

ST. JAMES'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ALASKA YOUTH MISSION TRIP
SUMMER 2009

Dear Parents and Youth,

The time has come to sign up for our Summer Youth Mission Trip to Alaska!

The dates for this year's trip are **July 25-August 5**. We are excited to offer this opportunity for outreach ministry to St. James's high school youth for a fifth year in a row, and we look forward to a successful venture to the Diocese of Alaska. The attached Q&A should answer most of your questions about the trip.

Parents, please have your child fill out the attached application sheet and return it to me at the church. You may fill out the form and return it in any of the following ways: (1) email it to me at chrisedwards@doers.org; (2) drop off the form at the church office; (3) fax the form to my attention at the church at 353.4837

Deadlines:

The deadline for all applications is **Sunday, February 8** (though the trip may fill up before then). Applications from regular Sunday evening EYC (Youth Group) participants will be given first priority in the sign-up process. EYC regulars have until **Wednesday, January 21** to submit their applications for priority consideration. After January 21, other applicants will be put on the participant list in the order that their applications were received.

***Please note:** even if you are NOT a regular EYC attendee, you are invited to submit your application as soon as possible!!! I will keep a list of applications in the order received and will notify you as we are able to fill available slots.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions. We look forward to another great Youth Mission Trip in the Summer of 2009!!

Peace and blessings,

Chris Edwards

**APPLICATION FOR ST. JAMES'S YOUTH MISSION TO ALASKA
JULY 25-AUGUST 5, 2009**

Name_____ Birth Date_____

School_____ Current Grade_____

Home Address_____

Home Phone_____ Cell Phone_____

Email Address_____

On a separate sheet, please state in a couple of paragraphs why you would like to be a part of the 2009 Mission Team and what talents you feel you could contribute. Why are you interested in mission work? What is appealing about this particular trip?

I understand that I am expected to attend all events related to the trip throughout the coming months. I realize that there may be schedule changes and I will try to accommodate them. I realize that I will be asked to sign a group norms covenant that we will all determine together in order to establish a code of behavior for the trip. This code will include a no drugs or alcohol policy. I understand that if I violate the norms of this policy, I will be sent home or left to starve in the Alaskan wilderness (just seeing if you're paying attention).

Signed_____ Date_____

Please return this application to Chris Edwards, St. James's Episcopal Church, 1205 W. Franklin St., Richmond, VA 23220, or via email at chrisedwards@doers.org.

FAQ: ST. JAMES'S YOUTH MISSION TO ALASKA

Who can go?

Any St. James's high school student currently in the 9th-12th grade is eligible to join the team. Team members are expected to have a passion for mission; they must be willing to work hard in the service of others and be mature and responsible travelers.

Where are we going?

We are going to Manley Hot Springs, Alaska, a village of about 80 people in the Alaskan Interior approximately 160 miles west of Fairbanks.

When exactly are we going and how are we getting there?

Tentatively, we are planning to fly out of Richmond mid-afternoon on **Saturday, July 25**, and returning to Richmond late-afternoon on **Wednesday, August 5**. While in Alaska, we will rent vans which will be driven by the trip leaders to get to and from Manley Hot Springs.

How many slots are available?

We have space for 12 youth to go on the trip.

What will we do there?

The Diocese of Alaska has begun to build a retreat and conference center near Manley that will serve as a summer camp for Alaskan youth and a retreat/conference center for the Diocese. The project currently consists of three existing cabins and a partially built multipurpose building to be used as a fellowship hall and chapel. The summer months in Alaska provide only a brief three-month thaw, allowing communities a small window of time to undertake building and repair projects. Consequently, a project that might take a year here in Richmond could easily take 4 or 5 years in Alaska because of the short building window and lack of manpower. Currently, we are continuing work on the multipurpose building. We hope to be putting on the roof this year – we began with the foundation in 2005.

Who is supervising the trip?

Chris Edwards and 2-3 other adult leaders will supervise the trip. Leaders will be announced at a later date.

Where will we be staying?

Accommodations are rustic. The youth will sleep in the cabins on the grounds of the Manley camp, and the leaders will sleep in tents outside the cabins. There is no running water or indoor plumbing – water is obtained from a well a couple of miles away, and outhouses are the only bathrooms. There *are* cooking facilities and electricity in the main cabin. (I promise you get used to it after a day or two.)

What else will we do for fun while we're there?

Working as a group on the various building projects has really been a lot of fun every year. And if you like the outdoors, or just appreciate beautiful scenery, Alaska is amazing – in late July, the interior of Alaska gets about 20 hours of daylight. Each year we have taken a trip to Denali National Park at the end of the week for an overnight rafting trip. We will do the same or something similar again this year – whatever we end up doing, I guarantee it will be fantastic.

How much does it cost?

We will not know the exact cost until we begin booking specific flights and reservations, etc., but last year's per person price of the trip was approximately **\$1,750**. This includes airfare, transportation, lodging, the rafting trip (or other fun event) and most meals. The mission team members will need to bring some additional money (we suggest \$150 to \$200) for meals while we sight-see and for spending money. For those who will be confirmed in The Diocese of Virginia this year, the Diocese provides a \$200 mission trip voucher which can be applied to this trip.

What are my responsibilities as a team member?

1. It is important for the mission team to have ownership of their experience and work. Please remember that **MISSION WORK IS NOT VACATION** – all will be expected to work hard and work willingly, with enthusiasm.
2. As we have done in past years, we plan to hold a fundraiser to offset some of the cost of our trip. **Mission team members will be expected to participate.**
3. Mission team members will be expected to help with St. James's "Mardi Gras" fundraiser the following year (usually in February). The funds from Mardi Gras are used to help make mission trips like this one possible.

What are the responsibilities of my parents?

Parents are asked to work out the details of paying for the trip with their children. Parents are also asked to support the fundraising events and make sure it is possible for their children to attend the scheduled events.

How do we reserve a space on the 2009 Mission Team?

Fill out the enclosed application form and return it to Chris Edwards at the church **no later than Sunday, February 8**. More details (including equipment and travel needs/supplies) will follow at a later date once the team has been selected.

If you would like to go, but aren't sure you'll have the money, you can call Chris or Randy at 355-1779. We have scholarship monies available.