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# JOURNEY TO ADULTHOOD

Church of the Redeemer, Baltimore

Welcome to **Journey to Adulthood (J2A)** at the Church of the Redeemer. Our vision for this class is to guide young adults into a maturing faith that explores Christianity through curiosity, relationship, and experience.

In addition, this class is intended to help students grow into thoughtful, responsible, empathic adults by exploring self, society, and God from a Christian, Episcopal perspective.

We meet on the 1st and 3rd Sundays, September through June. Through class activities, discussion, civic engagement, and the bi-yearly pilgrimage trip, we hope to help students feel confident and open minded in their faith. We aim to help students, as followers of Christ, live out their faith and evangelize through actions that foster positive change in the world.

Below is an overview of the themes that the students will be exploring this year followed by two calendars with class dates, as well as service opportunities and fun activities.

## FALL 2019 THEME: EXPLORING SELF

*“There is only one problem on which all my existence, my peace, and my happiness depend: to discover myself in discovering God. If I find Him I will find myself and if I find my true self I will find Him.” –Thomas Merton, 20<sup>th</sup> century theologian*

**Goal:** Help the students better understand themselves and understand how the ancient Hebrew Scriptures - the Old Testament - still offer insight into our lives.

Students who complete this semester will develop reflection skills that will help them answer these questions: Who am I? Who do I want to be? How does God see me? How might my faith help me become who I want to be and who God wants me to be? Students will also discuss stories from the Hebrew Scriptures and discuss the relevance of these ancient stories to their growth and development today.

## SPRING 2020 THEME: EXPLORING SOCIETY

*“At the center of the spiritual life, of life with God, is a twofold relationship with God, and with the world of the everyday (including the way the world of the everyday is structured).” –Marcus J. Borg, 20<sup>th</sup> century theologian*

**Goal:** Help the students think about the world in which they live from a distinctly Christian perspective and enact their calling to be change agents in the world.

Students who complete this semester will develop skills that will help them analyze, understand, and engage with inequity and injustice at the personal and systemic levels. They will also understand the distinctly Episcopal approach to these issues. Students will also gain a deeper understanding of Baltimore as a city that has suffered as a result of systemic racism. Students will learn how the Church of the Redeemer addresses inequity and injustice, and they will learn how the New Testament offers relevant messages to address today's challenges.

## LOGISTICS

**All families should sign up to the J2A email listserv by going to the J2A website [allenbrizee.com/j2a](https://www.allenbrizee.com/j2a) and clicking on the email listserv link on the J2A homepage.** The J2A listserv will be our primary means of communicating with you, other than in person! You are welcome to email us individually if you have questions and concerns, but all class information will be posted to the listserv.

**Website:** <https://www.allenbrizee.com/j2a>

**Email contact:** [shbrizee@gmail.com](mailto:shbrizee@gmail.com) or [habrizee@gmail.com](mailto:habrizee@gmail.com)

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We are honored and privileged to spend this time with you and the students, and we look forward to getting to know you.

