

# ZION YOUTH NEWS



## HS Youth Group Meetings- December

Our December meetings will be December 4th and 18th. With Bible Study on the 11th. See the full schedule on the website [shawanozion.org/youth](http://shawanozion.org/youth)

## Game Night- Thank You

Thank you to all who joined in our game night! It was an evening full of laughter and fun. Please join us for our next one in January.



## Homemade Holiday Craft Show- Thank You

The ladies that hosted the show wanted me to share a heartfelt thank you with all the youth that helped! Your efforts made the day run smoothly.

## End The Silence- Mental Health Conversation

On November 20, our youth group hosted the impactful "Ending the Silence" mental health conversation in collaboration with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). Led by Nancy Schultz from Health Ministry, Joel Yeakey with ROADS, and the NAMI team, the event was designed to open up honest conversations about mental health with our youth and invited guests from nearby churches and the high school.

Throughout the presentation, students learned to recognize early warning signs of mental health issues both in themselves and in others. The speakers shared relatable stories and real-life examples, making the discussion feel personal and approachable. By understanding these signs, students are now better equipped to seek help when needed and to provide support to their friends.

The presenters stressed the importance of reducing stigma surrounding mental health, a topic that resonated deeply with the audience. In today's world, creating a safe space for students to talk about mental health without feeling ashamed or isolated is invaluable. By the end of the session, students left with a sense of empowerment, knowing they are not alone and that seeking help is a sign of strength.

A parent-focused presentation is planned for a later date to continue the conversation and provide families with resources to support their teens. The success of this event has set a hopeful tone for future mental health initiatives in our community, paving the way for ongoing support and understanding among our youth.

## Youth Volunteer Training

Anyone working with youth in the church—whether as a teacher, chaperone, driver, or in any other role—is required to complete Youth Volunteer Training every two years. The next training session will be offered in January. Stay tuned for more details on the date and time.

**"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity."**

*1 Timothy 4:12*

## This issue:

- Youth Group Meetings PAGE 01
- Game Night- Thank You PAGE 01
- Craft Show Thank You PAGE 1
- End The Silence Review PAGE 1
- Youth Volunteer Training PAGE 01
- Game Night PAGE 2
- Mental Health Conversation PAGE 2
- Holiday Craft Show PAGE 2
- Child Protection Training PAGE 2
- Rent A Youth PAGE 02
- Carwash Cards PAGE 02
- Parent's Corner PAGE 03





## Youth Group Adopts a Child

Our Youth Group has adopted a local child in need this season and will be shopping for toys and clothes to donate on Dec 4 at the beginning of Youth Group. If you'd like to support this effort by helping the youth shop, donating funds, or providing items, please reach out to Kristin.

## ZION Float in Holiday Parade

Zion will have a float in this year's holiday parade. The parade theme this year is "Old Fashioned Christmas" and Zion will be going with "The Original Christmas" with the Nativity as our float theme. Members of all ages are invited to join with the float, dress in costume, and throw candy and hand out flyers. Let Kristin WhiteHorse know or sign up on the information desk if you will be joining.

## Christmas Cookie Sale

The Youth will be baking Christmas cookies to sell on December 15. Baking will take place Dec 11th at 6pm with decorating on Dec 14th at 10am. All ages are invited to join in the decorating and any adult helpers for baking would be appreciated too. Cookies will be on sale after services on Dec 15 as a fundraiser for Youth Programming.



## Christmas Program

Our annual Sunday School Christmas Program will be Dec 14th during the 5pm service. Join us for the telling of the Christmas story and singing of our favorite Christmas songs. All Sunday School students are expected to arrive by 4pm and meet in Fellowship Hall.

## Rent a Youth

High school youth will be continuing the Rent a Youth service & fundraising project this fall. We will be advertising that youth are available to help with projects for a donation to the youth fund. Please take advantage of this opportunity to earn service hours and support the youth program. Watch for information from Curt Preston, watch the SportsYou App, check the Youth Bulletin Board or the Volunteer Board in the Youth Lounge for work opportunities.

## Carwash Cards

We will continue to sell Kwik Trip carwash cards to raise funds for our programming. They are always available in the main office and will be available between services several times a month.

## Parent's Corner

Every month, I'll share insights on issues that many parents of teenagers face. I hope you find the information helpful and thought-provoking. If there's a specific topic you'd like me to cover, please let me know!

## December at a Glance

Dec 4- Youth Group Shopping Confirmation Class

Dec 6- Holiday Parade

Dec 11- Cookie Baking/Decorating Confirmation Class

Dec 14- Christmas Program

Dec 15- Sell Cookies

Dec 18- HS Youth Group & Confirmation Class Holiday Party

Merry Christmas!



# Parent's Corner

## Cultivating Gratitude in the Discouraging Seasons of Parenting - Katie Polski | November 7, 2024

I don't like roller coasters, but out of love for my teen, I accompanied her on one several years back. On the slow ramp up, I embarrassed my teen by repeating over and over: it's only a minute and thirty seconds long, which I knew because I Googled it.

