

**Grant Park Church Youth Personal and
Spiritual Transformation Journey Year:
Focusing on the Ancient Practice of Ser-
vice & Sacrifice in the Christian Tradition**



Grant Park Church

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God cares deeply for the hearts of youth. In our North American culture, it's so easy to become deceived about what is most important in life. The scriptures are full of illustrations that talk about serving as a way of living out our lives. Being a Christian is not about coming to church, it's about serving like Christ. So, I want to challenge some youth to go on a journey. It will be a radical journey because they will be asked to put this as the highest priority on their calendars. Together we will learn about an ancient Christian called service and sacrifice. We will take ourselves to places where we can learn from those who serve and do service ourselves.

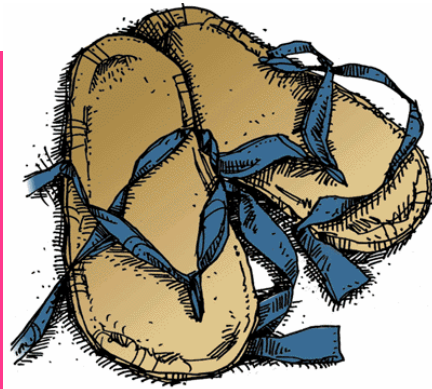
Through the year, we will commit to meeting together at least once a month for an extended period of time. Also, we will commit to reading scripture, journaling and prayer that we all will grow with Christ. A reading and prayer journal will be provided.

It's my deep belief that God wants to connect to our hearts and lives in significant manners. With youth, that connection needs to come through not just talking but by putting our faith into practice. By learning from those who currently serve and serving ourselves, it's my prayer is that your love for Christ, for your neighbor and yourself will deepen.

In the bonds of the Master's love,

Pastor Gregg

Gathering 1 in January would be an opportunity to get to know each other, to hear one another's stories and to enter into the Holy Ground of each other's lives. The spiritual discipline learned would be listening and hearing God in other people's lives.



Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.
EXODUS 3:5



Gathering 2 in February will be an opportunity to learn about service in our community through a place called Project Hope. [www. projecthopeportland.org](http://www.projecthopeportland.org) It's my hope we will spend time with Reba Strickland whose son was killed several years ago and who started Project Hope.



Gathering 3 in March would involve walking the Stations of the Cross during at The Grotto during Holy Week and listening to how that impacted each of the participants.

Gathering 4 in April would involve spending a day with the Trappists in Lafayette. We would learn about their lives of service and prayer. On that day we would have a time of silence during the day.



Gathering 5 in May would involve looking at serving one another. We would go camping with the intent of being servants all weekend, one to another and creating another kind of community experience.



Gathering 6 in June would be an outward focused event for our community. We would work with the adults in our church family on developing the prayer path. We would then walk the path, encourage other peers to walk the path and serve at the path sight that could possibly be at Grant Park or in our church building.



Gathering 7 in July would be up at Camp Arrah Wanna for two day training time in preparation for our serving at a summer camp in August.



Gathering 8 in August would focus on serving at Camp Arrah Wanna for a five day session . We would do everything possible to make a week at camp wonderful for the kids that attend. We would talk openly about the joys and struggles of serving. This opportunity would really reinforce the biblical teachings about loving neighbor and serving others. Would it be easy, absolutely not, but it has the potential of being a great adventure in the lives of the youth.

September's focus would be on being servants in a foreign culture. We would gather for an overnight retreat and learn about how to be engaged in a foreign culture without inflicting our culture upon those we are going to work alongside. We would study cultural norms and how to make a cross cultural visit with servant's hearts. We would study several vignettes from life in Mexico to gain a greater understanding of the people's lives.



October we would go and learn about the lives of people who live on the streets in Portland. We would try to gain a greater understanding of what happens in people's lives and how we as Christians can respond. On one of the school break days we would go to the Mission to serve and learn.

Our November gathering would involve an early morning departure to the airport via public transit and flying to San Diego. We would then travel South to the Mexico on the red car and walk across the bridge to meet our missionary partners in Tijuana. We would go with open hearts, willing to serve in whatever manner our sisters and brothers in Mexico would like. Most likely we would be working with the folks at Deborah House, a ministry to victims of domestic violence and partnering with Ray and Adalia Schellinger.



Our December gathering would be an overnight time of reflection on the past year and dreaming about what the future could look like as we think about serving Christ in the future.