

Ripple Newsletter

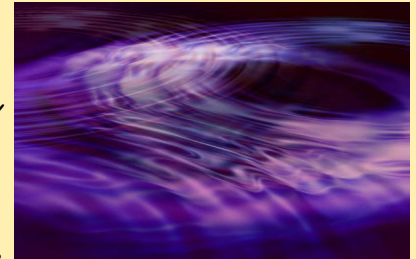
March - June 2010

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<http://ripplevt.ning.com>

Youth Group Is About Changing The World

The first question that I often hear as I introduce this new ministry is "Why 'Ripple'?" My answer always includes our website's tag line: *We never quite know how one small action, inspired by love to bring about peace, might ripple out and change the world.* For me, youth group is about changing the world. Yes, it is fun to get to know other youth and indeed incredibly important to be



a part of a community that you can count on to accept you during the highs and lows of life. Games are great and Bible study can tie us to our roots. But all of this culminates in what I believe is our central core mission: As people of faith we are the hands and feet of God called upon to bring about the peaceable kin*dom here on earth. In order to do this we need a community that supports us, friends and family who inspire us, a centered self able to make good decisions, and a connection to God that baptizes our work. Will this effort grow the church? Yep, you bet; but that's just a side effect - Christ called us to be agents of his love first and foremost. Will this ministry offer firm foundations for healthy adolescent development? I truly believe so. Our wholeness in and of itself helps to heal the world around us. So, whether it be a youth group topic centered on peace within or bringing peace to someone you may never meet, think on this and say it to a friend: I'm going to youth group to find out how I can change the world.

Make It Ripple!

Rachel Stampul

March 2nd Ripple Youth Group - Homelessness

When we pray for peace for our community, our minds go to many different kinds of community conflicts. For me, I often think of our homeless population, a population that sadly has had significant growth during this economic down turn: the families who have lost their homes to job loss and foreclosure and now spend their nights at COTS; the young people turned out of their homes by substance enslaved parents who turn to Spectrum; the veterans who our country sent to war but returned unhealed from their PTSD, and everything in between. Homelessness is often the invisible problem that our society wants to wish away. How can we bring peace to our homeless neighbors? Can a community truly be at peace when this disparity goes unaddressed? What can we do to help support the homeless ministries in our community? Tonight **Mark Redmond**, Executive Director of Spectrum Youth and Family Services, will present some of his thoughts on the issues of homelessness and how we can be a help in our community.

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Dating is not for the faint of heart.

March 16th Ripple Youth Group - Relationships

Dating is not for the faint of heart. There isn't much that is more intoxicating than a crush-turned-romance, and it is so easy to let our sense of self slip away in the midst of it. Our Peer Ministers raised the topic of "How NOT to lose yourself in a relationship" for tonight's meeting. Ever watch a friend disappear for a time during a relationship only to reappear once the heartache sets in? Have you done it yourself? How does your faith play into the choices you make in dating? Can we intentionally build relationships on the idea of peace so that our hearts have a safety net?

Come tonight and bring a friend (maybe one who is dealing with this issue) and we'll uncover some new tools for navigating the dating adventure.



When you pray,
move your feet.
- African Proverb

March 26th to 27th - 30 Hour Fast for the Hungry

We will gather to fast for 30 hours (it is a juice fast so youth will get the necessary sugars and salts, but will feel hungry), and raise awareness and money to help tackle this world wide problem. You and your church can raise money for any organization you choose so long as it addresses the issue of world hunger and resource scarcity: World Vision, Lutheran World Relief, Oxfam, Heifer International, etc, etc, etc.

Together we will open our eyes to what breaks the heart of God. We never know how one small action, inspired by love to bring about peace, might ripple out and change the world.

Join us. Every little drop counts. Make It Ripple!



Game on!

March 30th Ripple Youth Group - Games + Ice Cream Sundae Night!

It's a Fifth Tuesday! Let's do something fun!

