



# Youth Ministry Manual

Who we are, What we do, and Why we do it...

17-18



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## **The Foundation is a ministry to students in grades 7 through 12.**

*1 Corinthians 3:11 - For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

### **Our Vision and Heartbeat of the Ministry:**

Our vision is to see youth be firmly established on the foundation of the Word of God and be transformed through discipleship into adults that are fully devoted to God.

### **Our Mission:**

- Equip teens with the truth of the Word of God - **2 Timothy 4:2**  
Through Sunday School: Emphasis on doctrinal, theological lessons
- Enforce the doctrine of the Bible in the midst of an ever-changing world - **2 Timothy 3:16**  
Through Youth Group: Providing practical applications with topical lessons rooted in Bible
- Engage teens in ministry opportunities both local and foreign - **Acts 1:8**  
Through Outreach and Missions events - Rest homes, LV Rescue Mission, and Local, Regional, and Foreign Missions trips
- Enhance a community of encouragement, unity, and love - **Hebrews 10:24-25**  
Through fun, unifying social events: Jello-Jam, Scavenger hunts, Movie Nights, Game nights
- Evangelize teens that are lost without God - **Luke 19:10**  
Through Special Events: Snow Camp, Superbowl; Lock-ins
- Embolden teens to share their faith with an unsaved world - **Mark 16:15**  
Through specific training: Witnessing, Specials (i.e. See you at the pole; Lifebook Movement)
- Encourage teens to become men and women of integrity - **Psalms 101:2-4**  
Through Small groups, split groups, special studies (i.e. Purity lessons with SVPS)
- Establish teens that will become the leaders of tomorrow - **2 Timothy 4:12**  
Through Leadership specific training: Beach Weekend, Mentoring

### **Our Partnership:**

We truly believe that parents are the primary influence in building the faith of teenagers. To that end, we are privileged as the youth workers of Lebanon Valley Bible Church to be given a small amount of time in your teens lives to help partner with you in ministering to their hearts and helping to grow their relationship with Jesus Christ.

## **Our Leadership Team:**

*A brief overview of our current youth leadership staff*

### **Brandon and Sherri Shirk:**

Brandon serves as our youth director and primary Wednesday night Bible teacher. They have been serving officially as youth leaders since 2011, and have been involved with the youth group in various capacities since 2004. Brandon grew up in this same youth group as a teen. They were married in July 2006 and have two young children, Madelyn and Micah. Brandon is an architect and runs the design department with Yingst Engineers, and Sherri works in the bakery at Weis Markets.

### **Shawn and Dolly Getz:**

Shawn and Dolly have been attending LVBC since 1994, just after they were married. They both grew up in Lancaster county and currently live in Lititz. Dolly works part time at a bakery and Shawn works as a draftsman, drawing steel for bridges. They have one grown daughter, Miranda.

### **Aaron and Kristen Goshert:**

Aaron and Kristen have been married since 2005. Aaron grew up in the Philippines as a missionary kid and Kristen grew up here in Lebanon County, attending our youth group as a teen. Aaron works as an HVAC contractor and Kristen is a registered nurse at a retirement community in Lancaster. Aaron is currently attending Lancaster Bible College to become a full-time pastor. Along with serving in the youth group and leading bible studies, Aaron also teaches for the young married class, the Legacy Builders, and Kristen helps on Praise Team during Sunday worship services. They both enjoy hiking, playing games, and spending time with family and friends.

### **Jon and Mandy Lauver:**

Jon serves as the Pastor of Worship Arts and Family Ministry here at Lebanon Valley Bible Church. They moved here to serve in this ministry in 2014, and have served faithfully with the youth and throughout the church since then. They have a new daughter, Dulaney.

## Sunday School:

**Description:** Our Sunday School class uses a program that has been established by Word of Life International in Schroon Lake, New York. Word of Life has been ministering to youth for over 60 years. The class meets during the Sunday school hour (10:30-11:30) after our weekly family worship service and focuses on Biblically-based, doctrinal lessons. We emphasize bible study, personal devotions, scripture memorization and doctrinal lessons during our time together. Our Senior High Students (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade) meet in the youth room underneath the family life center and the Junior High Students (7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade) meet in the small classroom next door to our youth room. We generally start with announcements and prayer requests, followed by our lesson time.

