



**ANTIOCH CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**YOUTH MINISTRIES**  
**(BIRTH-12TH GRADES)**

# Parent Handbook

2019-2020

## **Introduction**

Welcome! This guide was written especially for Antioch Youth Ministries (AYM) parents with children Birth-12<sup>th</sup> Grades. As parents, we all share the common goal of raising our children up in the Lord... and that's why this guide was written. Its purpose is to try to explain our goals, purposes, and policies and to answer many frequently asked questions.

Programing is designed for each specific group:

- High School Ministry (HSM) - Grades 9-12
- **Middle School Ministry (MSM) - Grades 5-8**
- **Children's Ministry (KIDS) - Birth-4<sup>th</sup> Grade**

## **Antioch Youth Ministries Staff**

### **High School Minister**

Ben Wacaster – [Ben@AntiochCofC.org](mailto:Ben@AntiochCofC.org) - 256-975-4473

### **Middle School Minister**

Chuck Chisam – [Chuck@AntiochCofC.org](mailto:Chuck@AntiochCofC.org) - 615-972-2822

### **Children's Minister**

Stacy Whittington – [Stacy@AntiochCofC.org](mailto:Stacy@AntiochCofC.org) - 615-775-5460

### **AYM Assistant**

Elaina Marshall – [Elaina@AntiochCofC.org](mailto:Elaina@AntiochCofC.org) - 615-554-4477

### **AYM Elders**

Todd Bess – [Todd.Bess@Comcast.net](mailto:Todd.Bess@Comcast.net) - 615-351-1761

Kent Johnson – [Kent.Johnson@Lipscomb.edu](mailto:Kent.Johnson@Lipscomb.edu) - 615-397-7978

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Tim Partlow – [TWPartlow@Hotmail.com](mailto:TWPartlow@Hotmail.com) - 615-521-0269

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## **Communication**

Communication is an essential part of the success of AYM. Below are the many ways you can inform yourself of AYM news and activities.

**Church Database** – It is very important that your family information in our church database is complete and accurate. This information will be used for mailings, calls, weekly email updates and text messages. If you need more information on contact Sheryl Friend (615-834-3063) for database access.

**Church Bulletin** - Published weekly it has specific details surrounding upcoming events.

**Church Website** ([www.AntiochCofC.org](http://www.AntiochCofC.org)) is updated often and is a quick reference for upcoming events, calendar information, brochures, medical release forms, pictures, and other news.

**Group Me** – Text your name and email to Elaina at 615-554-4477 to be added.

**FaceBook** (High School Ministry – ACOC, Middle School Ministry ACOC, Antioch Kids (birth-4<sup>th</sup> grade) – Pictures, registration links and general reminders are posted here.

## **Safety and Security**

**Safety & Security Information** - At Antioch we take the safety and security of our children very serious. We have several measures in place to ensure we are doing our part to protect your children while they are with us.

**Volunteer Screening** - All AYM volunteers are background checked prior to their serving.

### **Policy Against Child Abuse**

- AYM in general maintains a strict zero-tolerance policy against child abuse and neglect. This includes mental injury, physical injury, sexual abuse, negligent treatment or maltreatment. It is against the law in Tennessee and against AYM policy for any child to be mistreated.

**Security Team** - Antioch is monitored by a security team whose members have been trained and educated.

- Specifically, a member of the security team is watching all the AYM classrooms closely before, during and after class time.
- In the event of the following EMERGENCIES
  - MEDICAL EMERGENCY (Code **WHITE** )
    - Medical team and parents will be contacted.
  - WEATHER EMERGENCY (Code **BLUE**)

- Kids will be escorted to Fellowship Hall if time permits. Otherwise they will take cover in an interior hallway.
- FIRE (Code **RED**)
  - Kids will be led by teachers to the nearest safe exit and gather at the pavilion.
- MISSING CHILD (Code **GREEN**)
  - Security team will be notified and parents will be contacted.
- STRANGER/WEAPON/UNAUTHORIZED PRESENCE (Code **BLACK**)
  - Teachers will lock classroom doors and group kids out of sight in the classroom.