Depending upon the weather we may play Kick-the-can or Capture-the-flag outside. Or we might play Catch Phrase, Apples to Apples, or Cranium. It is possible that we might play a combination of the above... Whatever we do, it's gonna be fun! Plan on a low key, high activity game night where we can just hang out and get to know one another a little better and eat some ice cream!

In the future, on Fifth Tuesdays, we may go rock climbing, skiing/snowboarding, bowling, apple picking, etc. But for this first one, we're going to PLAY!

Come ready to enjoy yourself!

April 6th Ripple Youth Group - Life Balance

Does finding balance in your life sometimes feel challenging? Maybe it even seems impossible most of the time! It is hard to be peaceful when you feel scattered, overextended, or directionless. Need some new tools for your balancing act? Come tonight to find some inner peace building tools that can help you find that gravitational center that keeps you joyfully juggling those many activities and demands that life is throwing at you.

Rita Marie Johnson, an internationally known peacemaker from the organization BePeace who works primarily in Costa Rica, will be with us tonight to talk about finding peace within so that we can create peace around us and in our interactions with others. Don't miss it!



Balance Doesn't
Come Easy...

April 20th Ripple Youth Group - Managing Parents

Perspective is a funny thing. I read a really good book last year called *Yes, Your Parent's Are Crazy* by Michael Bradley. However, Bradley also wrote the book *Yes, Your Teen Is Crazy*. Can you see where I'm going with this?

Parent's and teenagers have been wrestling through adolescence for longer than your parents have been alive (no, really) and their isn't an end in sight ("just wait until you have kids of your own"). My short answer to the struggle is: ego-separation. Ego separation is your desire and action on that desire to prove that you are not your parent. The results are often less than peaceful.

Tonight we will investigate some ways of managing your parents (or at least managing your relationship with them) because, like it or not, the book *Get Out Of My Life, but First Could You Drive Me & Cheryl To The Mall* (by Anthony Wolf) has a point. A peaceful home can start with you!

May 4th Ripple Youth Group - Mentoring

Several of our Peer Ministers had an interest in mentoring or role modeling for younger children, so we're going to take that idea on tonight. What does it mean to be a role model for a younger child? How is it helpful to both them and us as we mentor them? What does it mean to our church communities, our neighborhoods, and our futures as we help spread peaceful ideas about how to be in the world to kids younger than ourselves? Are we already responsible for the next generation of peacemakers? Maybe so.



Ever feel like this?



The next
generation of
peacemakers?

May 18th Ripple Youth Group - Transitions

Getting ready to leave home after high school? Are major changes happening in your life? Does the idea of this change bother you, excite you, both, neither? How we deal with life's transitions mold us almost as much as the change that we're experiencing. So just how resilient are you? What do you need to be able to make this transition a great one? How are you managing the relationships around you as this is happening? Parents, friends, and significant others will often change the way they act toward and around you, especially if they are anticipating their own life's changes.

Come tonight to find and spread some peace through the transitions in your life!



June 1st Ripple Youth Group - Environment

Do you know the *Story of Stuff*? Ever think about how the cheap piece of plastic that is the latest thing (toy, phone, purse, ball or whatever) comes from, how it is manufactured, who makes it, what's in it, and where it goes when you're through with it? Do you wonder how the future of the planet will look based upon today's environmental practices?

There is a whole religious-environmental movement out there that talks about caring for the creation and what our responsibility is to our earth and our neighbors on the planet. It isn't just ("just") that we are harming the earth's environment, the fact is that the people most effected by global warming are the poorest among us. It is a social responsibility for us, as people of faith, to care for the world around us and for everyone living here.

Summer Fun!

June 15th - End of the school year - kick off the summer party!
(Maybe pool party... stay tuned!)

June 25th - 27th - Peer Ministry Training Retreat! If you wish to be a Peer Minister on our Leadership Team for 2010-2011 you need to join us for this retreat! There will be an application process for aspiring Peer Ministers starting in April.

First week of August, a five day mission trip to New York City.
Details to follow!

Continued Ripple Youth Group through the summer!
1st and 3rd Tuesdays. When you're in town join us!

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Summer will be here
before we know it!