**Curriculum:** Word of Life provides a cyclical 6-year study program to provide a comprehensive study throughout a teen's years in the program. Each year they incorporate various lessons from each doctrinal area so that teens will have fully covered each topic by the time they finish high school. The main topics are as follows:

- Man, Sin, and Salvation
- Future Events
- God the Father, and the Bible
- Jesus Christ
- The Holy Spirit
- The Church: Its Allies and Enemies

**Purpose:** We are here to change your life. That's a pretty bold statement to make, isn't it? In fact, it sounds like either a sales pitch or some gimmick, doesn't it? How can any program change your life? As a matter of fact, a Biblical program based on Biblical Principles can! It isn't the program but God's Word that makes the difference. God's Word changes lives and brings hope. Those principles can be more easily applied with effective tools – that's where the program comes in. We are not primarily interested in entertaining people but energizing them to become obedient Christians living a dynamic life. But how do you do this? How can you there? Are there steps to take? We believe that to become an obedient Christian you start with...

- **BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES (GOD'S WORD)**  
Foundation of truth  
Then you build upon that your...
- **BIBLICAL PHILOSOPHY (GROUP OF PRINCIPLES)**  
This is done by grouping your principles together with your knowledge of a particular subject.  
On your philosophy you build your...
- **BIBLICAL PURPOSE (GOAL)**  
This is what you want to accomplish.  
Then you build a...
- **BIBLICAL PROGRAM (GAME PLAN)**  
These are tools and procedures that will accomplish your goal.  
Finally - all this develops...
- **BIBLICAL PEOPLE (GODLY PEOPLE)**

## Wednesday Night Youth Group:

**Description:** The Foundation Youth Group revolves around our weekly, Wednesday night Bible study and fellowship time. It's a great time for fun and fellowship and a nice interlude in the middle of the week to refocus our attention on Jesus Christ. The night includes time for fellowship, a time of worship through music and prayer, a Bible study, and, of course, food! We meet every Wednesday night at 6:45 until 8:45 in the youth room on the lower level of the family life center. The youth group provides a fun, welcoming environment for our teens and a chance to recharge their spiritual batteries.

**Curriculum:** The lesson topics vary throughout the year and provide a mixture of both Bible Book Studies and multi-week topical lessons with an emphasis on practical application. Lesson topics are reviewed among the youth staff prior to the beginning of the year to establish a structure to provide a solid foundation of the Word of God and to challenge each student to a deeper, more personal walk with God.

### **Typical Schedule:**

- 6:45 Arrival (Fellowship & Open Gym) – Meet in the youth room or Family Life Center
- 7:05 Icebreaker/Group games
  - Week A: Open Gym (Dodgeball, basketball, volleyball, etc.)
  - Week B: Group Game
  - Week C: Group Game
  - Week D: Icebreaker/Food Challenge & Extended Prayer Time
- 7:20 Welcome/Announcements
- 7:25 Worship time (Singing and Prayer)
- 7:35 Bible Lesson
- 8:00 Small Groups Review (Application and Prayer)
- 8:35 Snack and Fellowship
- 8:45 Youth Group Finishes

## Ministry Opportunities:

The Foundation Youth Group seeks to provide multiple opportunities for teenagers to become involved in the work of the Lord. We look for ways to help teens discover and develop their God-given gifts and talents and then to exorcise them in various ministry areas.

### Ministry Teams:

We seek to involve teens in ministry in many opportunities. We strive to involve them in ministry throughout the church, including serving on praise teams during Sunday worship by singing or playing instruments, assisting with offering, greeting on a welcome team on a Sunday morning, working with drama teams, helping in the nursery, and numerous other possibilities. Similar ministry chances are being developed for our Foundation meetings with a welcome team, praise teams, and praise band. Our annual mission's trips also provide great opportunities for teens to be involved in ministry.

