



Because we got such a positive response to our vote-with-your-feet Sunday youth group meeting, we will try one Sunday and one Tuesday each month! Read the schedule inside and sign up on-line to get e-mail reminders!

JANUARY - MARCH 2011

WINTER
EDITION

RIPPLE NEWSLETTER

A PEACE CENTERED ECUMENICAL YOUTH MINISTRY COOPERATIVE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- CHOOSING FRIENDS AND HEALTHY FRIENDSHIPS** 2
- TOLERANCE FOR OTHER RELIGIONS AND PEOPLE** 2
- DEALING WITH STRESS** 2
- BE GOOD TO YOURSELF VS. SELF HARM** 3
- COMMUNICATION WHEN IT ISN'T EASY** 3
- HOW TO CONVINCE YOUR PARENTS THAT YOU ARE TRYING YOUR BEST AND NOT SLACKING OFF** 3
- MORE ABOUT RIPPLE** 4

OUR MISSION AND PURPOSE

We believe that our purpose, as people of faith, is to be and work towards bringing about the peaceable kin*dom on earth and, as a youth organization, we create opportunities for young people to learn and experience both the being and the doing of that mission.

ATTENTION PARENTS: THE CHILD INSIDE THE TEENAGER...

...is at war with the adult who is emerging. And yet, that child still desperately needs to be loved, cared for, and affirmed.

How do we find peace within ourselves and in our families when this inner war is going on, and the pain is so often unacknowledged? As a youth pastor, I have a privileged view into the lives of the youth who walk through the doors at Ripple: I am not their parent or a direct authority in their lives, I have both the training and experience that helps me understand where they are coming from, and I work determinedly to build trust and opportunities for young people to open up to their deepest feelings and needs. Some of their deep needs are to feel useful and to find the confidence that is gained from being affirmed in their gifts as they create ripples of peace in the world around them. **Some of their deepest needs are to be loved and accepted for the beautiful people (child and adult) that they already are: gifts, weaknesses, hopes, and fears.**

There have been many parents who have come to me over the years with worries about their daughters and sons, and there

have been many more whom I wished knew that they could. Over and over again, I have been able to say to parents that their child is wonderful, that they will be ok, and that, most of all, they need to feel loved and respected.



Holding Them Close Yet Letting Them Ripple

At the end of the fall we had a chance for all of the Ripple youth to brainstorm and vote on their ideas for upcoming youth group meetings. You will see the synthesis of this in the next few pages. But what I want to draw attention to is what they wrote on two of the brainstorming pages. On "creating peace within self" the top most highly rated topics included: "Don't bottle up;" "anger management;" "dealing with stress;" "self harm;" "suicide;" and "deep breathing." Another poignant one was "How not to take out your self hate on the members of your family." Then, the most highly voted on topic on the "creating peace in your family" page was: "How to convince your family that you are..."

Continued on page 4...

30 HOUR FAST FOR THE HUNGRY (AND THIRSTY)

Save the date: March 25–26! Invite your friends! Get some sponsors! Dig a well! Make it Ripple!

You/r youth are invited to be a part of this life changing event! Our goal this year is to raise \$10,000 altogether in order to drill a well for a village in Malawi! We will come together to fast for 30 hours, learn about world hunger and a

growing thirst, participate in local service projects, and have loads of fun! This year's event will be hosted by Faith United Methodist Church in South Burlington!

Contact Rachel to find out more and to register your group.
RachelStampul@gmail.com or
802-881-3768.



**YOUTH GROUP TUESDAY JANUARY 4TH 6:30 - 8:30
CHOOSING FRIENDS AND HEALTHY FRIENDSHIPS**

Why does it matter who we choose to be friends with? What does a healthy friendship look like? And what in the world do buckets of frogs and buckets of crabs have to do with friendship?

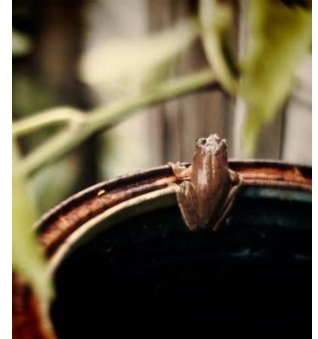
There are two kinds of friends - frogs and crabs. If you are in a bucket with a bunch of crabs, every time you try to get to the top, each time you try to get ahead, or get out of the bucket that you are all stuck in, a crab-friend will grab your leg and drag you back down again. "Who do you think you are? Do you think that you're too good for us? You aren't good enough to be able to do that..."

