

Dear Parents and Junior High Students,

Core Groups are starting **September 15<sup>th</sup>** and some things have improved in junior high to help make our Wednesday night program align with our mission of making disciples-makers of Jesus Christ. This email contains the basic info you'll need to prayerfully consider this opportunity of discipleship and growth for your son or daughter. Please make sure you understand the following expectations (as parents and as students) for Core Groups and then consider the opportunity. Bottom line: we ask our students in Core Groups to commit to the discipleship process of being Planted in Community, Rooted in Truth, and Reaching in Love.

### **What are Core Groups?**

Core Groups are similar to small groups. 3-6 students and 1 volunteer staff member (Core Group Leader). These Core Groups will be spending time together being Planted in Community, getting Rooted in Truth by going through the R.O.O.T.S. Bible Studies, spending time discussing how they can Reach in Love as they share the gospel with their friends, and of course, prayer.

### **To be in a Core Group students will:**

**-Sign up on the form posted in the Student Center.** Although students can sign up at any time during the year, signing up now gives us the ability to place them in a group this fall when we kick-off Core Groups for junior high.

**-Attend the Core Group regularly on Wednesday nights.** There is no expectation of perfect attendance, as we know sometimes people are sick, can't make it because of a ride issue, or have an important commitment they can't change. The goal is to make every effort to attend regularly and let your Core Group Leader know when you can't.

**-Commit to being a part of a Core Group 2 out of 3 school seasons.** We see Core Groups as a vehicle to help us create disciples, and to do that effectively, it's important that students are willing to make the commitment to attend 2 out of 3 school seasons (i.e. Sept-Nov, Dec-Feb, and March-May) so that they spend enough time in a Core Group to build the necessary intimacy to grow in maturity towards Christ. We know students have commitments to sports or other after school activities that require their time so we want to allow students the ability to miss 1 season

while still being able to be part of a Core Group. The expectation will be that even though they may miss that season, they will still be doing their R.O.O.T.S. and checking in regularly with their Core Group Leader. *Still sign up for a Core Group now even if you plan on missing the Fall season.*

**-Be willing to let their Core Group Leader speak truth into their life and challenge them to grow deeper with Jesus.** Those who attend Core Groups are committing to be authentic and to demonstrate that they desire someone to come alongside them and challenge them in their faith.

**-Do R.O.O.T.S. to the best of their ability.** Again, we don't expect perfection, but we do expect a desire to make God a priority in each student's life. That means our students should demonstrate their willingness to do their R.O.O.T.S. regularly and come to Core Groups prepared. That said, they may have some questions or there may be circumstances that prevent the student from completing some or all of their R.O.O.T.S.. We still want this student to come despite this and we want them to not feel judged in any way. If the student makes a habit of not completing their R.O.O.T.S., then we will have a conversation with them to better understand their reasons and if they can commit to making Core Groups a fruitful experience.

**-Be able to apply to our mission trip called Reaching: Trek.** Students must be in a Core Group to be able to apply to Reaching: Trek. As before, students in a Core Group will still apply for this mission trip and acceptance depends on the decision of the Junior High Director. We believe that we serve out of who we are in Christ. Therefore, it's essential that prior to serving others, we are being disciplined in the process of growing in Christ. It's by deepening our faith in Jesus Christ that we serve others with the right heart.