

## Thanks for your interest!

Dear potential Youth Leader,

We are so excited that you are considering a possible leadership role in our student ministry! We have a HUGE need for mature adult leaders who are called by God into youth leadership to make an impact for Christ in student's lives. We believe healthy youth ministry is built on healthy relationships--between adult leaders and students. Christ like leadership is the key to students feeling loved and understanding God's love in practical ways.

The quality of our leadership team is very important. We are looking for men and women who have a deep commitment to Christ and a desire to care for students. Included with this packet is an application for our ministry. Please fill it out with much prayer and consideration.

Once we have received your application material, we will call to set up a meeting with you. All information will be strictly confidential. We look forward to meeting you. Feel free to call or e-mail us at: 318-9446

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### **Inside this packet...**

- What students need
- Why we exist as a ministry
- What we are building
  - Involvement
- Taking the next step

# What Students Need

Students do not connect to programs, they connect with *people*. The most effective way to impact students is through significant relationships with caring adults. One of the common roadblocks for adults getting started in youth ministry are misconceptions about what it takes to be a youth worker like...

- You must be young
- You must have outstanding Bible training
- You must be a perfect example of a Christian
- You must be a captivating communicator
- You must feel secure
- You must be able to act like one of the students
- You must have plenty of free time
- You must play guitar
- You must know the most 8 popular videos on MTV
- You must be wild, crazy and dynamic
- You must be liked by all the students
- You must own a 15-passenger van

Student ministry is not easy and it's normal to feel inadequate about your skills. Your confidence will grow the more you're around students and see how God can use inadequate people (like us) to do great things.

Here's the truth about what students need...

- Love God and live for Him
- Be interested in a student's life
- Take initiative to get to know students
- Pray for students
- Be real
- Say encouraging things
- Believe in students
- Laugh and have a good time
- Remember names
- Share God's love through personal experience
- **Be consistent with attendance**
- Be patient
- Speak Truth
- Listen
- Be accountable
- Be available

# Our Covenant

In order to facilitate a physically, emotionally, and spiritually healthy environment for both students and leaders we observe some biblically defined directives that we believe keep us on track.

## **I will protect unity...**

- ...by acting in love toward other members. (Romans 14:19; 1 Peter 1:22)
- ...by refusing to gossip. (Ephesians 4:19)
- ...by following the leaders. (Hebrews 13:17)

## **I will share responsibility...**

- ...by praying for its growth. (1 Thessalonians 1:1,2)
- ...by inviting those who don't know Christ to attend. (Luke 14:23)
- ...by warmly welcoming those who visit. (Romans 15:7)

## **I will serve the ministry...**

- ...by discovering my gifts and talents. (1 Peter 4:10)
- ...by being equipped to serve by my leaders. (Ephesians 4:11,12)
- ...by developing a servant's heart. (Philippians 2:3-4,7)

## **I will show support...**

- ...by attending faithfully. (Hebrews 11:25)
- ...by living a godly life. (Philippians 1:27)
- ...by serving/giving regularly. (1 Corinthians 16:2)

## **I will demonstrate love to others...**

- ...by exhibiting mutual submission. (Ephesians 5:21)
- ...by encouraging and building up others, not tearing them down.
- ...by avoiding public displays of affection. (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

# Why We Are Here

Our goal is to help one another become the transformed people Jesus died for us to be. In fact, our mission statement as a ministry is simply: “Transforming Real Students into Real Followers of Jesus Christ.” (Plugging Students Into God’s Purpose)

We believe in the transformed life Christ alone offers, not rules or tradition. This frees us to focus on enabling life-giving relationships with the One who came to give life.

# What We Are Building

## **Graduating Students Should Know...**

...that they are image bearers of God.  
(Gen. 1:26, 27)

...who they are in Christ.  
(2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15)

...what they believe and why.  
(1 Pet. 3:15)

...how to be equipped for battle.  
(Eph. 6:10-18)

...what their spiritual gifts are and the importance of using them.  
(1 Cor. 12:28)

...how to plug into and serve in the body of Christ.  
(1 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 4:12,13)

...their responsibility to share the gospel with others.  
(Matt. 25:14-30; Luke 12:48)

...how to lead others to Christ.  
(Matt. 28:19,20)

...where and how to look for answers to tough questions.  
(Heb. 4:12)

Everything we do has these goals in mind. We are passionate and purposeful about helping students cultivate a Christian world-view.

# How We Are Building It

## Biblical Teaching

We are passionate about teaching directly from the Bible and believe it to be God's inerrant love letter to us. A portion of every night is given to the teaching of God's word.

## Small Groups

Our small groups exist to Transform Real Students Into Real Followers by creating a safe place for our students to connect with the Body of Christ, and to help them grow in their faith.

