Dear Parents of High School Students,

Welcome to summer 2018! We are so excited to continue to partner with you in raising up the next generation of disciples of Jesus Christ. If this is your student’s first year, we would like to welcome you to High School Ministries and encourage you to sign your student up for the Bare Soles trip. The trip is from June 10-14; **online sign ups** begin April 15. Details are on the website.

BARE SOLES HAS TWO PRIMARY OBJECTIVES ::

As we learn from, discuss, and are transformed by the power of God’s Word, we hope to see students deepen their relationships with Jesus Christ and begin to build more fully-orbed Christian worldviews. We believe they can leave this trip with a deeper understanding of the wonderful reality that God cares for them personally and that all of life belongs to Him.

Also, we hope this trip provides the context for your son or daughter to build friendships within the body of Christ and develop deeper relationships with small group leaders, mentors, and staff. We want students to leave the trip with a stronger connection to the church and deeper commitment to living “life together” as a church community as they move through their high school years.

WHO DO WE WANT ON THIS TRIP?

Every high school student! Why? Because this trip is about the gospel, and we believe that every single student, volunteer, and staff member needs continual life-giving opportunities to hear and experience the good news of God’s love for us and what that demands from our lives. Throughout the week, the grace, truth, and love found in Scripture will be preached, discussed, and practiced. We are going to celebrate the best news we could ever receive :: God loves sinners and invites us into new life. We are going to do our best to make this reality practical, experiential, and targeted to the lives and needs of our high school students.

The teaching, community, and trip as a whole, is arranged in order to speak to the students’ unique struggles and opportunities in this stage of life. Some of our students will have the opportunity to grow deeper in a faith that is currently thriving, others will have the chance to be called back to the savior who they are drifting away from, and for some, this trip will provide the opportunity for them to hear and receive the gospel, with soft hearts, for the first time. Regardless of where your student is at, we can assure you that Bare Soles will be an amazing context for them to be deeply transformed by the love of God.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

Dale Hollow Lake in Tennessee. We will stay on houseboats and will take land ventures to explore God's beautiful creation. Each houseboat will be supervised and shepherded by three to four approved leaders.

WHAT WILL BE DOING WHILE WE ARE THERE?

There will be scheduled quiet times for students to engage with devotional materials and time for prayer. We will have round table discussions on various topics, such as, how to share your faith, sexual purity, how to study the Bible by yourself, the importance of Christian friends and community, learning to pray, etc. We will have daily free time to enjoy the beauty of our location, swim, go tubing, hike, play games, and enjoy rich conversations with friends and leaders. Each night we will have time of teaching & worship followed by small group discussions and prayer.

IN WHAT WAYS WILL A STUDENT BE STRETCHED ON THIS TRIP?

To think more deeply about who Jesus is and what it means to follow him. They will be encouraged to be authentic in their relating. They will be asked to serve others when they don’t want to, and will likely have the chance to try new activities they haven't tried before.

ARE THERE ANY SPECIFIC QUALIFICATIONS OR SKILLS NEEDED ON THIS TRIP?

No skills necessary. We are on real boats on real water, so we do expect students to follow guidelines and be careful, but there is no “mandatory” swimming or adventuring. There will be many activities available that appeal to a wide range of personalities and interests. The trip has many opportunities to be highly active, but at all times there are a significant number of students and leaders sitting, talking, and playing games on shore or on the decks. If your son or daughter has any special needs you think could be a concern on this trip, please reach out to us and we would love to talk.

HOW COULD A PARENT PREPARE THEIR STUDENT WELL AND FOLLOW UP WELL?

You can pray for and with your students that they, their friends, and our leadership team will have soft hearts and be transformed by God’s word during our time together. You can also pray for your student to enjoy a lot of adventure, to try new things and to be challenged. Please encourage and challenge them to expect a time of restoration. We live lives that are so often marked by busyness, pain, and anxiety. Our prayer is that this trip will provide a context and a culture that allows students to experience the true joy and rest of being in Christ. When they return, ask them about what they enjoyed, how they were challenged, and what they learned. Ask them how they have been transformed by God’s word, and how they hope to continue to grow in Christ over the coming weeks and months.

Hopefully this helps as you plan your summer. If you have any questions, feel free to ask!

We hope to see your student on Bare Soles!

The High School Ministries Team

Blythefield Hills Baptist Church