But in a bucket of frogs, each frog jumps on to the back of another frog and they all help one another out. They cheer each other on. They are excited (rather than jealous) of each other's accomplishments.

What kind of friends do you have and choose? What kind of friend are YOU? How do we help one another learn to be frogs rather than crabs?

Be the frog that you were meant to be! ☺

Come out on this TUESDAY to learn more and maybe find some other great frogs to hang out with!



Are your friends helping one another to jump out of the bucket?

**YOUTH GROUP SUNDAY JANUARY 16TH 4:00 - 6:00
TOLERANCE FOR OTHER RELIGIONS**

Back in September there was a huge uproar about a church in Florida whose pastor threatened to burn the Quran on September 11th. The uproar was heard all the way around the world and the outrage was felt here at home, too. Humans have a terrible tendency to judge poorly peoples of different religions, cultures, and genetics. When any part of the church does this, it convicts the rest of us to reexamine what we say we believe and what we actually do. It calls upon us to think about our own intolerances and biases. Most importantly, it calls upon us to stand up for those most trod upon by other people who claim to share our

faith. How does God call us to be in community with those who believe in a different way?

Come out this SUNDAY to talk about this crucial topic in our understanding of world peace. Should we imagine a world with no religion or a world where religious peoples of all stripes live up to their own ideals of peaceful harmony with God and one another? What practical things can we do to make a ripple through interfaith activity and mutual love and respect?



Imagine a world where religious peoples live up to their own ideals of peaceful harmony with God and one another...

**OPEN MIC AT 25 BUELL
SUNDAY JANUARY 30TH 7:00 - 9:00**

So much fun was had in November at our first Open Mic Night that we absolutely had to do it again!

Bring your friends, tell your classmates, prepare a song, a story, a poem, or whatever to share!

We'll gather again at the First United Methodist Church parsonage @ 25 Buell Street in Burlington (right across from the parking garage) and we'll enjoy the evening together!

Last time we were all blown away at the talent that came to join us for the evening and all the new faces that we saw! We're hoping to make this a regular outreach program going forward so be on the lookout for more to come!

We'll make a splash and watch the ripples go!

Make it Ripple!



What do you want to share? What song, story, or poem do you have that needs to be heard?

YOUTH GROUP TUESDAY FEBRUARY 1ST 6:30-8:30 DEALING WITH STRESS

Stressed? If you aren't feeling it then you probably don't need to worry about coming to our March 20th meeting either... ☺

But chances are that stress is a part of your life just like most of the rest of us. How do you deal with stress? What did Jesus say about worrying? "Do not worry about your life..."

How do we balance trusting in God's care for us with taking care of ourselves? Hmmmm... This is not an easy question and you will likely wrestle with it your whole life long. But one thing is for certain - worry and stress do NOT help you make good decisions - so let's find some ways to deal with it better together this TUESDAY!

YOUTH GROUP SUNDAY FEBRUARY 13TH 4:00 - 6:00 LOVING SELF: BE GOOD TO YOURSELF VS. SELF HARM

It's Valentine's weekend! So how are you going to show yourself how much you love yourself? You know, "Love your neighbor as you love yourself" implies that you love yourself first. So do you?

These years are chock full of people, advertisements, magazines, and more that convince us that we are not enough - not good enough, not good looking enough, not smart enough, not studious enough, not big/small/light/dark/smooth/real/funny/talented/

whatever enough for whom ever is doing the talking.

Don't bottle it up! If internalization is the key to your daily grind, I'll bet you've become pretty angry. Let's talk tonight about being good to yourself, anger management, and some of the realities of self harm, depression, and suicide. It is awfully hard to make peaceful ripples in the world when your fight or flight instinct is on over drive. Come out this SUNDAY to learn more!

