

# Footsteps in the Sand



## Beach Retreat

Designed and Written by Tracey E. Herzer

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## Introduction

This retreat was originally designed as a four-day long weekend. We used it in mid-summer with a newly-formed group of middle school (Rite 13) students who kind of knew each other, but the new school year would mean they were now in Youth Group, which they'd never experienced before.

This was a small group – less than 10 students and 2 adults. We drove only a few hours away from our home church and we actually stayed at a church that had converted their old Sunday School rooms into bunk bed rooms. Kids brought their sleeping bags and pillows and the church let us use the small parish hall for our kitchen and meals.

There are lots of ways to organize a successful beach trip with teenagers, but here are some basic principles to keep in mind:

- The more organized you are, the more smoothly the trip will run.
- The more details you provide parents well in advance of the trip, the better. At a bare minimum, be sure they know: who, what, where, when, and cost!
- Teenagers will eat more food than you think they will – plan grocery budgets accordingly. If you aren't used to cooking/feeding groups of teenagers, talk to parents or teachers to get realistic numbers.
- You don't need luxurious accommodations and you don't want to drive more than 6 hours with your group, if possible – less than 4 hours is better.
- Take a minimum of 2 adults -- a male & a female adult, if your group includes both males and females. If at all possible, bring at least one more adult – even if they only handle certain logistics like driving or meals. It will make your job as leader MUCH easier!
- No trip, no matter how well-planned, will run exactly as you imagine it... be gracious, flexible and quick to laugh. 😊
- Bathe the whole trip in lots and lots of prayer.

# Supplies

You will see supplies marked in red with asterisks at the beginning of each activity in the Detailed Daily Plans... but here is a summary:

Permanent Markers

Masking Tape

Posterboard, butcher paper or large sheets of paper

Washable colored Markers

Book of Common Prayer for each person or Compline Booklets

Song Sheets

Bible with passages marked or papers with scripture written out:

One or more inexpensive pedometers (optional)

Construction paper or colored paper

Crayons or pencils for tracing feet

Things for cleaning feet:

Soap

Bowl for water

Old towels

Scrub brush

Nail clippers & file

Lotion, etc.

Things to decorate feet:

Nail polish

Nail art stickers

Washable markers

Temporary Tattoos for Girls

Temporary Tattoos for Boys

Red yarn or ribbon

Stakes for yarn/ribbon

Plastic containers, utensils, etc. for sand castles

Hand mirror

Blank t-shirts – I like to get all of them the same bright color so that we can wear them on the beach or out to eat and it's easy to spot group members

Fabric paints

Pie tins for paint

Paint brushes or sponges

Fabric markers

Ribbon for decorating t-shirts

Scissors

Newspapers or disposable plastic tablecloths to protect tables

Large paper grocery bags (folded)

Hourglass (sand timer)

Small paper lunch sacks – white ones, preferably

Stickers

Small, colorful pieces of paper – we found some in the shape of feet, but you can use any kind

CD player & soothing music

Trinkets like small wooden crosses or small sand dollars

# Schedule

This was our suggested schedule – but the activities are easily adaptable to other formats.

## DAY ONE

|              |                      |
|--------------|----------------------|
| 9:30 am      | Leave Church         |
| 4:00         | Arrive & Get settled |
| 6:00         | Dinner               |
| 8:00 – 10:00 | <b>SESSION #1</b>    |
| 10:00        | Compline             |
| 10:30        | Lights Out           |

## DAY TWO

|               |                             |
|---------------|-----------------------------|
| 8:00          | Wake up & Breakfast         |
| 10:30 - 11:45 | <b>SESSION #2</b>           |
| 12:00         | Lunch                       |
|               | Quiet Time                  |
| 1:00 – 5:00   | Beach – program & free time |
| 6:00          | Dinner                      |
| 8:30 - 10:00  | <b>SESSION #3</b>           |
| 10:00         | Compline                    |
| 10:30         | Lights out!                 |

## DAY THREE

|              |                             |
|--------------|-----------------------------|
| 8:00         | Wake up & Breakfast         |
| 10:00        | <b>CHURCH – EUCHARIST</b>   |
| 12:00        | Lunch                       |
|              | Quiet Time                  |
| 1:00 – 5:00  | Beach – program & free time |
| 6:00         | Dinner                      |
| 8:30 - 10:00 | <b>SESSION #4</b>           |
| 10:00        | Compline                    |
| 10:30        | Lights out!                 |

