

2023-2024 Brookdale Youth Group Preview

Welcome to the 2023-2024 Brookdale Youth Group! This packet will give you a sneak peak at what's ahead as together we endeavor to take our next steps in following Christ!

Our Spiritual Focus

Every day you make choices, big and small, and those choices determine how you feel, how well you succeed, what will happen in your future, and what kind of relationships you have with others. Most importantly, your choices affect how close and confident is your relationship with God.

Did you know that the gospel (which means "good news") can help you make all of these choices well? That's right! The gospel is more than a message about what happens to you after you die. It's a message that helps you make both the big decisions that come your way and the daily decisions that fill your everyday life – at home, at church, at school, and anywhere else.



This year, we'll take a few moments each Friday night to focus on the gospel. The Scripture that we will focus on is Philippians 1:27, which says: "Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ." First, we'll talk about what the gospel is. Then we'll talk about how this history-changing, life-transforming message can influence all the choices that you make so that the gospel of Jesus Christ can fill your daily life and future with real and lasting good news!

Our Weekly Schedule

Sunday, 9 a.m.

Each week, we encourage you to start your week right here at Brookdale, 9 a.m. Sunday morning in the Youth Center. Mark Hulbert will guide you through a captivating study about the greatest subject of all – God himself. You won't want to miss this times of study and discussion together. (Oh, and breakfast bars will be provided for those who need a little extra brain power to start your morning.)



Friday, 6:30 p.m.

On most weeks, we invite you and your friends to spend a couple of hours unwinding from a busy (and possibly crazy) week of school and other events. We'll begin at 6:30 p.m. and end at 8:30 p.m. A light dinner will be provided! During these times together, we'll play a variety of outdoor and indoor games, spend a few

moments talking about our “Choose the Good News” focus, pray together, and make plans for things coming up.

Once a month, we'll mix things up and meet at the home of an older couple in our church somewhere in the F-M area! These off-site gatherings will be a special time and will usually occur on the third Friday of each month. Here's what that schedule looks like thru the end of the year!

September 29	October 20	November 17	December 8
Merv/Renee Kelley	Rob/Laurie Moats	Jay/Barb McCarty	Judy Kinlaw
1115 - 14th St N Fargo, ND 58102	1613 - 19th St S Moorhead, MN 56560	4416 El Tora Blvd S Fargo, ND 58103	3307 Adams St S Fargo, ND 58104

In addition to these special times together, sometimes we'll announce special Friday night activities – or maybe an occasional Saturday activity, too. These activities may be things like bowling or a Fargo Force hockey or RedHawks baseball game. For paid activities like these, we'll ask you to purchase your own tickets and food. Other activities, like a community scavenger hunt, Christmas party, soccer or volleyball match, or service event (like raking someone's leaves, assisting at a food pantry, etc.) won't cost anything, but may require you to bring some food or be prepared to work a little. We hope that all these activities will help us grow in friendship and in our confidence to get out into our community together. If you have any ideas for some activities that you might enjoy, please let Pastor Thomas or Sarah Overmiller know! We're willing to consider suggestions!

Future Events

As we look ahead, here are a few dates and/or key events to mark on your calendars so that we can do our best to do these things together as a youth group!

- **Christmas Party (Dec. 8):** We'll gather at Judy Kinlaw's home for a fun evening together. Teens should bring a fun gift for the “white elephant” gift exchange and will be asked to bring some cookies or snacks. Oh, and dress festively!
- **New Years Eve Game Night (Dec. 31):** On Sunday, New Years Eve night, we'll join the rest of our church family from 6 p.m. to midnight (or as long as you want to stay) to play board games, table games, group games, and Nintendo Switch to ring in the New Year together. Just before midnight, we'll pray for God's blessing on the year ahead.
- **The Winter Funtastic (Mar. 22-23):** Teens from other churches throughout MN will gather at First Baptist Church of Baxter, MN for two days of exciting activities, Bible preaching, and helpful Q & A sessions focused on topics important for teens. Pastor Thomas and his wife, Sarah, will serve as chaperones. We'll depart together from Brookdale at noon on Fri. and return early Saturday evening. Cost will be approx. \$35.
- **Camp Chetek (TBD):** Sometime in June or July (Mon.-Sat.), we'll make the trek to Chetek, WI for a week of nonstop Bible teaching, counseling, and fun with teens from throughout MN and WI. Cost will be approx. \$300, so begin saving early! This is always a very special time together as a youth group and we hope you can come!
- **New York City Missions Trip (June or July 2025):** This is a tentative event almost 2 yrs. away, but we're already doing preliminary research and Faith Baptist Church, the church Pastor Thomas pastored before coming to Brookdale, has already agreed to host us! Our purpose for this trip would be team

building and ministry training by helping FBC run a VBS and/or soccer camp outreach in the heart of Queens. This will be a true multi-ethnic, gospel outreach experience with lifelong, life-changing implications. Pastor Thomas and Sarah would go as chaperones and other parents may also be included. Cost would be approx. \$400 for roundtrip airfare, plus some additional cost for meals, a subway metro card, and some affordable sight-seeing spots – so perhaps more like \$500-600. Housing will be free since FBC will host us on-site in the church, which offers showers and a kitchen for preparing our own food. Please let us know if you are interested in this opportunity so that we can make clear plans and begin saving early for the expenses of the trip.

Youth Retreat & Camp Scholarship

For any teen who participates in either a youth retreat or camp week planned for the Brookdale youth group (like Winter Funtastic and Camp Chetek), there is a \$25/teen scholarship available for each event. Once you register for the event, just let Pastor Thomas know that you've registered, and he will request a \$25 reimbursement from the deacons to be provided to you to reduce the cost of the event. We want as many of our teens to participate in these events and hope this helps make that possible!

Weekly Meals

This year we're trying something new by providing a light meal for teens on Friday nights. We're still preparing the meal rotation, but it will likely include things like burgers, soup & sandwiches, hot dog, chili, pizza, taco bar, baked potato bar, ham mac n cheese, spaghetti & meatballs, or a pancake bar. Brookdale will provide these meals, with Pastor Thomas and Sarah preparing the food. But if any parents would like to help with a meal (as some have asked if they could do), they may do so by providing an entire meal for an evening or bringing part of a meal to help. Please contact pastorthomas@brookdaleministries.org if you would like to help in any way.

Staying in Touch

As we go through the year, it will be important to stay in touch! We will include the weekly Friday meetup location (whether at Brookdale or somewhere else) in the Sunday bulletin, so be sure to look at that. We also will endeavor to send out regular emails and text messages to teens and parents to keep you in the loop about special activities, events, and other important things. To ensure that we all stay on the same page, please send your preferred email and cell number (if you have any) and also your parents' preferred emails and cell numbers. You can send this info to pastorthomas@brookdaleministries.org.

Looking Forward to a Great Year

We're looking forward to a great year as we spend both serious and fun time together, learning and serving – and “choosing the good news” as we face the experiences of everyday life with growing confidence in Christ. We hope that you will make the Brookdale Youth Group gatherings and events a very high priority as we will be making you a very high priority in our lives. We thank God for each of you and are praying for an enjoyable and fruitful year together.

Grace and Peace.

Pastor Thomas and Sarah