YOUTH GROUP TUESDAY MARCH 1ST 6:30 - 8:30 COMMUNICATION WHEN IT ISN'T EASY

Sometimes communication IS easy. Sometimes it isn't. We're talking tonight mostly about communication in communities. The original topic was posed this way: "How to include others in a conversation in a non-awkward way when half of the people you are talking to apathy the other person."

We'll deconstruct that sentence and go from

there! ☺ This applies to small groups at Ripple, to school groups where participants in a conversation might hardly know one another, and to larger community groups when topics polarize. Communication can be hard. Let's find some tools this TUESDAY to help make it easier.

Make it Ripple!

YOUTH GROUP SUNDAY MARCH 20TH 4:00 - 6:00 HOW TO CONVINCE YOUR PARENTS THAT YOU ARE TRYING YOUR BEST AND NOT SLACKING OFF

What else needs to be said?

Come out tonight to learn how to communicate what you ARE doing and how to ask for help with what you aren't. This SUNDAY will be a good night for parents to join the parent

group and talk about the other side of this challenge. How do we love one another above all and let go of preconceived expectations? How do we forgive one another for being only human? These questions go both ways. Love one another as God has loved you.



Need to find some peace amid the stresses of life?

You know, "Love your neighbor as you love yourself" implies that you love yourself first. So do you?



When trying your best never seems to be enough.

We are on the web!
Ripplevt.ning.com

WINTER
EDITION

Ascension Lutheran Church
95 Allen Road
South Burlington, VT 05403
Church Phone: 802-862-8866
Rachel's Cell Phone: 802-881-3768
E-mail: RachelStampul@gmail.com

Find us on Facebook



Ripple

You like this.

THE CHILD INSIDE *Continued from page 1...*

doing your best and not slacking off." (Both A students and struggling students voted for this one.) We ALL feel this pressure, don't we?

So, I'm writing to you, parents, because you need to know that every child-adult walking through the doors of Ripple is experiencing pain and they need, more than anything else in the world right now, to be loved and to know they are loved by YOU. There is a longing for this peace even as they are actively pushing you away as they struggle through ego-separation: becoming themselves apart from their parents.

Chances are, you already know this. Chances are, you are trying your best to do just that. And, yes, we talk all the time at Ripple about how hard our parents are trying to be the best parents that they know how to be and about honoring our fathers and mothers. We work on communication skills, empathy, and faith that God will be there even when no other human seems to be. As a parent myself, this is what I would want my daughters to learn. I hope that the parent's group, which meets at the same time as our youth group, might be a place to talk about the struggles of parenting teenagers, where you might talk about the same things your kids are struggling with, and might be able to find some support for the journey. We all know it isn't easy and perhaps now is the time for me to say to you "Good Job!" on raising such amazing young people, because they truly are - every last one of them.

In the meantime, I'm here for you and your young person. Come find me. We'll talk. Together we can create the next generation of peacemakers. Make it Ripple! << Peace >>

Rachel Stampul, Youth Pastor

WE NEVER QUITE KNOW HOW ONE SMALL ACTION,
INSPIRED BY LOVE TO BRING ABOUT PEACE,
MIGHT RIPPLE OUT AND CHANGE THE WORLD.

MORE ABOUT RIPPLE

Ripple is a regional ecumenical youth ministry cooperative that brings youth together from many different churches around Chittenden County, Vermont in order to create an exciting youth ministry program! Our core focus is about creating peace in the world and becoming peacemakers!

We meet twice a month as a **youth group** and have a **parent support group** that meets at the same time. We also have **occasional activities** like the 30 Hour Fast for the Hungry (and Thirsty), mission trips, and local service projects that focus on service learning!

Come to Ripple to:

- Find **meaning** – through service, mission, meditation, worship...
- Find **acceptance** – through community with peers and adults who love you for who you are and for everything that makes you unique...
- Find **direction** – through coaching, small groups, inspirational retreats...
- Find **comfort** – through pastoral counseling, small groups, and prayer...
- Find **empowerment** – through leadership training and opportunities.



This is an open and affirming ministry where the LGBT community is welcomed and loved, invited to serve with us in ministry and to seek alongside us in safety. May we all find a spiritual home among friends here.

