

# STICKY FAITH 2015

## *New Tools and Vision in Youth and Family Ministries at Faith*

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To: Parents, Leaders, Friends, and Students at Faith Pres!  
From: Brett Shoemaker, Youth and Family Ministries Pastor

As I begin to serve alongside you at Faith, I have become aware of an impactful program that many churches have benefitted from since its birth in 2006: STICKY FAITH. I would like to take this STICKY FAITH journey with you during 2015 to see where God may be leading us next in connecting our youth and family ministries and allowing us to build lasting faith in young people and families.

### **What is STICKY FAITH?**

STICKY FAITH curriculum, workshops, and seminars have come out of many years of research that followed 500 high school graduates closely over the course of their next three years of college or work. The goals were 1) to determine how many stick with their own walk with Christ and stay connected to Christian community and how many walk away; and 2) to find the helps and obstacles to making faith stick for these young people. The research showed that key elements of a faith that sticks are:

- **Intergenerational ministry** – A faith that is grown out of a youth group or ministry that is by and large separate from the larger faith community may harm young people’s ability to connect to authentic, faithful communities once they leave those programs. How can we work together to bridge ministry to young people with other ministries that span generations?
- **Teamwork with parents** – Parents are and will always be the primary leaders of faith in a young person’s life. There is no substitute for this. Youth workers, mentors, and pastors can support and train and help youth, but we must minister in partnership with parents and we must minister within a family ministry context.
- **Milestones** – How can we encourage, equip, and celebrate young people through important steps of faith at appropriate developmental stages that grow roots more deeply as opposed to a more disconnected “hit and miss” or “trial and error” approach to various programs that seek to build faith?
- **Mentoring, mission work, and direct involvement in leadership and worship** are other important points of conversation around the STICKY FAITH issue.

### **How can we benefit as a church?**

We will invest a good portion of time and funds into a STICKY FAITH COHORT during the year 2015. This is an intentional investment to reap the benefits of the STICKY FAITH program and begin to put in place some strategies that will move us in the direction of building solid faith for young people and families. At the very least, it will begin some important conversations about how we do youth ministry and family ministry. At the very most, God will move in powerful ways in the lives of our young people and families, ways that will have a long-lasting and multiplying impact for the Kingdom.

### **Starting the Conversation...**

Over the next couple months we would like to pinpoint seven to ten individuals with varied interests in youth and family ministry (parents, youth leaders, elders, older youth or college-aged students, for

example) who can begin talking in January about where we are now in ministry. Out of these conversations, or upon the group's recommendation, we will select three people to join me February 11-13 to attend the opening STICKY FAITH seminar in Pasadena. Those who attend the Pasadena cohort will be primary voices in giving shape to what happens throughout the year as we continue.

**A head start!**

I do feel that Faith is already on the path to being STICKY. This church certainly demonstrates intentionality in wanting to decompartmentalize youth ministry and make young people an active and important part of the larger church. The *Stepping Stones* of Faith and a desire to partner with parents for the long haul are key steps that Faith values as well. With this trajectory, we should be able to maximize the input from the STICKY FAITH folks as we move ahead with a new building and renewed vision for serving Christ together in the world!

***Please take a look at the Frequently Asked Questions, available on the church website and in the narthex, and feel free to contact me with questions.***

Peace in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brett Shoemaker". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

*Research shows that almost half of graduating high school seniors struggle deeply with their faith. Recognizing the ramifications of that statistic, the Fuller Youth Institute (FYI) conducted the College Transition Project to identify the relationships and best practices that can set children and teenagers [in partnership with parents and mentors] on a trajectory of lifelong faith and service.*