

116th Convention of the Episcopal Church in Utah, 2021

Report of Youth Ministry

Members: Karen Gleeson, Ingrid VanZanten and support from Christine Jenkin and trained counselors from Camp Tuttle

Mission: Youth ministry in the Diocese of Utah strives to provide opportunities for young people to gather together for fellowship, service, support, and spiritual growth in a safe, inclusive space that builds community.

Youth and Young Adult Events, Fall 2020/Winter 2021:

During this past year with the Pandemic, we have scaled back in person youth ministry gatherings to outdoor day events rather than overnight retreats.

We began a new outreach for our young adults which consist of recently graduated youth to young adults to age 30. This program allows opportunities for young adults to fellowship together, share concerns, engage in interesting discussions, and connect on a similar level.

September, 2020 – Jr/Sr High Fall Day Retreats at Camp Tuttle

During our fall retreat weekend at Camp Tuttle, youth from junior and senior high had the chance to reflect on this year and were able to fully consider the incredible amount of change they've had to withstand through the previous six months. Campers were then given the opportunity to connect their feelings and thoughts through a representative art project based on a tree that represented them the most in this current place and time. We took a hike through the beautiful changing leaves of Big Cottonwood Canyon, played the camp classic, Nuke 'Em, and stayed toasty warm by the fire.

October, 2020 – Young Adult Hike

It was a beautiful fall day at Lake Solitude for the kick off of our young adult series. Folks from our community ages 18-30 met at Camp Tuttle and joined us for a hike through the beautiful changing colors of Big Cottonwood Canyon. Author and camp counselor, Sam Wittke joined us for a conversation regarding themes from his upcoming book: *The Best Guess: Asking Life's Big Questions in an Age of Unlimited Answers*. Sam shared his ideas about finding answers to questions about our life's origin, meaning, purpose, and destination.

November, 2020 – Young Adult Campfire/Movie Night

St. James hosted an outdoor evening for our young adults to get together to enjoy an outdoor movie and campfire with smores and snacks.

February, 2021 – Jr/Sr High Sledding Event at Camp Tuttle

Youth ages 6th-12th grade joined us in the snowy mountains at Camp Tuttle for an afternoon of sledding and snowshoeing. We were met with a sunny, bluebird morning. A handful of parents elected to stay in camp with us and toured the surrounding area on cross country skis or snowshoes. We caught up with the youth regarding their current schooling situations and personal lives.

Upcoming events:

- 2021 Fall Retreat: In late September under the changing leaves and in the crisp cool air of fall, junior and senior high youth will join us for a retreat at Camp Tuttle
- Young Adults: We would like to continue programs to include and engage our young adults from recently graduated youth to age 30

Goals:

1. Continue to build a safe, fun environment where youth feel connected with God and with each other
2. Continue to build a youth leadership team to help and support youth in celebrating and recognizing their God given gifts and feel supported by their peer group and youth leaders
3. Continue to coordinate diocesan-wide events for junior and senior high youth to build community
4. Provide service opportunities and an inclusive environment to engage the outer communities
5. Continue providing opportunities for our young adults to stay connected through activities and fellowship

Submitted by,

Karen Gleeson
Diocesan Youth Coordinator