



CHURCH OF CHRIST

900 North Waldron Road Fort Smith, AR 72903

Phone (479) 452-1240 Fax (479) 452-5767 www.westark.org

Greetings, in the name of Our Lord Jesus!

The West-Ark Church of Christ in Fort Smith, Arkansas is in search of a new Youth and Family Minister. We hope that you will share this information with qualified and interested candidates.

Located in the “Arklahoma” region, where I-40 crosses the Arkansas-Oklahoma border, West-Ark is a congregation of about 700 members with a stated mission of making disciples for Jesus who are eager to serve others. Our members are involved in all manner of local, regional, national and international works to accomplish this mission, such as:

- The Hope Chest, a facility in Fort Smith that serves those in need by providing clothing, infant supplies, and other services designed to show the love of Christ. The annual toy giveaway is a particularly popular event;
- Lions for Christ, our campus outreach ministry to the University of Arkansas Fort Smith, a growing regional college located adjacent to the main West-Ark facilities;
- Iglesia de Cristo, a ministry to the growing Hispanic population in the area, with a dedicated full time minister and a newly constructed church building to serve their needs;
- C.U.R.E. (“Compassionate Utilization of Resources”), an organization established by West-Ark to provide emergency supplies during disaster situations, food for the needy, and donated medical equipment and supplies destined for foreign mission efforts;
- Our international missions program, which is currently involved in Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, Nigeria, France, Belgium, Guyana, Ethiopia and others. We have also helped to establish a local congregation of Laotians (originally refugees from the war in Southeast Asia) in Fort Smith.

We offer a range of Bible classes for kids and adults in several different programs, including:

- FLOCK (“Feeding Lambs of Christ Knowledge”) for 3-year-olds through 1st grade;
- GATEWAY (“God’s Amazing Teachings Enable West-Ark Youth”), for 2nd grade through 6th grade;
- WiNGS (“Women in God’s Service”), an intensive weekly Bible class for adult women;
- KFC (“Kids for Christ”), a Sunday evening program for kids from 3 years old through 6th grade;
- LIFE (“Love, Involvement, Fellowship, and Evangelism”) Groups, our small-group ministry;
- Sunday morning and Wednesday evening Bible classes for youth and adults.

West-Ark currently has a ministerial staff consisting of a pulpit minister, a campus minister, and several other full and part-time staff members, along with eight elders and nineteen deacons. (More details about these and other activities at West-Ark can found on our website at www.westark.org.)

And now, what we need is a Youth and Family Minister!

Our elders have established a Youth and Family Minister Search Team and have charged this group with helping the church find the right person for this job. We believe that God has already chosen the man – we just need to find him and locate that person and convince him to join us!

Included in this packet are a brief history of the youth and family ministry work at West-Ark, descriptions of the characteristics we are looking for in a youth and family minister, and a description of the duties and responsibilities we envision for this position.

Qualified and interested candidates are invited to inform the Search Team of their interest in the position by submitting the following items:

- **A current résumé, including educational background and employment history;**
- **A list of at least five (5) personal and/or professional references that we may contact to discuss your interest in the position;**
- **Any other material (written works, audio/video materials, etc.) that you would like us to view in order to further understand your interest and qualifications.**

These items should be submitted to:

**By mail: West-Ark Church of Christ
ATTN: Jackie Sofio
900 N. Waldron Road
Fort Smith, AR 72903**

Or by email: jackie@westarkchurchofchrist.org

Please feel free to pass along this invitation to any other person who might be interested as well. The packet is also available for download on the church's website at www.westark.org.

We appreciate any interest you have in this opportunity, and request your petitions to the Father on our behalf as we undertake the process of filling this position.

Thank you, and may the Lord bless you in all you do!

The West-Ark Church of Christ Youth and Family Ministry Search Team:

- Dr. Chris Benjamin (our pulpit minister)
- Mary Burkett
- Dave Cogswell
- Bruce Davenport
- Colleen Frost
- Lisa Grace
- Bill Kamp
- Jackie Sofio (administrative support)

HISTORY OF WEST-ARK'S YOUTH MINISTRY

The church family known as the West-Ark Church of Christ began meeting at its current location on October 13, 1983. At that time, **Ken Jones** was the congregation's youth minister; he began his ministry in late 1980 and worked in that position till early 1984. Upon his resignation, he continued to worship with the West-Ark family for a time and still has family ties here. He is presently working on his doctorate and teaching at an Oklahoma university.

After Ken Jones' work, a group of volunteers stepped forward and began helping with the youth ministry. This group included **Mickey and Carol Davenport, Jane Smith, Jim and Helen Pratt, and Larry Treat**. (Larry and the Pratts are still active members of West-Ark.) This group provided leadership until **Stan Dauck** became youth minister in July, 1986. He was West-Ark's youth minister till February, 1987. Stan later continued his education and is now a pulpit minister.

