

Dear Parents or Guardians of Middle School Youth,

Area UMC middle school students have the opportunity to study the topic of sexuality in January through a program called "Sex, God, and Me." As parents, you are already aware of how pertinent this topic is to our youth, especially during middle school. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention gave these statistics for 2006:

Students are increasingly likely to be sexually active as they move through adolescence. Percentage who have had intercourse:

Age Group	Boys	Girls
Before age 13	9	4
9 th grade	39	29
10 th grade	42	44
11 th grade	51	52
12 th grade	64	62



Our youth get a lot of input on this topic – from peers, school, and the media. The church, however, is not generally seen as an equivalent voice on this topic. This program is directed at providing that direction through meeting the following goals:

- To encourage Parent/Teen communication on sexual matters
- To promote the Bible as a reference for the everyday challenges that effect our lives
- To rely on the power of prayer to help them through everyday matters
- To provide a forum for discussion of sexual topics in a safe, religious environment with adult facilitators who are communicating a message of sexual abstinence with God's help.

"Sex, God, and Me" was designed in the Episcopal Church but is accepted for study in the United Methodist Church, as well as several other denominations. We have reviewed this course, as well as many others, and selected this one, as we were impressed with the message, the tone of the message, and the ability of this program to be effective with our youth. The program is frank without being unnecessarily graphic and is useful in the tools and ideas it shares to help teens make effective choices in managing their sexuality.

In addition to youth participation, parent or guardian participation is required. The value of having one or both parents, or a guardian, present for each of the sessions can't be overemphasized. While the content of this program is important and valuable, the real value is in the discussions you may be able to have with your youth as a result of the topics that are shared. Since no one can replace your role as a parent, or guardian, your participation is required.



Leadership of this program will come through several sources. First, Heidi Kidd, a member of Midland First UMC who has facilitated this program in the past, will be responsible for the overall program direction. Second, a member of FUMC pastoral staff will be present each week. Third, we will be



using a video series that is part of the core curriculum and provides information from a series of speakers including doctors, youth leaders, clergy and others who have a message to share in this area. These speaker choices are a result of six years of research by the curriculum developer and represent the best choices for each topic area that they have found. Finally, we will also use other members of this congregation and our community to help facilitate some discussion areas. At all times, we will stay consistent with the goals stated above.

The program will be conducted on two Saturdays: February 11 and 18 from 9 a.m.— Noon at Midland First United Methodist Church. Please consider how you can make time available for both sessions.

This is an important topic and the “Sex, God, and Me” program is an effective tool to present both issues and solutions that teens can consider as they work through it in their own situations. The message is positive and empowering and clearly communicates how every teen, regardless of where they are in their personal journey, can begin making good choices. If you have any questions or concerns about the program, its messages, or content, please feel free to call. We will be happy to work with you to address any issues.

To register for Sex, God, and Me, please contact Marcia Payne in our church office by telephone (989-835-6797 extension 18) or email (mpayne@fumcmid.org). There is no fee for the sessions.

Best Regards,

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Associate Pastor
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Associate Director of Middle School Youth
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Heidi Kidd and Tammy Brown
Facilitators—Confirmation Leaders

