. Classes are confirmed on Mother's Day during our 10a worship service. Although the milestone is for freshmen, Confirmation is open to any youth who are 9th–12th grade who have yet to be confirmed. Mary Kathleen is the primary teacher for this class and is supported by other staff members, parents, and youth advisors.

Youth 10th grade and older who would like to join the church are also invited to attend any of our Sunday morning new member classes. These occur quarterly and are led by our pastoral team and Membership Committee. Participants are able to join the Sunday they attend the class during our 11:15a service.

Youth Sunday

Youth Sunday is typically held on Super Bowl Sunday. The worship services that morning (9a & 11:15a) are entirely planned and led by our youth. Our youth choir sings and our seniors bring the word that day. All ages contribute to various aspects of the service (written liturgy, artwork, speaking parts, children's church, etc.) in the weeks leading up to the service.

Service Opportunities

Each school year, we try and offer at least two service opportunities per semester. Most often these opportunities connect us with one of our local mission partners (Rise Against Hunger Meal Packing, preparation for Magi Market, collection for United Ministries/ Serenity Place/ Pick-Up Project, etc).

Senior High Youth are also invited to fill out the Time & Talent form each year and be plugged into a Sunday morning volunteer role.

Youth can also earn up to 25 service hours for participating in one of our Witness & Service Trips in the summer or 15 hours for helping with Vacation Bible School.

Time and Talent Survey

Each August we make a new Time and Talent Survey available to our Senior High Youth. This enables us to connect them with various ministries within WPC and equips them to serve as volunteers with WPC Kids on Sunday mornings, Wednesday afternoons, and beyond.

Youth Elders

2024 was the inaugural year for Westminster's Youth Elder. Youth in 10th grade who have been confirmed are invited to indicate on the Time & Talent form that they would like to be considered as a potential nominee for that year's youth elder. The Nominating Committee will consider those names and elect a youth to serve a two-year term as elder. This person will serve as a full, voting member of session, and serve on the Education Committee.

Current Youth Elders are:

Ben Bloodworth (12th grade)

Mary Mac Fairey (11th grade)

Payments and Scholarships

If the price of a trip or event ever poses a challenge, families are invited to reach out to Mary Kathleen about scholarship or payment plan needs.

All trips and events require a deposit or payment in full at the time of registration. Payment may be made online or via check/cash in the office. After the date indicated on the registration page, refunds may not be offered. We often have to pay well in advance of our trips for transportation, room, board, conference fees, etc. and cannot get that money back past certain dates. (Occasionally, if a youth needs to cancel, we are able to fill that spot and issue a refund, however, that is not guaranteed.)

Registrations

All registrations are available on our website under “Connect” and “Events Registration.” If they are not online, it is because they aren’t open yet or registration has closed.

More Information about Meals

Unfortunately, it's very challenging to know exactly how many youth will show up for dinner, so expect to have leftovers.

- Plan to feed 150 people. The most efficient way to prepare this much food is for each family to cook for 20 people.
- Dinner is served at 6p. Setup typically begins at 5:30p. Coordinate with Anna if you need more time.
- You can cook in the kitchen or bring food prepared.
- We have youth who are vegetarian, gluten-free, nut-free, and sesame-free. A tossed salad with dressing on the side is a great way to make sure every youth has a safe option. We also have frozen Uncrustables for you to use.
- Plates, silverware, napkins, and cups are provided.
- Lemonade mix and jugs are provided.
- Salad dressing (Ranch & Italian) is provided.
- Food will be served using all four buffet lines in the hallway outside the kitchen.
- For dessert, youth especially love ice cream sandwiches, ice pops, cookies, and brownies.
- The dishwasher is easy and fast to use. Anna will help you clean any dishes you use.
- Leftovers can be taken by y'all or we can donate them to Loaves and Fishes or the fire station.

We ask that you stay to help clean the food serving lines, dishes, or prep areas in the kitchen.

We have found the most effective way to communicate as a team is for the Team Leader to create a group text for easy and quick coordination.

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