

January 2010

Dear Parents,

**I pray that you had an incredible Christmas.** Our Jr High, Sr High and College Christmas Parties were very well attended. You can view some of the pictures on the CEFCYouth.com website. In preparing for the New Year, I've taken a look on this past year and have taken some time to do some personal evaluation. Being reminded multiple times about that shortness of life (The most recent was on my trip to Eagle Lake Community Church), I want to push a little harder in what we do with Students here at Community Church. I receive countless phone calls, Text messages and people stopping in to share and discuss anything from relationship problems, family concerns, School issues, hurts, fear, self loathing, anxiety, anger and numerous other thoughts and feelings. What is obvious to me is that there is a limit to what I can do. I don't know many people who like admitting that. Following up with the multitudes of decisions that Students are making has become tougher and tougher. On one hand, that is very good because we see that God is working in the lives of our students. On the other hand, it is tough to acknowledge that students do fall in the cracks. In the middle of last month, there were over 25 decisions made. A good number of students were talked with, but not every one. We have students that need rides to church. **Many students just want adults who are willing to listen** and simply care.

As I look this over, with much prayer and discussion with my Student and Adult Leaders as well as with many of you, *it is clear to me that God is moving.* Now as God is moving through the various ministries here at Community church, many things are changing and not only are the students changing, but they are growing. As they grow, they are sharing more as well as making tougher and more intensive decisions.

Part of what we do here is to provide options and tools to the students and the leaders here. **Another part of what we do is working with YOU.** I just want to briefly touch on some specific goals in regard to working WITH YOU in order to provide the best for the students. I'm focusing my efforts this year working with you on *three areas, Communication, Connectivity and Consumables.* You can read all the specifics on the parent page on the Youth Ministry Website. But in a nutshell, I want to communicate BETTER with you, I want you to be able to Better connect with me and MORE IMPORTANTLY, you with your children, and I want to be wiser as we provide consumables for the students. (Though many could argue that THEY are consumables.) ☺ We have revamped the Student Ministries website in beginning this process. If you would prefer to receive information through text messages or email, please connect with me through the CEFCYouth.com website and let me know. Trying to find parents on Facebook doesn't always work out. We will be taking some time to evaluate and discuss some of the needs concerns and our resources. Tuesday, Jan 26<sup>th</sup>, and Wed Jan 27<sup>th</sup> during youth group, there will be two parent meetings to present options and specifics on this year. I would encourage you to participate if you are able to. If you cannot attend, please go on to the parent page on the Youth Website and complete the parent survey.

In assisting some of our High School Seniors with their Senior Projects, we will be hosting a Sr High Overnighter January 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>. We still need Chaperones (Even if you can only commit to a couple of hours) and drivers. Details are available online.

Our **College Young Adult Ministry** had an incredible winter retreat in the Tahoe Truckee Area. You can find out the details on the College Ministry Facebook Page. The three sessions are available digitally upon request if you missed out for only \$5 for all three messages or \$2 individually.

Our **Sr High Retreat** will take place, **February 19-21** for \$120 and our **Jr High Retreat** will take place **March 12-14** for \$100. Please save the dates. **The next Early Bird Deadline for the retreats will be Thursday January 28<sup>th</sup>.** If you turn in a \$20 deposit per student, the fees will be \$95 for Sr high and \$75 for Jr High. We have a waiting list for Chaperones for these retreats, but if you are willing to drive there or back, we still need drivers. From Jan 29- Feb 4, the price raises to \$105 for Sr High and \$85 for Jr High. After Feb 4<sup>th</sup>, the prices will raise again. You will be able to find specifics online.

This year we will be taking some time to **DEEPEN our ROOTS.** We will be leaning a little heavier on interacting Scripture. In order to do that though, I would encourage you to invest in getting your student a Bible. We will use the New Living translation a lot as it reads smoother for this generation, but getting a New American Standard, a New International Version, English Standard Version or a New King James Bible are all excellent choices as well. I would encourage you to speak with your student and find out what is easiest for them to read and understand while still stretching them. If you are having difficulty with that, there are resources on the Youth website or you can contact me for options.

This month we are looking at making plans, setting goals and how God interacts with us or for the Sr High, What happens when Jesus Christ changes your life. Next month we will be looking at relationships and the options that God gives. You can check out the parent page for home follow up questions. **Sunday Feb 14<sup>th</sup>,** we will be hosting our second **Purity Ceremony** with requirements, standards and safeguards raised a bit higher from our last one two years ago. Later that day our Female leaders will be hosting a **Girl's Tea.** If you have a life story about YOUR relationships that you would want to share with Jr or Sr Highers, please let me know as we are putting together a new *panel discussion* for February 16<sup>th</sup> (JH) and 17<sup>th</sup> (SH).

Sunday, January 31<sup>st</sup>, we will be holding a Luncheon and Student Auction at 1 pm in the Youth Room. If you have some jobs that you need or want done, or that you would like to simply have a lunch where you don't have to prepare anything, we would love for you to join us. All proceeds will go to assist students in attending retreats.

As we begin this New Year, please keep us in prayer. I greatly appreciate your flexibility, your graciousness, your care and support. Thank you also for entrusting us with time with your children. Your input and interaction with us will provide better for both them and you. Thanks for allowing us to partner with you.

Excited to see what God will do this New Year,

*Jackson*

Student Ministries Pastor