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A CAMPING & YPM NEWSLETTER

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ympm Connection

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Meet Our New Associate Director of YPM

by Rev. Jacey Pickens-Jones



My name is Rev. Jacey Pickens-Jones and I am honored to be the Associate Director of Young People's Ministry. I'm grateful to Rev. Darren for all of his work over the past 9 months.

As we are experiencing yet another staff transition in this position, I am planning on doing a listening tour throughout the conference starting in September. This will allow us to talk together about our hopes, concerns, and dreams for youth and young peoples' ministry in our Conference.

A little bit about me, I grew up as a United Methodist in Western Pennsylvania. Youth group was a huge part of my faith journey. In college I majored in Youth Ministry. Immediately after graduation in 2015, I began seminary at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington DC. During my time in seminary, I participated in the National Capitol Semester for Seminarians, which is a program that engages faith and politics. More importantly, I met my wife Rev. Emily Pickens-Jones.

After graduating from seminary, Emily and I were appointed to serve as Co-Pastors at Sonoma United Methodist Church. During the pandemic in 2020 we were both reappointed to our own congregations. I am currently serving as a part-time pastor at First United Methodist Church in Richmond CA.

My schooling and personal experience have fueled my passion for working with young people. The world can be a messy place and it is important to listen to and trust our young people as we consider where our Church and our world are headed.

Following Jesus requires a faith that touches every aspect of our lives and I want to work with all of you to expand our knowledge and experiences about and with the Divine. If you have any questions or would like to set up a meeting please email me at jaceypj@calnevumc.org or give me a call at 510-621-3418.

Let's continue this journey of faith together.

Blessings,

Rev. Jacey Pickens-Jones

FOR MORE VISIT: www.calnevypm.org



Talking With Young People About UMC Disaffiliation

With the postponement of UMC General Conference to 2024 and the announcement by the Wesleyan Covenant Association that it will launch the Global Methodist Church on May 1, 2022, many of us are asking questions about what this means for The United Methodist Church, our local church, and our camps.

For some youth and young adults, our camps are their primary connection to United Methodism. Let's prepare for questions that may come up among campers and staff. This article from YPM offers five excellent steps we can take right now. In the camp context, Directors may consider how to respond to questions, identify local church or conference resource people to help, and prepare summer staff to have camper-appropriate conversations. Read the article [HERE](#)

COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS FOR YOUTH: GUN VIOLENCE

By Cindy Klick

With the recent tragedy in the Texas elementary school, we thought it would be appropriate to share a past resource that helps discuss such events.

Courageous Conversations for Youth are designed to equip a youth leader with a model to create brave spaces where youth can share their thoughts and feelings on pressing topics. The point is not to arrive at consensus, simply for a youth leader to create a space where everyone can be heard.

This resource asks participants to explore gun violence and gun laws by sharing their opinions, doing research, and discussing any local impacts in their communities from violence that includes guns. This guide to create space and respectful discussions is built upon the series published by Discipleship Ministries, "Courageous Conversations" by Scott Hughes. Click here to view the adult counterpart to this resource. [Full Article Here](#)

Looking for Retreat/Mission Ideas?

Are you looking for a great place to getaway with your youth or youth leaders? Would you like to be surrounded by tall pines, beautiful water, hiking trails, and fresh air? Would you like to have the convenience of your own kitchen, fellowship area, sleeping area, AND showers all under one roof? Then look no further than the Lake Tahoe Retreat Center in Kings Beach!

Over the past several years, we have taken our youth to the retreat center, and it has been the perfect place for us. The pastors have always been accommodating, helpful, and made us feel right at home. The kids love the bunk beds and the easy access to the bathrooms which are just down the hall! The fact that there are so many local hikes and excursions available, and the retreat center is within walking distance to beautiful Kings Beach, we never run out of opportunities to meet and play with God in nature.

This summer, we are planning a week-long service trip and will be staying at the retreat center with 18 kids and 5 adults. While you might think that there aren't many service opportunities in the Lake Tahoe area, nothing could be further from the truth! From construction on local churches, to working in a garden that provides veggies for people who struggle with homelessness and food insecurity, to cleaning up trails and beaches, to helping a local disabled woman, we almost don't have enough time to do it all in a week!

Pastors, youth leaders, and other adults, this is a great spot for a work or spiritual retreat, a training event, etc. The Wi-Fi works amazingly well and there is room for plenty of tables and chairs. I have been to the retreat center so many times, I feel like I have a second home in Tahoe! Special thanks to Pastor Jaime for her hospitality.

For more information about the retreat center, please visit www.laketahoeumc.com.

Blessings,
Melanie Oliver, Provisional Deacon of Christian Education
FUMC Loomis

Family Faith Night

by Corey Dao-Forrester

Coming out of a physically and emotionally isolating time, it is vital for our souls and beloved communities to reunite, do life together, and discuss our faith.

The challenges that usually arise when creating these discussions with families are two fold: the timing of events (including days and seasons) and the environment the church creates for parents and caretakers each present difficulties.

With awareness of these two major challenges, we created a Tuesday night event over the summer where families can come and be led in different faith-centered discussions. During these discussions, we will begin with a time of icebreakers, followed by an introduction of the evening's theological topic. We will then lead the family unit in discussing with one another what they believe about the specific topic. This part is crucial as it allows each person in the family unit, regardless of age, to feel capable of expressing their beliefs and thoughts on matters of faith.

As we listen to this portion of the family discussion, it will also give discussion leaders a baseline for our proceeding breakout groups. We will then break out all of the family units depending on age or role. During this time, we can dive deeper into the teachings of the presented theological topic. We will conclude with everyone coming back together and reviewing take-home activities that will help lead and empower our families to continue these faith conversations outside of the church.

This Tuesday night family event encourages our families to grow confidence when communicating about their faith. Given that our church may only see our families two hours a week at most, we are determined to continue striving towards programs that expand family spiritual formation beyond church walls and incorporate it into everyday life.

Other Helpful Sites for UM Ministry

UMC Young People's Ministry - www.umcyoungpeople.org

UC Lead - www.umclead.net

United Methodist Camping and Retreat Ministry (UMCRM) - <https://umcrm.camp/>

Sierra Service Project (SSP) - www.sierraserviceproject.org

American Camping Association (ACA) - www.acacamps.org