### Community Outreach:

Another part of our goal is to reach out to the community around us and show them the love of God. We participate in multiple events throughout the year. Some of our reoccurring outreaches include:

- Rest home services - We provide several opportunities throughout the year to participate in services and programs that are held at various rest homes throughout the area. This outreach provides each teen an encouraging environment to minister to the residents and to develop their God-given talents and abilities.
- Freedom Fun Fair - This is a church-wide activity fair that is generally held every year in May. The day provides free games and food for the community. The teens participate in this event by working at or running an activity booth, providing special presentations throughout the day, or working behind the scenes with trash and food. This outreach provides a way to introduce the community around us to our church and to share with them the love of our Savior.
- Vacation Bible School - Each July a church-wide, nightly Bible school is held. This event is a great way for children from around the area to come together for a week of fun where they will be presented with the truth of the gospel. The teens participate in this outreach by helping in the classrooms, whether as a teacher or helper, helping in the craft room or with games, or by helping with the closing program.
- Church work days - Twice a year, a church work day is organized by our board of deacons. Many teens participate in this outreach by using their muscles, cleaning expertise, and willingness to care for our church building. This outreach teaches our teens the importance of stewardship and diligence with everything that God has provided to us.

## **Missions Outreach:**

As part of our mission for the Foundation youth ministry, we seek to provide multiple avenues for our teens to be involved in missions. God has given us the grand commission to go and share our faith.

### **Local Outreach:**

We seek to find ways to locally support the sharing of the gospel throughout. Currently we minister to the men at the Lebanon Rescue Mission, the residents of the Londonderry Village retirement home and Interfaith Manor, and are also involved with the Lebanon Valley Youth for Christ. We are always looking for other local mission outreaches to partner with in spreading the word of God to our community.

### **Global Outreach:**

As a youth group, we support, both financially and through prayer, missionaries around the world, specifically two families that have been assigned to us by the missions committee. We also try to take part throughout the year in at least one missions event to expose our teens to missions. We also partake in church-wide mission's dinners to meet and hear from some of our supported missionaries around the world. We have also taken part in Operation Christmas Child for the past several years in providing essential items for under-privileged children around the world.

### **Missions Trips:**

We are currently operating with one summer missions trip per year (generally in June or July) on a circulating 4-year schedule as follows:

Year 1: Immersive Regional Missions Experience (8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Grade)

Year 2: Stateside Missions trip (9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Grade)

Year 3: Overseas 2-week Missions trip (9<sup>th</sup> grade to College & Career)

Our mission's trips are planned in conjunction with our church supported missionaries and through our church's missions committee. To take part in our mission's trips, each student must meet our missions requirements.

## Missions Requirements:

**Presence** - Each potential team member must be a regular attendee of Lebanon Valley Bible church or the Foundation youth group.

**Prepare** - Each team member must have a regular quiet time or devotional of scripture reading and prayer.

**Participate** - Each team member must use their God-given gifts, talents, and abilities to serve the Lord and share the gospel with others in at least 4 different settings or events. This may be through youth group outreach events or church-led events. These opportunities are not limited to speaking, singing or music, but can include the gifts of encouragement and helps and can be "seen" or "unseen" participation. (examples: leading a Sunday worship through a praise team, taking offering, serving food)

**Plan** - Each team member must take a very active role in leading and planning at least one outreach or missions event. This may be a Foundation youth group event or a church associated project. The team member will be given a leadership role for the event and may be responsible for setting up the event, organizing, planning, promoting, or whatever help may be required to "lead" the event.

**Project** - Each team member must create, or find on their own, one missions project opportunity that they create and develop on their own. The purpose of this project is for each team member to actively search for a way to share the gospel on their own without being prompted or promoted by church or youth staff leadership. The project should be reviewed with a leader prior to completion to ensure the intention of this criteria is met. This does not mean that the team member cannot join a pre-existing outreach outside the church, but must look for something that is not planned or promoted by the church or youth group.

**Practice** - Each team member must be take part in at least one training session pertaining to this missions trip or a general training session focused on witnessing and sharing the gospel.

