



Dear 7th Grade Fathers & Sons,

Jr. High is a defining time for every young man as they transition from boyhood to manhood. Across cultures and generations, rites of passage have marked this important milestone. This spring, we invite you to a special weekend to equip our boys as they step into this next stage of life as God-honoring men.

RITE OF PASSAGE EXPERIENCE: A FATHER-SON ADVENTURE

West Side's Boys Rite of Passage Experience is an annual retreat created for 7th-grade boys and their fathers (or father figures). This weekend is a unique opportunity for fathers and sons to come together alongside a team of respected, godly men from our church for an intentional and unforgettable experience. Together, we'll:

- Explore what it means to be a godly man
- Enjoy great food, fun games, and outdoor activities
- Bond through a ropes course and team-building challenges
- Spend meaningful time together in faith, reflection, and encouragement

Our leadership team has been working diligently to make this an incredible event. After over a decade of powerful stories—including my own son's experience—I can confidently say this is a weekend fathers and sons will cherish for a lifetime.

EVENT DETAILS

- 📍 **Location:** Camp CILCA (8 miles north of town)
- 📅 **Dates:** Friday, May 2 (6:30 PM) – Saturday, May 3 (10:30 PM)
- 💰 **Cost:** \$50 per person (financial assistance available if cost is an obstacle)
- 📝 **Register by April 13** at www.wschurch.org/ROP

Space is limited, so sign up soon! If you have scheduling conflicts or questions, email ChrisS@wschurch.org. We encourage you to **make this event a priority**—it's a rare opportunity designed for this select group of young men. I hope every 7th grader can be part of this powerful experience!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Sandel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chris Sandel
Director of Family Ministries

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the sleeping arrangements?

Most participants stay in bunk beds inside the retreat center, which includes indoor bathrooms and showers. However, if you and your son prefer a more adventurous experience, you're welcome to bring a tent and camp on the grounds while still using the indoor facilities. If you'd like to camp, just let us know!

What if I don't have a father or father figure?

We strongly encourage attending with your father or another male mentor you admire (grandfather, close family friend, etc.). If you don't have someone to attend with, please reach out—we can help connect you with a trusted male leader or small group mentor. **Please don't let this keep you from attending!** Every year, some boys participate with a caring leader who steps into this role.

What if my father can't attend that weekend?

This event is designed to be a special, shared experience between fathers and sons. We ask that fathers do everything possible to make it a priority. If your father-figure truly cannot attend, we encourage you to wait and do something similar at a time you can do it together. We're happy to help provide resources and ideas to help you create your own experience at a later date.

What if camping and outdoor activities aren't really our thing?

No problem! While we'll take advantage of the beautiful setting with some optional outdoor activities, all sleeping arrangements are indoors in a retreat center with bunk beds, showers, and restrooms. No outdoor experience is required, so don't let that hold you back!

Can I leave and come back during the event?

To keep our focus on this special time with God and minimize distractions, we strongly encourage all participants stay on-site for the entire event. If you have extenuating circumstances, please contact us to discuss options.

What if I can't attend this year?

This experience is most impactful when shared with other fathers and sons. However, if you're unable to attend but still want to do something meaningful for your son, let us know! We can provide a complete guide to help you create your own special rite-of-passage experience at home.