## DAY FOUR

|       |                                    |
|-------|------------------------------------|
| 8:00  | Wake up & Breakfast                |
| 8:45  | Clean up facilities                |
|       | Pack and load van                  |
| 9:45  | <b>CLOSING ON THE BEACH</b>        |
| 10:15 | Get in van to travel home          |
| 5:30  | Arrive at church & parents pick up |

## Letter of Invitation

TO: All Junior High Students & Parents  
FROM: Tracey Herzer, Youth Minister  
DATE: March 9, 2011  
RE: **BEACH TRIP (June 3-6)**

As most of you know, our Junior High group is going to Florida in early June. Enclosed you will find the information sheets I handed out at the Parents' Meeting on Sunday, March 6<sup>th</sup> – Trip Summary, Tentative Schedule and Parental Consent form. Please call me if you have questions. **The money for the trip will be due on Sunday, May 15<sup>th</sup> — but I need a list of who wants to go ASAP!!** If you are planning to attend, please call me at the church to reserve your spot!!

This trip is open to all rising 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Graders and will be a very special time of planning and dreaming for our group. If you've never been to any of our functions, this would be an ideal time to join our group since this will be our first activity together and will hopefully begin a foundation for next year. It will give us a chance to get to know each other, decide about officers, talk about what we want to do next year, and **PLAY ON THE BEACH!**

Call me right away to reserve your spot!

See you Sunday!

## Advertising Ideas

Most churches don't have resident artists on staff, but that's no reason to send out boring, picture-less emails, flyers, letters or announcements.

Here are some ideas to add some attention-grabbing zing to your communications:

- Ask parishioners for photos to use.
- Do a search for “beach” or whatever search term you like on sites like [www.dreamstime.com](http://www.dreamstime.com) where you can use royalty-free photos.
- Ask a teen to draw something
- Take a box of blank letter-size envelopes and markers into a youth group meeting and have teens graffiti all over both sides of envelopes. When you're ready to send out a mailing, stick plain white address labels over the colorful background and your communication definitely won't be mistaken for junk mail! 😊
- Do a text blast to teens & parents with church website address where they can find more info about event.
- Have teens take digital pictures to share – be sure you have parental permission to use any photos showing the face of a minor.
- Make flyers with unusual fonts on brightly colored paper
- Recruit a few teens to help you with a VERY short (less than 2 minutes) VERY well-rehearsed, funny little skit about the event. Be sure to coordinate this with celebrant if using during worship announcements.
- Ask teens who have committed to attending to reach out to other teens who are new to the group or are undecided.

# Parental Consent Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

To Whom it May Concern:

I, the undersigned do hereby give permission for my child, \_\_\_\_\_

(child's name)

to attend and participate in activities sponsored by \_\_\_\_\_ on

(name of church)

\_\_\_\_\_ on

(date)

at \_\_\_\_\_

(location of activity)

I authorize an adult, in whose care the minor has been entrusted, to consent to any X-ray examination, anesthetic, medical, surgical, or dental diagnosis or treatment, and hospital care to be rendered to the minor under the general or specific supervision and on the advice of any physician or dentist licensed under the provisions of the Medical Practice Act on the medical staff of a licensed hospital, whether such diagnosis or treatment is rendered at the office of said physician or at said hospital. The undersigned shall be liable and agree to pay for all costs and expenses incurred in connection with such medical or dental services rendered to the aforementioned child pursuant to this authorization. Should it be necessary for my child to return home due to medical reasons or a violation of the said standards, the undersigned shall assume all transportation costs.

The undersigned does also hereby give permission for my child to ride in any vehicle designated by the adult in whose care the minor has been entrusted while attending and participating in activities sponsored by \_\_\_\_\_.

(name of church)

Hospital Insurance? Yes

No

Insurance Company \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Policy Number \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that the possession or use of any illegal drug (including tobacco for minors), alcohol, weapons or firearms is a violation of church standards. If for any reason an adult, staff, or youth violates these standards or exhibits other inappropriate behavior (including sexual behavior), they will be sent home immediately at their own expense.

