



# THE ORCHARD

September 6, 2023

Issue Seven

Youth Newsletter



PLANT/GROW



## OUR PURPOSE

"Under God's leadership, the purpose of the youth ministry at Highland Hills Church of Christ is to plant the seeds of God's steadfast love, of a faith that seeks deeper understanding, and of God's kingdom. In doing so, we aim to grow together with the triune God, each other, and our broader community."



## WHAT'S (GROW)ING ON?

In August, the youth group reflected on our service projects so far this year. We've been continually developing a strategy for carrying the things we learned from our trip to Battlefield Farm back with us, and have almost finished refining our ideas down to one, actionable plan. Expect to hear much more from us about that very soon! We have also been diving into the book of 1 Samuel, learning about God's work in building his kingdom through the Israelite monarchy and the ways that relates to Highland Hills' theme of "Coming Together to Build the Church."

In September, we aim to finish working on our plan to serve those in our area who live in food insecurity, and we look forward to hopefully share that work with the congregation by the end of this month or the beginning of October.



## FRESH FRUIT

Our fresh fruit section usually focuses on the current achievements of our youth and their personal lives and their lives together. However, this month we look forward to their potential. Each and every one is an incredible person in their own right, and we're so proud as we continue to see everybody grow in community, in Christlikeness, and in faith. We love and appreciate you all!

# 2023 SEPTEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3 Samuel	4 Labor Day Cookout	5	6 Homework Help Exodus	7	8	9
10 Samuel	11	12	13 Homework Help Exodus	14	15	16
17 Samuel Friends and Family Day	18	19	20 Homework Help Exodus	21	22	23
24 Samuel	25 Caleb Out	26	27 Exodus	28	29	30

Please consult the calendar at [highlandhills.church/youth-ministry](http://highlandhills.church/youth-ministry) for the most recent calendar updates.

## GRAFTED ONTO GOD

This month's reading and art for reflection



- Walking on Water-Glacier, © 2021 Makoto Fujimura

The Japanese ideogram for beauty is built with two Chinese characters, "sheep" and "great". Apparently, in China, beauty was a "fat (great) sheep." But in Japan, with the contribution of Sen-no-Rikyu and others, this word for beauty became refined and abstract. Beauty became associated with death and its sorrow. "Mono-no-aware," an expression that captures the sentiment of sorrow (literally "sorrow of things") points to the notion of beauty as sacrifice. To enjoy the feast at a banquet, a sheep must be sacrificed. Autumn leaves are most beautiful and bright as they are distressed with their impending death. The minerals I use must be pulverized to bring out their true beauty. The great post-war writer Ryunoske Akutagawa wrote, before committing suicide at the age of thirty-five, "But nature is beautiful because it comes to my eyes in their last extremity."

I did not realize, when I wrote the above passage, that my family and I would witness first hand, and survive because of, the sacrifice of hundreds of firemen who carried out their mission to sacrifice their own lives to save others. They climbed the falling towers. They, along with other heroes of 9/11, re-defined life's true expression forgotten by the "convoluted theory" of recent times. The firemen's art was in their sacrifice. Their lives were offered up in response to the terrorist's art of vengeance in their "last extremity." Theirs was the metanoia, turning 180 degrees to face death head on rather than fleeing. They are the examples of great sheep, and from their example of sacrificial love, we can begin to know and experience true beauty." - by Makoto Fujimura, from "Refractions: a journey of art, faith and culture"



## THE PATHWAY

Classes and Times

Sunday Morning at 9:00:  
Samuel

Wednesday Afternoon at 2:30:  
Homework Help

Wednesday Evening at 6:30:  
Exodus