

Hello Parents and Families,

Starting this Fall, three Cedar Grove churches will join together to offer new opportunities for the youth of our communities in grades 6-12. Since July, parents and other leaders from Calvary OPC, Faith Reformed, and First EPC have been meeting regularly to discuss how we can cooperate to nurture our youth, and our youth have already been enjoying fellowship opportunities together throughout the summer. And we'd love to extend an invitation for you to join us!

Our stated mission is "making disciples by Christ's transforming power who are growing in our relationships with God and one another, seeking to be a light to the world." Our fellowship events during the summer have already helped us grow in our relationships with one another. We've also planned two weekly events throughout the school year to help live out our mission.

On Sunday nights beginning September 9th, we'll meet for small group Bible studies from 6:00-7:00 PM at Faith Reformed Church (243 S. 4th St.). "**Core groups**" are generally 5-10 students, are divided by age and gender, and have 2 adult leaders. These studies help the students grow in their relationship with God as they work through His Word together, and are also invaluable in building close friendships with other students as they help each other walk through life together. We've named this event "**Core**" because Bible study is at the core of Christian living.

On Wednesday nights beginning September 12th, we'll gather at First Evangelical Presbyterian Church (221 N. Main St.) from 6:30-7:30 PM. (Note: at the first meeting on 9/12, we'll gather at **6:00PM** for pizza!) Students can come as early as 6:15 for a snack and fellowship. At 6:30, we'll begin by worshipping God together through song. After that, the high school and middle school students will split up. The middle schoolers will do an activity together, followed by splitting up into smaller groups and doing a lesson that helps them consider how to apply God's Word to their daily lives. The high schoolers will also discuss relevant, pressing issues in their lives from a biblical perspective. They'll start with a large group lesson, and then split into small groups to discuss the topic in greater depth. We've named this event "**Connect,**" because it gives students the opportunity to break away from their weekly routines to connect with God and one another.

Also note that once per month at **Connect**, we'll have a special event. These events will include fellowship nights, service projects, outreach nights, and much more. It is important for students to take part in hands-on ministry to apply the things that they learn!

Our goal is to keep most of our special events on Wednesday night. Everyone is busy!!! However, middle schoolers are invited to a weekend retreat at Silverbirch Ranch on October 19-21, and high schoolers are invited to our FORT weekend retreat on January 25-27. Also, the high school group takes an annual mission trip in mid-June. Our students have greatly enjoyed these events in the past, and they all fit right in with our mission statement!

We'd like to invite your family to a potluck at Calvary OPC (136 W. Union Ave.) on Sunday, August 26th from 4:00-5:45. More information will be shared about these events at the potluck, but it will also give us a chance to get to know one another better, and for you to get to know your kids' leaders as well. We hope to see you there, and feel free to bring a dish to pass!

Sincerely,

The Leadership Team