**Check-In/Pick-Up** - Check-In/Pick-Up procedures apply to children birth – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade.

- When you bring your child to WOW or class, a team member will greet you at the door and give you and your child coordinating tags.
- Even if you have written allergies on your child's tag, please re-communicate this information to the team member at each classroom door.
- You will return your checkout tag to the team member at the door.
- For the safety of your children, we WILL NOT release a child to an adult without their coordinating checkout tag or a sibling under 7<sup>th</sup> grade.
- If something happens to your tag or you misplace it, please talk to a Stacy, or if unavailable, a Security Team member.

## **Health and Wellness**

**Wellness Policy** - Our desire is to protect all children and our dedicated volunteers from exposure to illness. We appreciate your courtesy and cooperation in maintaining a healthy environment. We look forward to seeing your child when he/she feels well and is not exhibiting:

- Fever (100+ degrees), excessive/colored nasal drainage, persistent coughing, diarrhea, vomiting within 24 hours, rash, infection of the eye/nose/throat etc.
- Our classrooms are cleaned regularly, however please be courteous also as we know children get sick without much warning. Let us know if your child gets sick Wednesday night after class for example, so we can make sure to get rid of extra germs, especially during flu season!

**Allergies & Special Needs** - Please notify us of **ALL** allergies, medical or behavioral special needs so we can best help your children.

# High School Ministry (HSM) AND Middle School Ministry (MSM)

HSM/MSM exists to **REACH** students, **CONNECT** them with God and others, and challenge them to **GROW** in their faith and **SERVE** others as they **HONOR** God with their lives.

## About the High School Minister

Ben Wacaster began as a Youth Minister at Antioch Church of Christ in June. He has a BA in Philosophy and a minor in History from Auburn University. Ben has a great passion to instill faith in teens and create a community centered around devotion to God.

Ben and his wife, Rachel were married in May of this year and are very excited to be joining us at Antioch.

## About the Middle School Minister

Chuck Chisam has been involved in the lives of children at Antioch Church of Christ for over 30 years. He holds a B.S. in Education and a M.A. and Educational Administration from Lipscomb University. He has served as an educational deacon and is currently serving as the Middle School Minister. He has also been the Camp Director for Antioch Bible Camp (ABC) for the last 20+ years.

Chuck and Debbie will have been married for over 30 years! They have 3 children: Chaz (27), Brenden (25), and Anna (20).

## WHAT TO EXPECT FROM HSM/MSM

- Christian Atmosphere - We will work hard to provide a wholesome environment that fosters spiritual growth and fellowship through the nurturing of Christian friendships.
- Leaders - We will provide opportunities for quality Christian relationships with adults outside the child's family to provide examples of servant living.
- Transportation - When special events require transportation, we will strive toward safe, efficient, and dependable travel by using qualified drivers with good driving records. Safety is always a top priority.
- Supervision - We will take the responsibility for your child very seriously when they are in our care (for instance, in classes, on one of our activities, etc).

- However, we will not be monitoring your child when he/she is not under our responsibility (for instance, during worship services, before and after classes, in the church parking lot, etc.)
- Safety - Provisions are made to satisfy basic first aid needs. On most group activities such as retreats, we try to have a nurse, or someone trained in first aid, present.
- Responsibility - We ask you to remember that parents bear the primary responsibility for spiritual growth of their child. There is little we can do to replace the training of a godly parent.
- Prayer - We ask you to continually hold up this ministry in prayer, that all we do will be blessed by Him, and that our kids will be trained and matured into servant leaders.