Powerful and life-changing community can exist, with great difficulty, because a Christ-centered environment calls for acceptance, encouragement, authenticity, and discernment.

### Why We Have Small Groups...

The primary biblical purpose for small groups is fellowship (connect). We do small groups to make large groups smaller. We want students to create and maintain meaningful relationships.

The secondary biblical purpose for Small Groups is discipleship (grow). Every week we will study and discuss biblical passages. A portion of the small group time will be devoted to the application of biblical truths to our lives. Small Groups are not a classroom (all learning), nor a party (all play). Small Groups are a place for students to form relationships with others and with God so that they can grow in their faith.

Understanding WHAT (connect, grow) we're trying to do will help you be a better, more focused leader.

The Church is called to be different and marked by powerful, authentic, and Christ-centered community. We seek to create these "pockets of community" within our small groups. Here are some of the benefits for our students:

Students can be known and accepted for who they are.

Students can be verbal and discuss important life issues.

Students can be accountable to a spiritual mentor and challenged to spiritually grow.

Students can get personalized applications of biblical truths and find real help for the real problems that they face.

**As a leader, it is essential that you know and understand our purpose.**

# Ready for the Next Step?

## Get Ready...

### Prayerfully Consider Your Commitment

We want you to take time to pray and think through this commitment as well as seek counsel of family and/or friends about serving in Area32 Student Ministries.

### Complete the Student Ministry Application

The application should be included with this booklet. If not, please contact Mike Johnson at 318-9446 ext. 144 and we will send one to you. Please take your time and complete the application packet and background Check form.

## Get Set...

### Campus Locations & Times

Mondays in Lynden--6:15-9pm--High School

Tuesdays in Lynden, Everson, or Kendall--6:15-9pm--Jr. High

Wednesday in Kendall--6:15-9pm--High School

(Meridian info to come...)

Small group leaders build relationships with students that meet consistently from week to week. Groups are typically between 5 and 8 students and leaders will always be in same-gender groups.

## Go!

### Check It Out

While you are still in the process of completing the application packet, you may want to observe one of our weekly services. This can be a great opportunity for you to get a feel for the ministry without having expectations or responsibilities.

### Let's Get Together

We want to get to know you. We want you to have the opportunity to describe your spiritual journey, discuss your gifts and desires for working in student ministries, and get questions answered. Be prepared to share your talents, goals, achievements. Why do you feel called to Area32 Student Ministries? What can you bring to enhance this team?

### Questions?

If you have any questions regarding the application process, please contact us!

# Your First Night

So you've made it this far, what's next!? Here are some simple steps to starting your new group.

## **Get Acquainted**

Spend the first 10 minutes greeting and doing relational ministry.

**Name Game**—go around a circle: Give 2 bucks to whoever can remember everyone's name. You may want to add this element—have each student say his/her name and favorite food that starts with the first letter of his/her first name. It may be easier to remember names this way.

## **Clarify Expectations**

Spend a few minutes casting vision to the students about your excitement for what Small Group can be this year. You will want to include the following...

- The students will get out of a small group what they put in;
- "I'm committed to this, all our leaders are committed, you be committed and watch incredible things happen,"
- The reason you are there is because you love God and you love to see what happens when students allow God to get a hold of their lives.

## **Get Student Profiles**

Do the student profile in small groups—we will try to provide pens or pencils for this to happen. Tell the students to answer as honestly as they can. Review the student profiles the following week. Go over student profiles to get to know your students. Have dialogue about the different questions. Instead of focusing on one student and having them give all of the answers, focus on each question, and have the students share their answers. This is less threatening, and it allows you to explore the answers in a group setting. Plus, it opens things up for more dialogue between the students.

## **Pray**

Pray for your Small Group year. You may want to ask for prayer requests (especially if you find that you have more than 10 minutes). Close the night in prayer.

# Keys for Leaders

## Connect

*"We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us." 1 Thessalonians 2:8*

Superficial community exists at nearly every level of our lives, and we often settle for clubs and groups and miss out on powerful relationships. Your small group should be a safe place where people feel freedom to be real and take risks in sharing their struggles. The first step to creating this environment should be taken by the leaders.

## Commit

*"Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly." James 3:1*

Your task is not to be taken lightly. As a mature believer, you have within you the ability to communicate God's truth. Be committed with your diligence to prepare for your small group time. Follow up on important issues.

## Be Authentic

*"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God." Colossians 3:16*

Don't seek to offer something to your students that you don't have. Maintain a vibrant relationship with Christ. Make filling yourself up with God's Word your first priority, and then passing that along to others will require less effort, as you'll be offering directly from your heart.

## Display Maturity

*"But solid foods for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil." Hebrews 6:11*

The ultimate goal of your investment in students' lives is to encourage them to grow closer to God. Help them mature in intimacy with God and the knowledge of the truth.

