

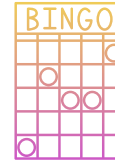
YOUTH GROUP

HS Youth Group Meetings- April

Regular Youth Group will resume April 8.
See the full schedule on the website shawanozion.org/youth

Game Nights Go Monthly!

April's Game Night will be April 26th 4:30-6pm. Join us for board games, bingo and table games. This is a great chance for family fellowship!



VBS- Rainforest Falls: Exploring the Nature of God

Vacation Bible School Volunteers Needed!
This year's Vacation Bible School will take place August 3-6, from 9:00 AM to Noon each day, and we are looking for volunteers—both youth (6th grade and older) and adults! There are a variety of fun and meaningful jobs available to fit your interests and schedule.

➔ Register online with our new program at vbspro.events/p/2a414b.

When registering, you can select the roles you're interested in, or feel free to talk to Kristin about the best options for you.



HS Youth Serve Dinner @ SAM25 – April 15



Our high school youth will be serving dinner at SAM25 on April 15 at 6:15 PM, and we're excited to put our leftover spaghetti dinner donations to good use! We'll be preparing a spaghetti meal to share with those in need.

As we get closer, we'll make a plan for cooking and organizing the evening, with opportunities for students to help with food prep, serving, and clean-up. It's a great way to serve others, build community, and live out our faith in a hands-on way.

All high school students are encouraged to join us—more details to come soon!

Crossways Camps

Give your child an unforgettable summer at Crossways Camps! Campers will grow in faith, make lifelong friends, and enjoy outdoor adventures like swimming, hiking, and campfires—all in a Christ-centered environment.

Learn more and register at www.crosswayscamps.org/youth. Spots fill fast—don't miss out!

KIDS OF THE KINGDOM HOSTS INTERGENERATIONAL EVENTS

Kids of the Kingdom are excited to host monthly intergenerational events during the education hour between services — and the congregation is invited! Each month will feature a unique hands-on opportunity to grow in faith and fellowship together. April's event will be cooking & baking to serve our neighbors at SAM25 on a date to be determined. These events are open to all ages — children, youth, parents, grandparents, and friends. Come learn, serve, create, and grow together as one church family. We hope you'll join us!

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!

"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

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April at a Glance

Apr 2- Maundy Thursday
April 3- Good Friday
April 5- Easter Sunday

Apr 8- HS Bible Study & Confirmation Class

Apr 15- HS Serve at SAM25 & Confirmation Class

Apr 22- HS Youth Group & Confirmation Class

Apr 29- HS Bible Study & Confirmation Class

Parent's Corner

Carried by Friendships, Held by Christ Isaiah Marshall | **March 10, 2026**

As a former track & field athlete, I'll admit I don't enjoy running long distances. I remember one particular four mile run I went on with a friend. We both dreaded it, but we showed up anyway—running gear on, headphones in, music blaring to distract us from the discomfort. But what really made the run worth it wasn't just finishing those four miles—it was running with a friend and the conversation we had afterward.

As we stretched, we talked about marriage, work, and most of all parenting—all the things we carry. Then we finished by lifting those things up to the Lord in prayer. Before we got in our cars, my friend said something I still haven't forgotten:

"We need to do this more often. As believers we always talk about the importance of community, but we're too busy for community. I was doing community better when I was in the world."

That convicted me deeply—because it seemed true for me as well. Granted, as parents we have a lot of responsibilities. For some of us, we have to make space to love our spouses. We also have to steward and love our kids well. For some of us, we do that as single parents. Oh and don't forget work—we have to pay the bills. One would ask, how can I make time for friends when I barely can make time for myself?

We often talk about the importance of Christian community and friendships, but few of us prioritize it in a way that deeply shapes our parenting. I left the run with my friend that day feeling both accomplished and encouraged. I had finished the run. But more than that, my friend reminded me that I don't have to do life—or parenting—alone. The problem is many of us are trying to parent alone when we were never meant to. Scripture reminds us that even parents need friends. It reminds us what type of friends parents need, and the greatest friend parents could ever have.

An Example in Capernaum

In Luke 5 we read about a daunting task becoming doable. Jesus was preaching in Capernaum and people have gathered in large numbers to hear him. There were so many people, there was no room left in the home where he preached and no room outside the door. Then the story takes an unexpected turn:

"Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus" (Luke 5:18-19).

The text doesn't specify the relationship between these four men and the paralyzed man. We have to use our spiritual imaginations. Maybe these men came across this man in need and sprung into action. Or perhaps more likely, could have been friends who cared deeply for this man. When they heard Jesus was in town, they went to great lengths to get their friend at the feet of Jesus.

In either case, these four friends weren't just present—they were persistent, resourceful, and sacrificial. They were burdened by their friend's ailment and wanted to show up for him. We hear the saying, "desperate times call for desperate measures" and for these four men, these are desperate times.

They carried their friend's weight—literally and spiritually. The Bible says, "When Jesus saw their faith, he said, 'Friend, your sins are forgiven'" (v. 20). Then after the Pharisees accused Jesus of blasphemy, he told the man, "...rise, pick up your bed and go home" (v. 24).

Friends Like These

Jesus didn't forgive based on the faith of the paralyzed man; he healed and forgave the paralyzed man in response to the faith of the friends. These men didn't wait for their friend to get it together. They didn't wait for him to crawl to Jesus because he couldn't walk. They came, saw his need, and acted.

Just like those four men in Luke 5, you need:

- Friends who refuse to let you suffer in silence.
- Friends who see your burden.
- Friends who will act in faith on your behalf.

Parenting is hard, just like running four miles alone. But having friends who will show up and be present, see our need, and act in faith allows us to persevere through this difficult calling.

The Greatest Friend

Through these four men, we see a reflection of the greatest friend of all. Jesus, seeing our need, came down to earth to act on our behalf. Without Jesus, you and I would be dead in our sin. We would be lost sheep wandering aimlessly. Left to our own devices, parenting becomes impossible. But there is good news! The Bible says, "...there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." — Proverbs 18:24

That's Jesus. The Friend who left heaven, entered our broken world, and carried the weight of our sin. The Friend who forgives, restores, and walks with us in challenging times. The Friend who doesn't just meet us at the finish line—he runs beside us, especially when we're too tired to keep going. Jesus, because of his great love for us, is the friend that enables us and empowers us to live worthy of our calling to be faithful parents. The Bible says, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." — John 15:13

As parents, we often feel like we should have it all together. Not only that, but we believe we should be able to hold it all together. But the truth is: you and I need friends who will carry us to Jesus when our faith is weak, our patience is thin, and our soul is tired. Not only do we need this kind of friend, we need to become that kind of friend to others. In order to do that, we need the greatest friend of all—Jesus.

The gospel reminds us that we don't earn God's love by being perfect parents. We experience his love in our weakness, and we share that love by showing up for one another. We are carried by our friendships and held by Christ.

Jesus is not only the One who saves us, he's the One who sustains us—through his Spirit, his Word, and his people. So to the tired parent, you don't have to run alone. You have a Savior who sees your needs. And you have a Savior who runs with you because he loves you.

<https://rootedministry.com/carried-by-friendships-held-by-christ/>