### **WHAT WE EXPECT OF PARENTS AND STUDENTS**

- Involvement/Support - We expect (and need) you to be involved in HSM wholeheartedly. We are far from perfect, and we do not know all the answers, but if we work together in Christian love and with a common goal, we believe we can help you make a difference in the life of your child.
- Feedback - We expect communication and feedback from you. Let us know important things like schedules for your child's concerts, games, etc. Let us know if your child is having problems in certain areas. Also, if there are any special needs your child has, please inform us.
- Punctuality - We always try to be on time. When we are running more than 30 minutes late, we will communicate via group text and email. We try to be as punctual as possible to our departure and return times – so we expect you to be on time to pick up and/or drop off your child. Please call if you are going to be over 30 minutes late.
- Respect - We expect your children to cooperate and respect all AYM Staff, Volunteers, and ONE ANOTHER.
  - We expect your children to respect the property of others, including the property of Antioch (church building, campgrounds, vehicles, etc.) and any other properties we are using during any of our activities. This is also important when we are invited to other's homes.
- Participation - When your children is under our supervision (during classes, retreats, etc) we expect him/her to participate in all activities with the entire group and to have a good attitude. Exceptions will be made for illness and special circumstances.
- Rules - We expect your support and understanding with the enforcement of rules and discipline. Please help us convey to your child why we have certain rules and the responsibility

they have to respect those in authority. They are designed to help ensure the safety of your child, to minimize conflicts among the group, and to maximize spiritual growth. Basically, if your child uses common sense, they will know what is expected and will not have any trouble with our guidelines.

- Transportation - All children are expected to ride the church vehicles when they are driven and space is available. An exception is when a parent is attending the event and desires the child to ride with him/her... or when a time conflict is posed and the parent gives permission for the teen to arrive late or leave early.
- Dress - All Students should be dressed modestly at church and youth activities.
  - No clothes displaying inappropriate messages or pictures.
  - Stomachs, backs and underwear should not be visible.
  - No spaghetti straps. All straps should be at least 2 inches.
  - Shorts and skirts should extend below fingertips with arms straightened.
- No drugs, alcohol, fireworks, weapons, or tobacco products are allowed on any Student Ministry event.
- Prescription and non-prescription drugs should be discussed between a parent and an appropriate group leader attending the event. Instructions in writing are best.
- No disruptive behavior is allowed (fighting, cursing, vandalism, pranks, disrespect of authority, etc.)
- Parents need to ensure that any music brought to an event is appropriate. If inappropriate music is confiscated and the parent will be notified.

## **Rules & Activity Guidelines**

Though our children are raised to respect authority and are a joy to be with the majority of the time, there are occasionally times when, for a variety of reasons, it becomes necessary to enforce a degree of discipline upon certain young people who are not cooperative with those in authority.

As a parent you are the key to appropriate behavior and respect for Christian authority.

With that in mind, here is what we expect of you as parents regarding discipline.

When we are "away" on an activity, we represent the Antioch church, our city, our families, and, most of all, God. For this reason, we expect the teenagers traveling with us to conduct themselves in the best possible manner. If your son or daughter is guilty of misconduct or violation of a major rule, the only recourse we have is to send them home. When this happens, we will assist your child in contacting you. It then becomes your responsibility to transport him/her home. We will make every effort to fully explain the circumstances behind the discipline and why actions were taken.

Since many of our activities are designed for the spiritual growth and social development of your child, we urge you to use discretion when withholding church related activities from your child as a discipline measure. (We respect your judgment in this area.)

### **"What about the costs?"**

We always consider costs when we plan events. Though sometimes the cost of events may seem questionable, please understand that nearly all events are subsidized in some way through our church budget (transportation, housing, food, etc.) Essentially, our events and activities are always "non-profit." We know how expensive it is for parents with more than one child or when events run close together, and we try to minimize these expenses. Financial assistance may be available if needed - contact Elaina.

### **Retreats/Special Events**

The price for retreats and special events is determined based on location and price charged by the host facility. Adults/chaperones attend at a deeply discounted price, due to the gift of their time. Exceptions would be when we have enough required chaperones and we have other adults who would like to participate. These adults would be required to pay full price. Other exceptions may arise for events where budget mandates.