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Teen's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list any allergies or special medical problems your teen may have, or medicines he/she is currently taking:

*The Episcopal Church strictly prohibits sexual misconduct of any type by any ordained person or church worker, including volunteers. If you believe you have cause for complaint against any adult regarding sexual misconduct at this event, you are to notify \_\_\_\_\_ ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) or \_\_\_\_\_ at the Diocesan Offices ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) at once.*

*(internal contact at church)*

*(phone #)*

*(external contact)*

*(phone #)*



## Participant's Checklist

A one-page summary to keep track of necessary details from participants before departure

### FEMALE PARTICIPANTS

| # | Name | Paid? | Permission Slip? | Parent's Cell Phone |
|---|------|-------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1 |      |       |                  |                     |
| 2 |      |       |                  |                     |
| 3 |      |       |                  |                     |
| 4 |      |       |                  |                     |
| 5 |      |       |                  |                     |
| 6 |      |       |                  |                     |

### MALE PARTICIPANTS

| # | Name | Paid? | Permission Slip? | Parent's Cell Phone |
|---|------|-------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1 |      |       |                  |                     |
| 2 |      |       |                  |                     |
| 3 |      |       |                  |                     |
| 4 |      |       |                  |                     |
| 5 |      |       |                  |                     |
| 6 |      |       |                  |                     |

### ADULT CHAPERONES

| # | Name | Paid? | Safe Church Training? | Cell Phone |
|---|------|-------|-----------------------|------------|
| 1 |      |       |                       |            |
| 2 |      |       |                       |            |
| 3 |      |       |                       |            |
| 4 |      |       |                       |            |

## Trip Info Summary

**WHEN:** **Friday, June 3 (9 am) – Monday, June 6 (6 pm)**  
We have rented a van and will leave the church parking lot Friday morning to drive down to Laguna Beach, FL (near Panama City) about 5 hours away. We will return before dinner time on Monday evening.

**WHERE:** **St. \_\_\_\_\_ Church (city, ST) Rector: \_\_\_\_\_**  
We will not be able to answer the church's phone. We will call parents upon our safe arrival and before we leave, but teen's cell phones will be OFF at all other times. You can reach my cell phone 24/7 for emergencies at (XXX-XXX-XXXX). I will also check in once a day with the church office for messages.

**WHO:** **Teens entering Grades 6 – 8 in the 2011/2012 school year**  
This trip will be the first trip for this group – a time to celebrate new members, plan for next year, and get to know one another. The trip will be staffed by Tracey Herzer (Youth Minister), Sara Hxxxx (Junior High Advisor) and Mark Sxxx (parent committee and van driver)

**WHAT:** **Theme: "Footsteps in the Sand"**  
Our program will include Beach Time (NOT during 11-1 each day) as well as program sessions, activities, games, songs, crafts, movies and worship. All meals, clean-ups, etc. are done by our group in the church's parish hall. We will be housed in a dorm-like facility at church and walk one block to the beach.

**\*\* PLEASE NOTE \*\*** Teens & Adults will have very limited "screen time" with electronic devices during this trip, with the exception of the emergency cell phone which will always be on and in the possession of one of the adults.

### **WHAT TO BRING:**

|                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Shorts & t-shirts      | sheets, blanket, pillow |
| Tennis shoes           | towels,/washcloth       |
| Bathing suit & towel   | personal toiletries     |
| Beach shoes/sunglasses | sleepwear               |
| SUNSCREEN!             | a little spending money |

### **OPTIONAL:**

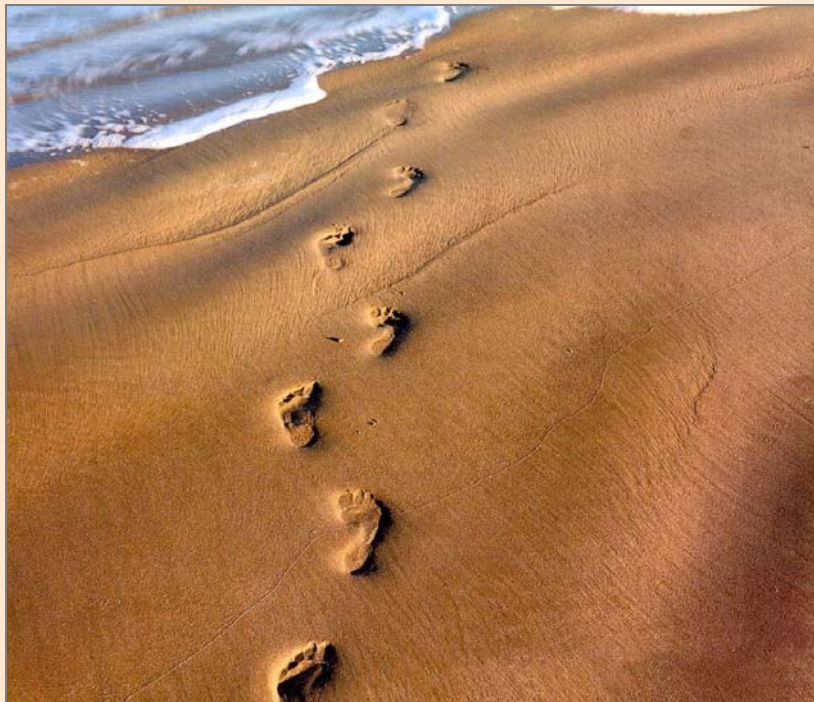
Beach toys, rafts, etc.  
"Junk food" to share  
Games to play  
iPod, etc. for van ride  
musical instruments

