



# Countryside

Community Church

August 1, 2010

Dear Parent(s) of Incoming 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students,

This fall Countryside Church is proud to offer a brand new program for our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. In discussion with the Boards of Christian Education and Youth about making all of our curriculum age and stage appropriate as well as getting our youth more involved in the church community we decided to make some significant changes to the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade educational program.

The new program for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders will be called Community in Action (CIA), and the program is all about building community. The three main goals for the program are to build community within Countryside, provide opportunities for intergenerational interaction, and develop strong peer group communities with the youth.

In order to achieve these goals the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will meet in peer groups of five to eight students and two adults twice a month on Sunday morning during a time that will be assigned to their peer group. The adults will work with the students to plug them into service projects and activities in five specific categories (Congregational Care, Children's Education, Hospitality, Outreach Projects, and Worship). A majority of the activities will be able to be completed on the Sunday mornings their group is not meeting. Students are expected to complete 20 service hours across the five categories per school year. The adults will also work to build relationships and deepen faith with the youth in their groups.

In trying to make Countryside's Confirmation program age and stage appropriate the Boards of Christian Education and Youth decided to move the Confirmation program to the 10<sup>th</sup> grade year and revamp the curriculum as well. The primary goals we hope to achieve by moving confirmation to the 10<sup>th</sup> grade year are to help the youth understand why they did all the service work as part of CIA, explore theological issues and the Bible in a group setting, and understand what it means to be a Christian and a member of the UCC. Confirmation will meet on Wednesday evenings at 6:30p.m. during the school year.

We would like to offer an option for this years 8<sup>th</sup> graders to receive confirmation this year since we changed the program in the middle of the process. If your student would still like to get confirmed at the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade year they will be required to attend a retreat in March of 2011 to work on statements of faith and they will be required to turn in two one page papers each month about what they learned in worship on two given Sunday mornings.

CIA is open to all 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade youth. If you would like to register for this exciting program please fill out the enclosed registration forms and return them to the church by August 15, 2010.

We are actively seeking adults who would be willing to commit themselves to leading a small group of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders in the peer groups. If you would like to be a group leader please contact Patrick Collins at [patrickc@countrysideucc.org](mailto:patrickc@countrysideucc.org) or (402) 391-5268 for more details.

Yours in Christ,

Patrick Collins  
Director of Youth Ministries