Sure enough, the twists and turns were unexpected, and I could hardly gather myself before the next surprise. And then, after mere seconds, the ride seemingly ended. I looked at my girl, whose face was ecstatic from the rush, and I couldn't help but smile. Even so, my legs were wobbly, and my head was spinning, so I was eager to get up and out. That's when my daughter turned and said, "It's going again, Mom!"

### Parenting Teenagers is Like Riding a Roller Coaster

A mother with two toddlers asked me recently what it's like to raise teenagers. I smiled sympathetically and told her, "It's like a roller coaster, my friend. It's just like a roller coaster."

Parenting teens is a fast and wild ride of irregular ups and downs. Sometimes it feels more like a never-ending jostle than a smooth and steady journey. Just when you think you've got a handle on it, the ride starts again.

It's during the unpredictable moments, and the highs and lows of their emotions, that it's easy to become frustrated with our teens. We tend to focus only on the harrowing obstacles in front of us. Perhaps, like me, you've had a fruitful conversation with your teen, where you sense some real maturity –only for that same child to plunge into sassy immaturity the next morning. When we assume we have control over the direction of the ride, we can become overly frustrated when our child's attitude or actions do not follow our expectations. It's then that we forget to be grateful for the child God has given. In our frustration we forget the Savior who has gone before us, and the work God is doing even in spite of us.

But it's also in these bumpy seasons that we find profound hope in the gospel. It's precisely when we are weak that God's strength is made evident in us (2 Cor. 12:9). We don't move forward in our own strength or by our own willpower, but in the strength of Christ. We are so united to Christ because of his death and resurrection that what is true of him is true of us.

Relishing this amazing grace and reorienting our perspective on Jesus causes us to grow in gratitude rather than revert to frustration. That grace-filled appreciation empowers us during difficult seasons with our teens and pushes us to love them more deeply as an opportunity to mirror God's love.

### Cultivate Gratitude on the Ride by Praying for Perspective

In trying seasons, it's easy to remember to pray for the difficult situation at hand, but it's more difficult to remember to pray for perspective. Sometimes what we face with our kids seems so much greater than what others are facing with theirs. Without proper perspective, this can lead to anger or jealousy, and our teens will feel that.

Instead, pray that the Lord will give you the necessary perspective. God may be giving us more than we think we can handle, but thank the Lord, he promises his strength to help us put one foot in front of the other. Thank the Lord that even the very worst trial with a teen (and our family has been through some weighty ones) is not beyond Jesus' reach (Eph. 3:20-21).

The single most valuable parenting advice I've ever received came in the form of two words from a seasoned mother: Don't panic. She explained that what we deem harrowing, God is never surprised by, panicked by, or thwarted by. It is all in his control no matter how jolting the ride may feel. Don't panic. Pray for perspective. We put our trust in a God who is lovingly in control of every single detail in our teenager's life.

### Cultivate Gratitude on the Ride by Giving Thanks for the Growth

Give thanks because even in the midst of challenges, growth occurs. Ask the Lord to help you recognize small victories, no matter how minor they seem. And don't forget to celebrate these moments with your teens. God graciously gives us glimpses of their spiritual and emotional maturity, and of the unique work he is doing in them. These glimpses don't mean the difficult ride is over, but they are a kindness from God in which he reminds us that he is working.

When we look back on our own testimonies, most of us recognize our growth in faith came through adversity. Mom, Dad, you are a witness to God shaping your teen's character. Yes, it can be gut-wrenching to watch but know that the good work our faithful God has begun, he will bring to completion (Phil. 1:6).

### Cultivate Gratitude on the Ride by Cherishing the Moments

I will never forget one of my teens walking in the door well past curfew one night. What followed was a lengthy argument, many tears, and a sleepless night. As the sun rose, my husband prayed, but all I remember thinking was: will this difficult season ever end?

The teenage years are not forever, mom and dad. The whirlwind of adolescence is fleeting, and it is precious. One of the ways we cultivate gratitude in the more trying seasons is by deliberately making connections with our teens. This might mean planning ahead for golf, or go-karting, or dinner out to a special restaurant. It might mean being spontaneous with your teen. Boy, does it take sacrifice in a busy season, but if you notice your teen seems a bit "off," divert from the evening's plans. Take her out for ice cream or play a game of cards.

These connections during hard seasons force you to step off the craziness of the ride and simply enjoy the uniqueness of the kid whom God has given you. Listen to her stories, dreams, and fears. Intentionally connecting shows her she is valued and loved, not just for what she's done, but for who she is in Christ.

In these moments of connection, we catch glimpses of God's grace in our lives and in the lives of our teens. These moments remind us why the roller coaster ride of parenting is worth every twist and turn. Connecting with our kids anchors us in gratitude and strengthens our resolve to navigate the challenges ahead with faith and love.

As you traverse the ups and downs of parenting, pray the Lord will give you a heart of gratitude for the teenager that God has purposefully and lovingly put into your care. Every page of your child's story has God's faithfulness shining through. His faithfulness will continue to guide us through the roller coaster ride of parenting.

<https://rootedministry.com/cultivating-gratitude-in-the-discouraging-seasons-of-parenting/>