Finally, we know that attendance at all events may be impossible. In fact, there are few kids that will be able to attend everything. We understand and encourage you to attend the events that meet your schedule and budget. Our experience has been that the right balance between church activities, school, and family life is an individual decision that we cannot make for each of our young people. We support your judgment.



# Children's Ministry (KIDS)

Parents,

Welcome to Antioch's Children's Ministry! If you are taking the time to read this, I know you are invested in your child's spiritual growth and wellbeing and for that I thank you. You are entrusting your children to us, the Children's Ministry team, and we want to provide a safe, uplifting environment for your child to learn about God.

I firmly believe it takes a village to raise children equipping them to fight of Satan in the world that we live in today. Antioch has an amazing village to assist you in raising yours. The Children's Ministry's mission and vision you will see below point to that and coincide with the church's values. I pray for your children regularly as they will be our next leaders in the community, in the church, in the world. I ask that you keep this ministry in your prayers as well that God will work through this ministry to strengthen our children and families as we bring up our children to be more like Jesus.

If you EVER have any questions or concerns not addressed within this handbook, feel free to email me.

Blessings,

Stacy Whittington

Children's Ministry (Birth-4<sup>th</sup> Grade)

[Stacy@AntiochCofC.org](mailto:Stacy@AntiochCofC.org)

## **Our Mission**

The Children's Ministry's mission is to help children gain a foundational understanding of God and His movement through all history including today. Through this we are committed to helping children think like Jesus.

## **Our Vision**

Our vision is for children to: know God's Word, grow in God's Spirit and show God's love.

## **About the Children's Minister**

Stacy Whittington became the Children's Minister in July 2018. She works with families and children birth through 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Stacy is a dietitian by education but has a passion for developing curriculum and shaping hearts of children to guard their innocence in the crazy world we live in! She finds joy in serving Antioch families and visitors through creating a safe and welcoming Children's Ministry area and building relationships with parents and children. She is overjoyed to see children and families growing within our Antioch family.

Stacy is married to Shane and they have three children: Sanora (12), Graesyn (10) and Lawson (8). Shane works alongside Stacy so feel free to reach out to him at any time as well.

**How to Serve** - We are always in need of volunteers with a variety of talents and capabilities! Below is a summary of roles that we use on regular basis in our ministry. Keep in mind though, we are ALWAYS in need of prayer warriors and mentors for our children.

- Bible Class Teachers
  - For both Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights.
  - We prefer to have two adults in each classroom; these can be spouses, friends or we can pair you up!
  - We would like for you to commit to a quarter at a time, however if that is not feasible, we are still willing to work with you!
  - You can also add your name to a list of substitutes to call when needed if your schedule does not allow for a regular commitment.
  - If you have 30 years of experience or have never taught there is a place for you! We will make sure you have the tools you need and resources to be successful and feel comfortable.
  
- Puppeteers
  - On Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights we use puppets in our ministry. If you would like to be added to the group of puppeteers, see Stacy.
  - Experience is great, however not required! If you are interested, we can easily train you with some quick tips and tricks on how to be a great puppeteer!
  
- Song Leaders
  - During WOW, Wednesday Nights and special events we love to sing!!! We also love having confident song leaders who know the words, variety of songs and can throw out a decent pitch. You don't have to be trained in this to qualify by any means! Many of you are overqualified. We just need to know who is willing to stand up when it is time.
  - We do have a list of songs (and are constantly adding to it) that we like to use that is available if you would like to use it.
  
- WOW Leaders
  - WOW is our children's worship. It meets after communion through the end of service (basically during the sermon).
  - Lesson is provided for you and you have teen volunteers.
  - The children are 3 years-2nd grade who attend.
  - The time spent follows the same general patterns: songs, prayer, memory verse, object lesson, skit (by the teens), Bible story, application game. The children are then dismissed to their Bible classes.
  
