

DALTON FIRST UMC YOUTH COVENANT

Youth group, Sunday school, retreats, mission projects, etc. are a part of the ministry of the youth department of Dalton First United Methodist Church. While participating in any activity, we will be representing both the Christian faith and DFUMC. As a church youth group, we will conduct ourselves both individually and as a group in ways that are consistent with who we are and what we represent.

With a group of our size it is important that we operate on trust, and that everyone clearly understands the guidelines by which we will operate and what is expected of each person. The following guidelines give the basic expectations for each of us to follow.

Minimum Expectations

It is expected that everyone will abide by the rules and guidelines in this covenant and those provided by the youth director and leaders. These are held to be the minimal expectations of any participant in any activity.

1. Alcohol, tobacco, inhalants, fireworks, weapons (**including pocket knives**), or illegal drugs of any kind have no place at the church or on any trip taken by our church. They will not be tolerated.
2. Illegal activity of any kind, including vandalism and shoplifting, have no place at the church or on any trip taken by our church. The law requires that we report any such incident to the police.
3. We will respect the physical property of others (personal items, etc.), including the **vans or buses** in which we travel, **restaurants** where we eat, and **facilities** where we stay. You mess it up, you clean it up...you break it, you buy it!!
4. The **language** we use and our attitude need to reflect the Christian nature of our group. Be positive and reflect who we are as a Christian community in all we say and do! Profanity, abusive language, derogatory comments and put downs have no place in our group or on any trip.
5. Everyone – youth and adults – will be expected to be **present and on time** for all events.
6. We are **never to be off by ourselves**. Make sure that you always have others with you when you are out.
7. The **adult leaders need to know where we are at all times**. One cannot leave the designated area without receiving permission from the adults in charge.
8. When on trips, we need to be **in the sleeping facilities by curfew**, which will be on the schedule and/or stated by the trip leader.
9. We are never to get into a vehicle that is not with our group. We are never to go off with anyone who is not with our group. (Pre-approved adults 25 and over are the only ones authorized to drive our vehicles).
10. We encourage expressions of affection and caring. However, youth activities or trips are not a date. Even if you are with your “sweety” (or you discover your “sweety” while participating in youth activities), expressions of romantic affection need to be appropriate to our group. Save your “romantic interludes” for back home. Do not put yourself in an embarrassing situation. (No making purple).
11. Have fun, help others to have fun, and get to know others. Be kind and considerate of others. Be flexible and patient with one another!

Violations of the Rules

Violations of our covenant fall into three groups: minor, moderate, and major.

Minor violations refer to those things which, though they may seem minor, either are inconsistent with who we are as a church youth group, or undermine what we are trying to accomplish. Adults need to immediately address any minor concerns and it will be expected that speaking to the issue will be enough to resolve the issue. It is further expected that there will be no further need to deal with the issue. These types of violations really deal with teaching our team members what is expected on the trip. Consequences appropriate to the offense will be decided upon by the appropriate adult. Minor violations include things like:

- ❖ *Use of inappropriate language*
- ❖ *Being late for an activity, or disregarding the schedule*
- ❖ *Not participating in group activities*
- ❖ *Removing oneself from the group*
- ❖ *Disregarding directions from adults*
- ❖ *Use of portable game units, music players, video players (except while traveling)*

Moderate violations refer to those things which require more than a word of instruction or correction. A moderate concern will require sitting down and dealing with the issue and involving the trip leader in the issue. Consequences appropriate to the offense will be decided upon by the appropriate adults. Moderate violations include:

- ❖ *Repeated violations of the minor rules*
- ❖ *Disrespect of any of the adults during an activity or on a trip*
- ❖ *Going off alone – leaving designated area without permission*
- ❖ *Missing a scheduled event*

Major violations refer to those things which not only do not belong at an activity or on a trip, but which also fundamentally undermine the activity and/or trip. These violations will result in the person's **parents being called** and being involved in the decision concerning the consequences. A major violation may result in someone **being sent home**. Major violations include:

- ❖ *The use of alcohol, tobacco, inhalants, illegal drugs, weapons or sneaking out*
- ❖ *Any illegal activity such as shop lifting or vandalism*
- ❖ *Physical fighting*
- ❖ *Sexual activity of any kind*

Signature of Participant (Print name below)

Signature of Parent (Print name below)