# Small Group Values

## **Relational Approach**

We value powerful and authentic community built on God's love and deep relationships.

## **Encouragement**

We value a positive environment that encourages growth, a place where God-infused potential is recognized and affirmed.

## **Laughter & Celebration**

We value fun; Small Groups don't have to be a comedy show, but it shouldn't be a funeral either.

## **Acceptance**

We value a safe environment; accept people for who they are and where they are at.

## **Transparency**

We value real leaders: admit your confusion to some questions and share your struggles.

## **Involvement of students**

We value student input and involvement; they should be doing 75% of the talking, and staff 100% of the listening.

## **Outreach-Oriented**

We value the encouragement and development of evangelism. Pray for non-Christian friends.

## **Numerical Growth**

We value numerical growth. There are too many unconnected students who need to be connected.

## **Spiritual Growth**

We value our communities drawing nearer to God.

## **Homelike Environment**

We value the feeling of belonging; when students miss a couple of weeks, they should be noticed; when they return they should hear, "It's great to see you back."

## **Intimate Relationships**

We value personal relationships; these result in genuine trust.

## **Professional Demeanor**

We value parents' perceptions.

## **Strategic Follow-Up**

We value the active pursuit in meeting special needs outside of Small Groups.

# Leading a Student to Christ

## 1. Explain to the student that life is short, and there is eternal life after:

*"For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appears for a little while, then vanishes." James 4:14*

*"Man is destined to die once and after that to face judgment." Hebrews 9:27*

## 2. Death is because of sin. We all sin, and we all need to be fixed.

*"Sin entered the world through one man and death because of sin. Death came to all men because all men sinned." Romans 5:12*

*"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23*

## 3. The only way that we can be saved is to believe and follow Jesus Christ.

*"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believed in Him would not perish but have eternal life. God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's only begotten Son." John 3:16-18*

*"God gave Jesus Christ as a sacrifice to pay for sins. So He forgives the sins of those who have faith in His blood." Romans 3:25*

*"My Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life." John 6:40*

*"I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6*

## 4. Guide the student through a prayer to confess their sins and ask God to be the center of their life.

*"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord', and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. With your heart you believe and are justified, and with your mouth you confess and are saved." Romans 10:9-10*

# Alert Signs: Students In Crisis

## **Green Alert:**

These students do not pose a danger to themselves or others and will be dealing with relatively minor issues at home, school, or in their relationships.

### **Looks like:**

Airing a grievance

Unsure what to do; looking for guidance

### **You should:**

Listen attentively

Encourage them and advise as much as you feel qualified to do

Offer to pray with them

Follow up

## **Orange Alert:**

Students in this alert status while not in immediate danger will be dealing with considerably more complex situations that can escalate if not addressed and may require counsel.

### **Looks Like:**

Student may be depressed or lonely

Situation may escalate if not dealt with

Verbal abuse

Potentially emotional or irrational

Drug or alcohol experimentation

### **You should:**

Listen attentively

Encourage them and advise as much as you feel qualified to do

Offer to pray with them

Talk to Justin, Mike, Tyler or Tarrah if you are not sure what to do

Follow up

## **Red Alert:**

This will require immediate action, as the student may be involved in a situation that is out of their control and pose a real and present danger to themselves and others.

### **Looks like:**

Suicidal

Extreme depression

Drug or alcohol addiction

Expresses plans or intentions to hurt someone else

Experiencing physical or sexual abuse

Anything that represents a danger to them or someone else

### **You should:**

Listen attentively and inform the student of your responsibility to report the situation—**never promise not to tell.** Make them aware of your concern for their safety and talk to Justin, Mike J., Tyler, Mike B., or Tarrah right away.

# So You Want To Speak At Area 32!?

## **Submit an outline...**

We want to know what you're talking about so we can best plan the night to complement what you're saying. So keep us in the loop. We require an outline of what you'll be speaking on at least one week prior.

## **Land the plane...**

Nothing is worse than a message in a holding pattern. You should be able to say what needs to be said in 20 minutes. If not, shorten it up or leave it out.

## **Keep it biblical...**

One of our goals in Area32 is to come from a position of strength especially when it comes to what we teach. Forwarding your own agenda is a quick way to get shot down. Make sure your perspectives agree with Bible truth and if people disagree, it's not with you. If you're in doubt, just ask. We can also provide help with resources (commentaries and study materials) should you want to make sure you on the right track.

## **Watch your mouth...**

There's a myth floating around that shock value is of any value at all. You want to avoid causing students to stumble because of what you said at all costs. Focus on great information and an excellent presentation and remember, we teach for the purpose of regeneration, not reaction. Let God be the One to work in people's hearts.

That said, you should avoid all questionable language, innuendos, and double-entendres ***even if they are heavily used in our culture***. Remember, culture does not determine what is appropriate.