

SUMMITVIEW TEEN FAMILIES

Making disciples of Jesus by the grace of God

Summitview's teen family ministry is a community of families with middle and high schoolers that are helping each other to navigate through the complexities of this phase of life and to "press on toward the goal of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14).

Vision

As a part of Summitview Church, we see our teen family demographic as very much an integrated part of the greater church body. We therefore incorporate the mission, vision and values of Summitview into everything we do. Nevertheless, there is a unique expression during this phase of life. The following is Summitview's 5-point vision statement with a description of the specific emphases that we are aiming for in this season.

Delighting in God...with genuine peace. Our first aim is to delight in God – to joyfully love and worship Him according to all that He is. In Summitview Teen Families, though, we place a special emphasis on peace. It's so easy for teens to be wrought with anxiety as they struggle with identity and social status. And it's just as easy for parents to be overcome with fear as they watch their kids go through such significant transitions. We want our parents to parent from a place of trust and security, and our kids to grow into adulthood with a solid sense of identity in Christ. One of the main ways we walk in this peace is through a simple emphasis on prayer.

6 ...do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7

Loving One Another...through supportive community. Loving one another goes hand in hand with loving God. Knowing that relationships can get so backwards during the teen years, we want to build a healthy and loving community among our youth. In addition, though, we want parents to experience the same thing. All too often, parents can feel isolated and alone in their parenting, and without a community that supports them during a very confusing time. Therefore, our goal is to offer not only a life-transforming youth community, but also a life-transforming and supportive community for parents.

Multiplying Christ-Followers...with intention and resolve. As a church, we want to see disciples made – to see more and more people come to a personal knowledge of Jesus and then to love and follow him wholeheartedly. We realize, however, that it's tempting for both kids and parents in this phase to become very passive

in their pursuit of Christ and in their pursuit of disciple-making. Yet this is a season that requires focused intention and a steely resolve. We encourage parents to be very active in prayer, in the cultivation of relationship with their children, and in discipleship. Likewise, we want to see our teens use these years to the utmost as they develop a close relationship with Jesus and love others for his sake.

Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

Colossians 1:28

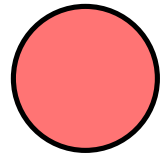
Blessing Fort Collins...from a place of distinction. We see the church as salt and light in our city. Within our normal spheres of influence, we are to proactively bring blessing in both word and deed. When it comes to our teens and families, we see them as a critical component of that effort to bless our city. Specifically, we see our teens as offering a distinct contrast to the world. That doesn't mean retreat. That doesn't mean denim jumpers. It does mean a noticeable difference in speech, in attitude, in affections, in character, and in confidence.

Expanding Globally...with focused preparation. Finally, we take seriously Christ's command to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20). We have our eyes up and envision the gospel spreading throughout the whole earth. With this in mind, we want to see our youth ministry as preparation for launching young adults into the world with faith-filled purpose. Of course, our kids will take a variety of directions when they graduate, but regardless of where they go, we want them to be well-equipped to carry the gospel into needy places, and for them to see themselves as ambassadors for Christ.



A Community of Parents

When considering youth ministry, it's natural to focus first on the youth programming. However, in developing transformational youth ministry, we must not neglect the development of a transformational community of parents. After all, even in the teen years, parents are still the biggest influencers in their kids' lives. Yet as parents, we all forget. We all grow weary. We desperately need a community that will continually stir us in our pursuit of God and in our vision for our kids.

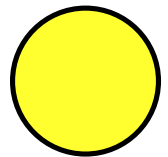


Small Groups. We have a variety of parents' small groups that share a common focus, set of values, and occasionally share the same content. Each is a place to seek God, to find genuine spiritual friendship, and to stir one another to love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24-25), and of course specific encouragement is given in the parenting of teens. While each small group has its own schedule and style, we do try to provide occasional overlapping activities in an effort to build a broader community of small groups.

Teaching. In addition to our small groups, we have at least quarterly teen family potlucks, where all our families share a meal together, followed by a time of instruction and encouragement for our parents. We intend for each of these potlucks to provide recalibration and motivation to continue to intentionally invest into our kids. We also aim to regularly resource parents with tools and instruction through seminars, literature, and other means.

A Community of Youth

As we shape our youth group, we are guided by a clear target. We have specific goals for our youth that we hope to see achieved by graduation. That target is based around the five points of our vision statement described above. Our youth group content, therefore, is focused and refined to use the seven years of middle and high school to adequately prepare our young adults to follow Christ wherever he leads.



Youth Meetings. High schoolers have a weekly meeting on Wednesday night throughout the school year. These meetings are intended to shape the students through worship, teaching, discussion, and community. The content is designed to meet the target mentioned above. We also ask upperclassmen to contribute in special ways in an effort to build ownership and to prepare them for life post-graduation.

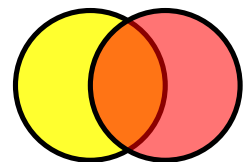
Fun Events. We know that teens love to be together and friendship is very important to them. We regularly provide social events to strengthen friendship and to provide opportunities to invite friends into our community.

Retreats. Sometimes God does something powerful in a life through an intense and focused time over multiple days. We provide at least one youth retreat each year to call teens to a greater pursuit of God.

Missions. Mission trips are also an important part of our youth ministry. Every other year we aim to provide a cross-cultural mission trip opportunity, and on other years provide a local or regional missions opportunity.

An Integrated Community

One of the most difficult challenges is providing an appropriate overlap between youth and parents. That is, allowing teens to grow in their personal faith and identity, but still envisioning parents to actively disciple their kids. There are several overlap opportunities we encourage parents to utilize. For example,



1. Involvement in youth meetings, specifically at the middle school level, but throughout high school as well. Parents are welcome to attend any youth meetings and there are always opportunities for contribution at those meetings. Parents are an important part of shaping our youth community!
2. Using youth content at home. Regardless of whether or not a parent attends a youth meeting, we try to provide parents with an overview of what the teens are learning and encourage discussion in the home.
3. Small group interaction. Although our small group communities are mainly intended for parents, they still provide opportunities for family overlap. We encourage families to spend time together and to be an ongoing support for each other.
4. Leading fun activities. We encourage all parents to be involved in the planning and leading of social and outreach activities.
5. Mission trips. We encourage parents and their teens to participate in cross-cultural missions together.

In all these ways and more, we hope to have a thriving youth community, a thriving community of parents, and an appropriate integration of the two.