- Volunteers for special events

- This can cover a variety of things! Basically, you tell us what you are good at and we will call you when the need arises!
- Fusion/VBS
- Christmas Party or other Holiday events
- 4<sup>th</sup> grade trip
- Back to School Bash etc.
- Organizers/Cleaners for classrooms and workroom
  - On occasion we find things getting a little cluttered! Once a quarter we would like to have a time for some cleaning out and organizing to keep it from becoming overwhelming and out of control.
  - Volunteers in this area will be given general guidelines and at their convenience can work on areas that need to be completed.

### **Our Classrooms**

- The Children's Ministry is located down the pre-school hallway and for K-4<sup>th</sup> Grade, in classrooms #41, 43, 45 and 47.
  - Violet Room – 3-12 months
  - Yellow Room – Born between 8-1-2018 and 8-1-2019 (or ready to promote from Violet)
  - Red Room – Born between 8-1-2016 and 8-1-2017
  - Orange Room – Born between 8-1-2017 and 8-1-2018
  - Green Room – Born between 8-1-2015 and 8-1-2016
  - Indigo Room – Born between 8-1-2014 and 8-1-2015
- Depending on the number of students we have in each grade classes may be grouped based on single grades or two grades grouped together. We will make this decision annually.
- WoW
  - K-2nd WoW meets in classroom #47
  - PreK WoW (ages 3-5) meets in the Indigo room
  - WoW stands for Wonders of Worship. It is intended to engage children grades K-2 in age appropriate worship. It is not required that children participate or attend WoW, but it is available for those who would like to give their children this opportunity.
  - Because we believe children benefit greatly from seeing their parents engage with God and His people, we encourage parents to bring children in 3rd grade and beyond to join us in the auditorium for all of Sunday morning worship. Antioch is a family of families, and we don't expect perfectly behaved children! If your child is being disruptive, please don't be embarrassed. The sound of children is the sound of life and a future!

### **What to Bring**

- Please have your child stop by the restroom on his/her way to WoW and/or class.

- There is no need for your child to bring anything to class with them (toys, bags etc.). These are distractions and it has been our experience that they cause more problems than help. If possible, please keep these items with you until after class time.
- Our K-4<sup>th</sup> graders have Bibles for their use in class. When they promote to Kindergarten the children are given a Bible and time to decorate the cover. That Bible will stay with them in class until they leave the Children's Ministry. Your child is never discouraged from bringing his/her own Bible to class, however, know that they do have a personal Bible here that they are welcome to use and mark in etc. each and every class time.

### **Prayer**

Prayer is an integral part of all we do. Pray for kids, fellow team members, and parents of all of the Children's Ministry. Consider that God is using you to plant seeds in kids' hearts. Whether you are a parent, volunteer or both, consider that God may use you to welcome visitors, demonstrate grace to a child or another team member, etc. Pray over all of that (and more) as you walk about your daily life!

### **Elementary Curriculum**

We use Answers Bible Curriculum

(<https://answersingenesis.org/sunday-school/abc/>). Sunday mornings classes will be divided into age groups and remain with their grade the entire hour.

Wednesday nights, we have all of grades K-4 together for the entire hour doing a devotional, songs, puppets, object lesson, hands-on activity etc.

### **Preschool Curriculum**

Our youngest grades learn through the use of Palma Smiley boxes

(<https://www.palmasmileyearlychildhood.com/>). At this age, repetition is key. The children focus on one subject matter for a month and engage in a variety of activities to reinforce the bottom-line message.

Our older two preschool classes spend a year in the Old Testament and a year in the New Testament covering the main stories.

### **Nursing Mothers**

We have a fully stocked nursing room located at the back of the auditorium. We also have a designated nursing area in our nursery.

### **Nursery Aged Children**

If you are leaving your child in the nursery, please label all their belongings as well as the bag. Please bring diapers but if you do forget the nursery does have some sizes available. Please let a nursery worker know if your child can have snacks (Cheerios, Animal Crackers) or tell them they have snacks in their bag.