**Preach** - Each team member must share their faith in a one-on-one situation with at least one person prior to the trip. This should be not be a family member, and should not be anyone you know already has a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. This can be with an unsaved friend, co-worker, neighbor, or even a stranger. We are called to share the gospel message not only with the uttermost parts of the earth, but also those in our towns and neighborhoods.

**Provide** - The cost for an overseas missions trip can be substantial and while there are opportunities to help cover the costs of the trip through the church and/or fundraisers, each team member must help to raise their own support at a minimum of 2/3 of the final cost. This may be done by your own personal donations or by writing assistance letters to your friends and family.

## Activities:

We seek to find creative activities for our teens to participate in that can also have a lasting impression on their faith. These activities range from yearly events that we have participated in for the past 20 years and brand-new, exciting events. In general, we attempt to provide one outside social activity per month. With a few exceptions, we try to consider the cost of having your teen involved in the Foundation and look to select events that require little or no financial input. However, please do not let cost be a factor in not allowing a teen to participate in an activity or event. Please see a youth staff leader if you may need financial assistance.

### Snow Camp (Winter Retreat):

Our winter retreat is an annual highlight for our students as we get away from the normal routine for a weekend for time of fun, fellowship and time to reflect on God's Word. The weekend combines Bible study sessions, theme games and activities, open gym times, table games, fellowship, food, and, hopefully, sledding and other "snowy" activities.

### Reverb:

Every year, Word of Life creates several Reverb events that is well attended by thousands of teens from around the country. We participate in a Reverb event that is held in the Philadelphia and/or Hershey area, depending on the year. This is an all-night event that combines the fun and excitement of a professional sports game, a rally event, Bowling, all-you-can-eat Pizza, Roller skating, laser tag and other games. This event also prevents a clear message of the gospel to all who attend.

### Other activities:

Teenagers need wholesome opportunities for fun and interaction and the Foundation socials and activities provide a wide variety where our teens can enjoy being together and build relationships with other Christian teens. We generally try to schedule 1 social or event per month. These events are generally planned during the summer months for the upcoming year and we always look to find new creative activities to do, while also continuing some of the teen's annual favorites. Among the events we have conducted previously are an outreach car wash and game night, snow-skiing and tubing, a girl's shopping trip, scavenger hunts, a canoe trip, and a boating day with water skiing, tubing, and wakeboarding.

## Evangelism:

God has called us to share the gospel with everyone around us, locally, regionally, and globally. However, this call generally goes unanswered because many teens, and adults if we're honest, because we feel unqualified or untrained. "What if we don't have an answer to a question they ask of us?" or "How do I even do it?" are questions we here often. Each year, we look for special events, generally as a training session or special Bible lessons, that provide a unique way to share the gospel or give the teens the heart of the gospel that they can learn and share with anyone they meet.

## Small Groups:

We currently implement our small groups into our weekly Foundation meetings on Wednesday nights. These groups are designed to pair 6-10 teens with 2 adult mentors. These small groups take place directly after our group bible lesson and help to provide a time of reflection and application. Our small groups focus on additional verse and Bible study along with questions designed to get our teenagers thinking critically and practically. These small group sessions are based upon the larger group Bible Study and designed to take the students deeper and more personally. The mentors take the time to help the teens understand how the bible lesson applies to their lives. The small groups also incorporate a time of group prayer and prayer requests. These mentors also seek to be involved in their group's lives throughout the year when possible.

## Leadership:

We believe that teens in our youth group will not only be the leaders of the church of tomorrow, but that they also are the leaders of the church now. Whether they see it or not, there is a world around them, including younger brothers and sisters, who are watching every move that they make. Many times this takes on a very informal approach, but we also look for opportunities to teach leadership principles through organized events, such as:

- Senior High Leadership Retreat - For the past several years in the fall, we have opened up an activity for some senior high youth in our church. We have generally held this event at the beach in Ocean City, NJ.
- Mentorship - Periodically, God brings teens into our ministry with both a great passion for God and a natural inclination to leadership. If there is mutual interest, we try to mentor these teens and have them take on an active role as a teen leader in our youth group.
- In the past we have also looked-for ways to partner our Senior Saints ministry (age 65+) with our teens as prayer partners and encouragement resources. Historically, we have also tried to involve our Senior high girls with our Junior High girls through a big sister – little sister program.