### **WHAT NOT TO BRING:**

Anything illegal, including any kind of fireworks  
Large amounts of money (over \$25)  
Dressy clothes  
Inappropriate music

**COST:** **\$125.00 per person** (due Sunday, May 15<sup>th</sup>)

# DETAILED DAILY PLANS



## Footsteps in the Sand

## Day 1

- 7:00 am Vans picked up the night before  
Bring van to church  
Double-check supplies for trip  
Establish gathering area for suitcases, etc.  
Have extra itineraries & contact info if any parents have lost info sheet
- 9:00 Teens and parents arrive
- 9:30 Load luggage & supplies in vans  
Vans pull out of church parking lot to begin trip
- 12:00 Stop for Lunch somewhere along the highway  
Refuel as necessary
- 4:00 Arrive at beach destination  
Go over quick ground rules before leaving van – where kids can & can't go, where to take their belongings, when & where to gather next  
Unpack Van – everybody helps!
- 4:30 Everyone is antsy from being in the vans and we're all ready to see the beach – so get the items inside as quickly as possible and then as a group, go to the beach so you can get the general lay of the land. Be clear with the kids BEFORE you start walking to the beach that this isn't swim time... but just a quick trip to explore around a little bit.
- 5:30 Group #1 – KP (Whoever has Kitchen Patrol helps with meal preparation, set up and clean up – everyone takes turns. This first meal it will probably be the group leaders, but the kids need to help with this all through the rest of your trip – especially if you are preparing your own meals!
- 6:00 Dinner served – something easy like sandwiches & salad or hot dogs
- 7:00 KP cleans up from meal and puts food away
- Everyone else, go get settled in your rooms --- but everyone be back in this room, ready to start promptly at 8:00.
- 8:00 - 10:00 **SESSION #1 - GET TO KNOW YOU GAMES**  
*\*\* Permanent Markers*  
*\*\* Masking Tape*

### **FIND YOUR PARTNER**

Put a piece of masking tape on each person's back that has a word printed on it. Then have each person ask what's on their back and try to find their partner. So if your word is "up" you're looking for the person with the word "down" on their back. We used directional words like the ones below but you can use anything – salt & pepper, peanut butter & jelly, black & white, lock & key, socks & shoes, etc.

|              |              |                    |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Over & Under | Up & Down    | Back & Front       |
| Stop & Go    | Right & Left | Backward & Forward |
| In & Out     | Top & Bottom | North & South      |

### **INTRODUCTIONS**

After you have found your partner, sit down with them. Try to find a place away from others. You have 15 minutes (7.5 minutes each) to find out as much as possible about this person: family, pets, school, grade, favorite TV show, hobbies, toothpaste, shoe size, where they were born, how long at our church, favorite food, favorite color, what kind of music they listen to, etc.

### **SIT IN A CIRCLE**

Gather everyone back together and have each person introduce their partner to the rest of the group.

### **OVERVIEW OF WEEKEND**

Discuss theme: "Footsteps in the Sand" – some of it will be serious, some will be silly. We're going to have a great time, but I want to encourage you to keep an eye out for special opportunities to get to know someone you might not know well now and also listen carefully to see if God has a special message for you during this time away from your regular daily routine... you never know what can happen or what God might use to work in your life.

**\*\*\* MORE INFO INCLUDED IN FULL VERSION – This is a sample and intended only for review purposes!!**

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