One of our current members, **Gary Brown**, then left his regular job to work as youth minister; he returned to his job after 3 or 4 months. Gary is currently very active in children's ministries at West-Ark. The group of volunteers again stepped forward to help with the teens.

In 1990, **Doug Allison** became West-Ark's next youth minister, and he worked in this position till January, 1992. In 1991, **Brad Pistle** became Doug's intern, and when Doug left, Brad became the congregation's new youth minister. During Brad's time as youth minister, the congregation invested in the youth in several ways: We hired interns to help Brad and to learn from him. Among the interns were **David Dickey, Bart Jones (Ken Jones' son), and Aaron Davis**. Also, our Family Life Center was constructed in 1999 with the teenagers and their activities in mind. Additionally, the elders began looking for an individual to serve as administrative assistant for the youth ministry's steadily growing numbers. Brad resigned as youth minister in September, 2007, and **Jackie Sofio** provided support and continuity as administrative assistant beginning the following month.

West-Ark Church of Christ - Youth and Family Minister Duties and Responsibilities

General Description:

The Youth and Family Minister will demonstrate the qualities and characteristics of a disciple of Jesus and work alongside parents and the congregation to develop those same qualities and characteristics in teens.

1. Cooperation and Teamwork. The Youth and Family minister will . . .
 - Promote unity within a diverse group of teens and their families
 - Work collaboratively with parents and other adults
 - Be accountable to the elders
 - Coordinate regularly with other ministers and staff
 - Facilitate connections with all generations within the congregation
 - Build relationships as a member of the congregation

2. Teaching and Mentoring. The Youth and Family minister will . . .
 - Teach Scripture in effective and creative manner
 - Facilitate development or selection of scripturally based curricula for use in the youth classes
 - Apply Scriptural wisdom to the concerns of teens and their families
 - Recruit and equip other effective and credible teachers to serve in the youth ministry
 - Model healthy teaching in life and practice

3. Worship and Spirituality. The Youth and Family minister will . . .
 - Encourage teens to use their gifts to serve God
 - Enable teens to express healthy spirituality in worship and service
 - Develop Christian maturity in our youth (Col. 1:28)
 - Encourage and model respect for others (Phil. 2:3-4)

4. Leadership and Service. The Youth and Family minister will . . .
 - Provide leadership for the Youth and Family ministry
 - Model servant leadership
 - Develop leadership and encourage service among the teens
 - Encourage parents and other adults to assume roles of service and leadership

5. Counsel and Care. The Youth and Family minister will . . .
 - Provide appropriate ministerial concern and counseling to the youth and their families
 - Help teens and their families reconcile conflict
 - Recognize when professional help is required and assist securing such help
 - Work with other ministers in building a reliable network of family counseling resources

6. Outreach and Evangelism. The Youth and Family minister will . . .
 - Help lead and equip the church to evangelize and reach out to teens in our congregation and our community
 - Guide teens as they grow into their own commitment to Christ

West-Ark Church of Christ - Youth and Family Minister Characteristics for Search

The person that West-Ark seeks for a youth and family minister will match, as closely as possible, the following characteristics and demonstrate, as closely as possible, the following skills:

Basic Qualifications:

- Baptized believer in Jesus Christ and an active member of the Church of Christ
- Married man
- Minimum of a Bachelor's degree in Youth Ministry, Master's degree is preferable
- Previous experience (4-5 years) in Church of Christ ministry

Leadership:

- Articulates a vision for the growth and strategy of the youth and family ministry
- Has experience developing student leaders
- Demonstrates responsibility in managing ministry events, facilities, and resources
- Effectively and appropriately delegates responsibility and maintains communication with co-workers
- Demonstrates ability to work with a diversity of teens and families
- Demonstrates ability to lead parents and other adults in the ministry
- Can manage an internship program
- Communicates high expectations and helps people meet them

Professionalism:

- Willing to seek further training as needed
- Receives direction and guidance
- Maintains accountability relationships
- Non-reactive and mature
- Thoughtful and responsible about the use of technology

Spiritual and Pastoral Skills:

- Maturity and depth of Christian faith
- Spiritual and moral integrity
- "Shepherding skills:" Demonstrates an appropriate interest in all teens and their concerns
- Capable of developing students' faith, biblical knowledge, worship and prayer life
- Ability to preach and lead worship
- Manages spiritual growth for self and family (self-care)

Organizational Skills

- Manage events
- Work with administrative assistant and other staff
- Work with and form ministry teams as needed
- Responsible with budget; can work with deacons and/or BMT