## Rules and Guidelines:

While we encourage, and secretly enjoy ourselves, a lot of fun, excitement, action, craziness and spontaneity, we also seek to provide a safe and organized environment for our teens. In order to achieve that balance, we have a few rules and guidelines that we ask each teen, leader, parent, and chaperone to abide by for the sake of the group.

### Teens:

- **Respect** – Teens are expected to agree with and to commit to be respectful of themselves, other teenagers, youth leaders, volunteers, chaperones and parents.
- **Boundaries** - Teens are to stay within the boundaries of the Family Life Center (FLC) and Youth Room between the hours of 7-8:45. Library visits should be before or after Foundation. Teens should not be socializing outside unless the whole group is outside, this is for your own safety and protection. At any overnight event where there are separate sleeping areas for guys and girls, the teens are expected to stay within their own respective area. Any teen found in the opposite area may be sent home at the parent's expense.
- **Lesson Time** - Teens are asked to use the restroom prior to lesson time. Cell phones, talking or note passing will not be tolerated during the lesson time.
- **Game Time** – When games are played as a group, we would appreciate the cooperation of everyone to participate. Some exceptions will apply. This is an opportunity to build unity and to get to know one another.
- **Refreshments** – Refreshments are a privilege and need to be eaten in the FLC. Teens are responsible for cleaning up after themselves. Abuse of this rule, will result in not having snacks the following week.
- **Personal Contact** - PC is not acceptable among the teens. This would include hand-holding, kissing, lying or leaning on the opposite gender, and hugging within the building or in the parking lot. Teens will also not be permitted to sit with members of the opposite gender on busses, vans, etc, after dark unless no other arrangements can be made.
- **Personal Property** - Please keep your personal property with you at all time (purses especially). Stealing will not be tolerated and will result in a call to your parents and loss of the privilege of attending the Foundation for a period of time. Additionally, the following items are not permitted at youth group events (I-Pods or other MP3 players, personal gaming devices, illegal food, drink, drugs or weapons of any kind, fireworks, pornography, explicit movies or music). Cell phones are permitted, but their use should not be abused, and should not be used during meetings and lesson time, except due to an emergency. If cell phone use is abused, especially during a lesson, the cell phone may be taken from the teen and returned at the end of said lesson or event.

- **Activity Refreshments** - When asked to supply a sweet, salty or drink, **each** person is asked to participate. If there is more snack donations than needed for that particular activity, the rest will be used during Wednesday night refreshments.
- **Dress Code** – Teens should dress modestly always and we rely on our parent’s guidance and help for this area. Shorts should be fingertip length. Shoulders should be covered by the width of 2 fingers. Cleavage should be covered. Underwear should not be visible through fabric. No tight fitting or very loose clothing, short shorts, bare midriffs, clothing with inappropriate pictures or slogans, or two-piece swim suits will be permitted. Guys are expected to keep their shirts on always, except when swimming. Youth leaders reserve the right to ask a teen to change any inappropriate or immodest dress.
- **Additional Activities** – Activities are designed to encourage a social atmosphere. For this reason, we do not allow electronic devices to be brought to the activities, including I-pods, mp3 players, or portable DVD players. Cell phones are allowed for the purpose of contacting parents only and should not be used for music, games or texting. We also ask each teen to respect the property of others at any activity or event. Any damage done by a teen due to reckless behavior, vandalism, or willful destruction will be paid for by the teens and their parents.
- **Transportation** – Teens must travel with the group to and from activities when transportation is provided by the church. Teens may be allowed to drive themselves to activities on their own under certain, limited circumstances with advanced written parental permission and youth staff approval. Teens will not be allowed to transport other teens (excluding siblings) to and from social activities, Christian service opportunities, ministry projects or any other youth activity off church property without providing advanced written permission from all parents involved.
- **Sign-ups** – When sign-ups are made necessary for participation in Foundation activities and/or cut-off dates are announced, teens will be responsible for signing up. These sign-ups are based upon the need for adequate transportation, food, supplies, registration, tickets and/or coordination with outside organizations. Those who do not sign up as announced may not be allowed to participate. Exceptions may be made at the youth leaders' discretion (i.e. there is room on vehicles or additional tickets are available)
- **Entertainment** – While Hollywood continues to produce a lot of entertainment that is not glorifying to the Lord, there are still many acceptable alternatives. As a rule, only PG rated or below movies will be shown at a Foundation sanctioned event unless parents are previously notified otherwise. Also, only Christian music is expected to be played at Foundation events.
- **Conversation** – Teens are expected to participate in conversations and to use language that is glorifying and honoring to God. Any hurtful or harmful words, put-downs, swearing, verbal or non-verbal sexual innuendo, and/or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.

