

116th Convention of the Episcopal Church in Utah, 2021

Report of the Youth Faith Formation

Members: The Rev. Vanessa Cato, The Rev. Tyler Doherty, The Rev. Kurt Wiesner, The Rev. Christopher Szarke, Karen Gleeson, Brooke Parker, Terry Palmer, Sara Baese, Ingrid VanZanten, Shannon Bramblett, Ashley Haws

Mission: The Faith Formation Committee supports the faith formation of the children and youth in all congregations of the Diocese of Utah.

Goals for Youth Faith Formation:

- Provide support for congregational faith formation leaders, both lay and clergy
 - Through diocesan workshops
 - Sending interested people to trainings which they can share with the Diocese
 - Bringing in knowledgeable people from the wider church for training and support
- Cultivate a network of those in each congregation who are invested in faith formation
- Support the programs for faith formation for junior high and senior high youth in the Diocese of Utah.
- Advocate for children and youth programs and presence at Diocesan events and in the budget
- Celebrate the gifts and presence of the young people in this Diocese
- Evaluate the needs and desires of the parishes for the children of the Diocese

In 2020/2021 we continued GO Mondays, for youth in grades 6-12 to meet monthly. Due to Covid-19, these gatherings shifted from in person meetings to virtual gatherings on Zoom. We updated the name to Go Virtual. This is a collaborative youth ministry that brings youth together from the Diocese of Utah for fellowship, games, music, sharing, teaching, and prayer.

We will continue to offer these monthly gatherings in fall of 2021. We hope to offer in person opportunities for youth to gather as well as the option to participate on line.

The Youth Faith Formation Committee presented a new program for young families across the Diocese with an online book club through Zoom called “Faith at Home – A Handbook for Cautiously Christian Parents” by author Wendy Claire Barrie. Books were distributed to parishes in November/December of 2020. The book club began in January to February of 2021 for weekly gatherings with parents and youth leaders. Wendy Claire Barrie met with our parishioners and answered many questions including creative ways to connect and worship with our children. Please view this presentation on You Tube: <https://youtu.be/CPSO-x9O8aw>

Wendy Claire Barrie will meet with Clergy the end of April to engage in Discussion topics such as 1) How can churches best support parents and other adults in helping kids grow into a lifelong faith? And 2) What are the opportunities and challenges coming out of the pandemic that might allow us to try something new?

The YFF Committee has been meeting to discuss the ever changing needs of our community. We have been collaborating efforts to provide online structures for engaging families and would like to start a new program for supporting parents of teenagers. Potential topics could include but not limited to:

- Understanding Generation Z
- Love Languages for Teens
- Love and Logic for Teens or Connection Based Parenting Strategies
- Raising Teens for a Just World
- Teen Sexuality
- Resiliency
- Breaking Free from Purity Culture
- Cultivating Sacred Moments with Teens
- Raising Anti-Racist Teens
- Teen Suicide/Teen Mental Health
- “Parenting Forward” by Cindy Wang Brandt

It is our continued hope and prayer that each person in the Diocese:

- Has a relationship with God
- Knows the Bible and of the important stories of salvation history
- Knows how to pray and grow spiritually in worship and outreach
- Is able to articulate their faith
- Has relationships in the church across generations
- Knows what it means to be an Episcopalian
- Gains knowledge of the faith, practice, and spirit of the Episcopal Church as part of the Anglican Tradition

Please visit our new Facebook page for resources and shared ideas: Utah Faith Formation for Families <https://www.facebook.com/groups/364944651427987>

Submitted by,

Karen Gleeson

Diocesan Youth Coordinator