



# GAITHERSBURG

## CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

Some General Spring Retreat Rules (so we can have a fun weekend!):

### Phones:

We strongly suggest that students leave their phones at home. A part of what makes time away impactful is limiting distractions and leaning into connections with God, leaders, and other students. Phones can complicate things. They are a great tool, but they can also be powerful distractions or barriers to in-person connection. We understand that there may be cases for why a student needs to have a phone while away. That being said, here is our policy:

- Students will be allowed to bring their phones. They may be used in cabins and during free time. However, we will **not allow phones** to be used during **SERVICES, SMALL GROUPS, or MEALS**. If a student is seen using their phone during one of these times, they will be asked to put it away. A second conversation will result in the student's phone being taken away, put in a secure place decided by the youth pastor and leadership team. They will get their phone back when we leave to come back to GCN. All parents will have the contact information of the youth pastor. If a student is asked by a leader to put their phone away during an approved time, the student is to listen to the leaders request but will not have their phone taken away.

### Where you can and cannot be:

Each student will be assigned to a cabin or room to sleep in. There should never be guys in girls' sleeping areas or vice versa. The campground has lots of places to gather and hang out, so male and female students will have access to spaces that can be supervised by leaders. Students are not allowed to leave the campground for any reason unless authorized by the youth pastor. This includes going on walks in the surrounding area connected to the campground. There are plenty of things to do where we will be, so there is no reason for students to have to leave.

Students are expected to be at all scheduled activities. They are also expected to not be in each others' things. No one should be touching or moving things that belong to others.

### What you can and cannot bring:

Here are things we would love for students to bring:

- a friend :)
- a Bible, journal, and pen
- deodorant and personal hygiene products
- bedding (twin) or a sleeping bag
- bug spray and sunscreen
- clothing for the weekend

Things you should not bring:

- Weapons such as firearms, knives, explosives, or fire starters (this includes small hunting knives or pocket knives)
- Alcohol, drugs, or vapes
- Inappropriate clothing
- Pieces of technology other than a cell phone (Nintendo switch, DS, tablet, laptop, etc.)

### Respect:

We want to be a community that gives respect to everyone. Students are to be respectful of the space we have (cleaning up after yourself, not damaging property) and to the people we are with (leaders, camp staff, other students).

If students are not able to follow the guidelines set above, a phone call will be made to parents or guardians. While we do not want to send any students home early from retreat, we reserve the right to send a student home if they are consistently being unsafe or are unable to follow guidelines.

Below are pieces of our general Student Safety Policy that are helpful to understand. Please read through them.

### General Policies

1. Gaithersburg Church of the Nazarene is committed to the safety and well-being of students, leaders, and families. To maintain a safe community, there is a zero-tolerance policy that prohibits any sexual, emotional, or physical abuse. It is a requirement that Gaithersburg Church of the Nazarene employees and Next Generation volunteers immediately report any occurrences or suspected occurrence of child abuse to our church staff.
2. Those who express interest in serving with GCN Youth must sign a criminal background check and Next Generation Volunteer Application before joining the volunteer team. Staff and volunteers are also required to have read the student safety policy and complete the accompanying form stating their reading and understanding of the stated policies. GCN Youth staff and volunteers must address any concerns or questions regarding the student safety policy to the youth pastor before completing the acknowledgement form and beginning service with this ministry. Staff and volunteers who fail to adhere to this policy may be asked to step down from their role.
3. Staff members and volunteers should make the youth pastor aware immediately of any inappropriate action or breaking of this policy. This will be brought for counsel before church leadership and an attorney, if needed.
4. GCN Youth will follow legal guidelines by the state of Maryland and federal laws concerning issues of sexual abuse.

### Overnight Events

Some activities and events with GCN Youth will require overnight sleeping arrangements to be made for both leaders and students, and will function under certain protocols:

1. Any overnight plans must be consistent with GCN's policy of having at least 2 adults with students.
2. An adult of the same gender as the students is required for all overnight activities or events. Sleeping arrangements should be separated by guys and girls.
3. Appropriate sleeping attire must be worn by leaders and students.

4. Students and leaders should never share a bed, blanket, sleeping bag, or other sleeping space. No leader should be alone with a student unless the door is open.

In order to have a safe, fun, and impactful retreat, students and leaders must be working to create a safe environment. Any questions or clarifications can be directed to Pastor Lauren ([pastorlauren@gburnaz.org](mailto:pastorlauren@gburnaz.org)) for more information.

I have read the retreat rules and agree to abide by them:

\_\_\_\_\_ (student signature)

I have read the retreat rules and will encourage my student to follow them:

\_\_\_\_\_ (parent signature)