Blessings,

Stephanie and Allen Brizee

## J2A - FALL 2019 CALENDAR

DATE	TOPIC
<b>SEPTEMBER 8</b>	<b>Group Dynamics:</b> Students will explore what it means to be part of a group. They will establish guidelines for class norms. As part of this class, we will explore the group dynamics of the Sons of Jacob in the Hebrew Scriptures.
<b>SEPTEMBER 22</b>	<b>Origin Stories and Identity:</b> Students will discuss how origin stories impact the way that people think of themselves and their culture. We will explore the origin story in the Bible and talk about key Christian concepts such as creation, the fall, and being made in the image of God.
<b>SEPTEMBER 29</b>	<b>PARENT/TEACHER MEETING - 11:15am - 12:15pm:</b> Parents, please join us in the <b>Women's Council Room</b> after the 10 AM service to discuss the school year and ways you can be involved, specifically as we look toward fundraising for the 2021 Pilgrimage.
<b>OCTOBER 6</b>	<b>Community:</b> Students will discuss what it means to be part of a community. We will discuss the community of the Hebrew Scriptures and the establishment of laws and ethics (i.e., the Ten Commandments) and how these concepts helped shape and govern that community.
<b>OCTOBER 20</b>	<b>Self-Awareness:</b> Students will discuss what it means to grow in self-awareness and how this often causes us to ask questions of ourselves and of God. We will look at the story of Job and the questions he asked about suffering and life.
<b>SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2</b>	<b>CLASS SERVICE OPPORTUNITY – 9AM – 12PM:</b> Making and serving soup for <b>Loaves and Fishes Outreach</b> . We will meet at Church of the Redeemer in the Parish Hall at 9AM to prepare soup that will be served to people experiencing homelessness. Rite13 will be joining us and we will also need parents to help in the kitchen. <b>Please sign up on the website.</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 3</b>	<b>Personal Vision:</b> Students will think about their own personal vision and life goals. This might seem like an overwhelming question, and so the students will be guided through what it means to write personal goal and vision statements. We will look at passages from the Major prophets (e.g., Isaiah, Jeremiah, etc.) and Minor prophets (e.g., Joel, Amos, etc.) as examples of ways people have talked about a vision for their life.
<b>NOVEMBER 17</b>	<b>Relating to Others:</b> Students will discuss the growing pains of moving toward independence and how this impacts our relationships with one another. We will read the stories of Ruth and Esther to discuss the journey that others have gone on as they have entered adulthood.
<b>DECEMBER 1</b>	<b>Agency and Angst:</b> Students will explore conflict and self-assertion. We will revisit the book of Esther and discuss the conflict in that book and how she approached it. Students will have an opportunity to take a self-exploration test that helps them understand how they respond to conflict.
<b>SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7TH</b>	<b>CLASS DINNER - 6-9 PM:</b> Students and parents are invited to a pot-luck dinner in the church Parish Hall where we will discuss what we've learned over the past semester, share fun stories and games, and conclude by having the students share parts of their personal vision statements. <b>To sign up for the pot-luck visit the website.</b> Please RSVP no later than November 25, 2019.
<b>DECEMBER 15</b>	<b>Hopes and Dreams:</b> Students will begin to think about what hopes and dreams they may have for their life. We will explore the book of Proverbs and talk about Sophia, the expression of wisdom in the Hebrew Scriptures, and what she has to say about pursuing hopes and dreams.

## J2A - SPRING 2020 CALENDAR

DATE	TOPIC
JANUARY 19	<b>Power and Authority:</b> Students will discuss the concept of justice and how Jesus spoke about power and authority in the Gospels. Students will explore some of the concepts of justice in the Old Testament and how Jesus expanded upon them in the New Testament.
FEBRUARY 2	<b>Civil Disobedience:</b> Students will discuss civil disobedience in history - what it is, who has practiced it and why. We will also discuss the concept as discussed in the New Testament and explore questions such as “What did Jesus say about civil disobedience?”
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15	<b>CLASS SERVICE OPPORTUNITY:</b> TBD
FEBRUARY 16	<b>The Problem of Good and Evil:</b> Students will explore Christian terms surrounding social justice and look at the debate over the concepts of good and evil. We will talk about how Jesus discussed these ideas and how the church handles them today.
MARCH 1	<b>Social Inequality:</b> Students will discuss New Testament coverage of social inequity by looking at how Jesus interacted with people experiencing poverty. We will discuss how social inequality is seen in our society today and what the Episcopal church is doing to respond. Students will also discuss the topic they want to focus on for their presentation on youth Sunday in May.
MARCH 15	<b>The Kingdom of God:</b> Students will think about the term “the Kingdom of God” and how Jesus used the term in the New Testament. We will also discuss what the term means to Christians and what it might look like to bring the Kingdom of God to Baltimore.
APRIL 5	<b>Understanding Baltimore:</b> Students will read about and discuss the history of Baltimore through a social justice lens, and we will discuss how we might help bring the Kingdom of God to Baltimore.
SATURDAY, APRIL 25	<b>CLASS ACTIVITY - EXPLORE BALTIMORE - 9:30 AM - 3:30 PM:</b> Students and parents are invited to a day-long exploration of African American history and culture in Baltimore. We will start at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture, eat lunch downtown, and then conclude with a walking tour of a local Baltimore neighborhood to experience history in person. <b>Please RSVP on the website by April 5th.</b>
MAY 3	<b>Deep Dive:</b> The students will focus on preparing their presentation on social justice for their spring presentation.
MAY 10	<b>CLASS PRESENTATION – Youth Sunday:</b> On Redeemer’s Youth Sunday, the J2A class will participate in the church service and following the service will present on what they have learned during the semester.
MAY 17	<b>Charity vs. Justice:</b> Students will discuss different approaches to helping the disadvantaged and marginalized. We will discuss how the church approaches this and ways we can address these issues from a distinctly Christian way.
JUNE 7	<b>Year in Review:</b> Students will review the past year, discussing highlights and lows and the ways they grew individually.