## **Parents:**

A permission/liability paper and health form, signed by parents, should be returned to the youth leaders for each teen participating in the Foundation. This is a one-time, yearly form, unless additional forms are required for specific events. Please get these to youth leaders in a timely fashion at the beginning of each new school year.

If your teens come to any youth meeting or activity, they should be in the meeting or activity. While this may seem redundant, we do not want teens wandering the halls of the church during an activity or meeting or electing to join a different activity, unless prior authorization has been given by the parents.

The Foundation has a Facebook page, where we will give information often. If you are not a friend, please be sure to join this page. We also try keep you up to date by email.

The Bulletin will also be updated each week. Please use this resource for details and information concerning the Foundation.

Please be at the church at least 10 min. prior to the scheduled pick up times. We love your teens and enjoy spending time with them, but at the end of the day, we are very ready to get home to our own families.

When asked to supply a sweet, salty or drink, **each** person is asked to participate. If there is more snack donations than needed for that particular activity, the rest will be used during Wednesday night refreshments.

Any students who exhibit ungodly behavior worthy of dismissal from a Foundation activity or meeting will sent home at the parent's expense.

## **Chaperones:**

All volunteers in the program must submit an application and are subject to approval by the youth leadership staff and board of elders as necessary. Background checks may be required as deemed necessary by church leadership.

Any volunteers, chaperones, and youth helpers must be a minimum of 1 year removed from their high school graduation.

All volunteers, chaperones, and youth helpers are expected to abide by the same rules as outlined above for the teens.

Volunteers and chaperones for an activity will required be to attend any and all pre-event meetings associated with the event, unless deemed otherwise by the youth leaders in charge of the event.

Volunteers and chaperones must have a clear understanding of the expectations, rules and guidelines of an event prior to attending.

Volunteers and chaperones will not be allowed to give students permission to omit any rules or guidelines at a Foundation event or meeting as outlined under the teen rules.

Volunteers and chaperones are expected to personally report to youth leadership about any issues or situations that may arise during an event or as they encounter them. This should be in a timely manner.

Volunteers and chaperones participating in transporting teens to or from an event must have a valid driver's license, a clean driving record, and all traffic laws are to be strictly followed, including all speed limits. Please refrain from any potentially unsafe driving incidents, including speeding, racing, Chinese fire drills, and texting and talking on the phone while driving. Please drive defensively and set a good example for the youth. All drivers must be at least 25 years old, or as stated in the church's automobile insurance policy.

Volunteers, chaperones, and leaders are expected to abide with our media policy during any Foundation sponsored event. This includes the music played in cars or during an event or any movies shown. Only Christian music should be played while transporting teens to, from, or during an event.

Volunteers, chaperones, and leaders should never put themselves in a situation where they are alone with a teen of the opposite gender. This may include waiting for parental pick-up or transportation. Also, please use extreme caution regarding physical contact, a hug may be considered appropriate, but massaging, stroking, or a kiss could and will be considered inappropriate. Please hold yourselves to the highest level of morality.

### **Discipline Procedure:**

Any teen found to have broken any of the rules will follow the following procedures per offense (or as deemed necessary by the youth staff):

- Receive a verbal warning
- Parents will be contacted and notified
- Teen will be sent home from the meeting or event
- Teen will not be permitted to return to Foundation events for a determined amount of time

Any volunteer, chaperone, helper or leader having been found to break the rules will be subject to the ruling and discipline of the youth staff leadership and also the board of elders as needed.