

## Offer Kids Perspective About the Supernatural



The supernatural is everywhere these days, and not just because Halloween is approaching. Young people are being bombarded with tales of vampires and magic powers, and they also may be intrigued by psychic claims such as ESP, palm reading, and Tarot cards. By definition, the “supernatural” includes things that people believe are real but can’t be proven. Although ghosts, spirits, and the occult fall into that category, so do positive things such as God and faith.

Supernatural forces are powerful; the difference stems from the source of that power. Satan, the father of lies (John 8:44), is behind supernatural phenomena that dishonor God and trick people into thinking they can be godlike. But our Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—acts supernaturally on our behalf and for his glory. Meanwhile, Christians trust him based on faith, not sight.

“Dark” supernatural phenomena appeal to many teenagers because they’re already dealing with powerful emotions and often searching spiritually. Many kids are curious about anything that goes beyond the definition of “normal,” and some may even be attracted to perceived danger involved in the supernatural.

As with many parenting issues, the best approach to keeping your kids safe from harmful experimentation is to talk about the supernatural and be receptive to kids’ questions. Don’t avoid the issue, but don’t hype or romanticize it, either. Assure kids that they’re protected by a loving, all-powerful God who conquers evil.

### The United Methodist Perspective

After returning to England from a disappointing mission trip to America, John Wesley had his “Aldersgate Experience” during a worship service. “I felt my heart strangely warmed,” he wrote in his journal. Wesley felt God’s mysterious power in a new, real way—although he couldn’t explain it.

Although adults and churches tend to shy away from talk of the supernatural, kids often embrace and seek to explore it. The lines between evil and good aren’t so clear for them. Characters in their books and movies don’t fall into clear-cut roles, and kids seek spiritual connections, often outside the church walls. Parents can help by:

1. **Communicating**—Ask about your teenager’s favorite books, and see a movie together. Then discuss the supernatural issues involved.
2. **Studying Scripture**—Jesus often told people to “fear not.” Explore some of the supernatural occurrences throughout the Bible and compare them to modern-day portrayals.
3. **Praying**—Pray for wisdom, discernment, and confidence that God is victorious over evil.

—Hank Hilliard, Young People’s Ministries, [hhilliard@GBOD.org](mailto:hhilliard@GBOD.org)



**Although relatively few kids are involved in serious anti-Christian practices, many young people are intrigued by supernatural activities.**

- Almost one-third (30%) of teenagers polled say they have had supernatural encounters. More than 10% say they have communicated with the dead, and nearly 10% claim they have psychic powers.
- Almost three-quarters (73%) of U.S. teenagers have engaged in a psychic or witchcraft-related activity. The most common listed were using a Ouija board and reading about Wicca, each of which were done by more than 30% of kids.
- Only 28% of Christian teenagers remember receiving any teaching at their church in the last year that helped shape their views about the supernatural world.



(Barna Research Group)

## Great Questions to Ask Your Kids

**Start a conversation about the supernatural by asking your kids these questions:**

1. How do you account for the popularity of supernatural practices these days?
2. How can you tell whether a supernatural force is good or evil? What are some ways to resist evil forces?
3. What supernatural abilities accompany your faith in God? How can you harness them?
4. Which supernatural phenomena are you most curious about, and why?
5. What would you tell a friend who was being deceived by evil supernatural influences?



## Focus on Prayer

### PRAY THAT:

1. God will protect your teenagers from all evil forces and activities.
2. Your teenagers will rely on God's Word and put on his armor each day as they live in our sinful world.
3. God will strengthen your teenagers to resist Satan's whole range of tricks and temptations.
4. Your teenagers will be powerful Christian witnesses to other young people who are attracted to supernatural phenomena.

### Verse of the Month

**"Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world." (Ephesians 6:11-12)**

Thankfully, God doesn't leave us defenseless. We can harness his mighty power by putting on armor that will strengthen us for all types of spiritual battles. God's armor includes the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, shoes of peace, a shield of faith, a helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is God's Word.

## What's Up With Kids

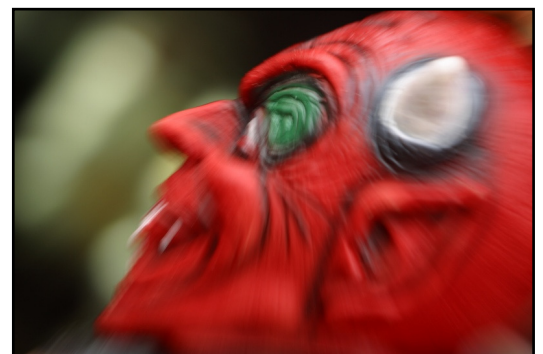
**On SimplyYouthMinistry.com, youth minister Lane Palmer notes that a popular horror-movie theme is selling one's soul to the devil. No one can do that, he writes. That choice is yours.**

Every time any of us gives in to temptation, we post a spiritual real estate sign that says: "Eternal Soul Available to Demonic Kingdom...Apply Within." The good news is that we also have the choice every day to keep our souls safe in the all-powerful and loving grip of our heavenly Father. John 10:29 promises that God "is more powerful than anyone else" and "No one can snatch [us] from the Father's hand."

Here's the amazing thing about the Christian life. If you have truly trusted in Jesus as your only hope of salvation, your eternal destiny is safe and secure. Yet every day in hundreds of little and big ways, you choose to listen to and obey the voice of life or the voice of death. The choice is yours.

Satan would love nothing more than to see you depressed, deceived, and ultimately destroyed. He will trick you any way possible, but you can also be sure that God's plan is to treat you as his unique and eternally loved child from today through eternity.

As you go about each day, think about your choices. Ask: "Does this keep me safe in the Father's hands or sell my soul to the devil?" Don't underestimate Satan and his powerful army of demons. One of the best ways to avoid sin and pursue holiness is to remember that the Enemy of your soul is just around the corner, waiting to rip you to shreds. Consider what desires tempt you and drag you away. This week, make a plan to take radical action (see Matthew 5:29-30) so you can live the abundant life that Jesus has promised his children.



# Hudson UMC Youth Group and R.A.D. News/Schedule of Events!

## Youth Group Schedule for October 18 – November 22

October 18th – Youth Sunday at 9:00 and 11:15 Services, No Youth Group/Aldersgate

October 25<sup>th</sup> – Normal Youth Group, 6:30 – 8:30 pm @ HUMC

November 1 – Normal Youth Group, 6:30 – 8:30 pm @ HUMC

November 8 – Normal Youth Group, 6:30 – 8:30 pm @ HUMC

November 15 – Normal Youth Group, 6:30 – 8:30 pm @ HUMC

November 22 – Youth Group Outing! Will need “Parent Consent” Form!

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*Trick or Treat for Unicef: Let's make Halloween count! Take a UNICEF box along with you as you “trick-or-treat” and collect contributions that will help children faced with the struggle to survive against disease, disasters and other hardships. Orange UNICEF boxes are available in the church office, Hallmark Gold Crown stores and at [unicefusa.org/trickortreat](http://unicefusa.org/trickortreat). You can make a difference! 6 cents can provide water for one child, \$45 can provide school supplies for 20 kids, \$112 can provide blankets for kids facing emergency situations and \$200 can immunize 104 kids against measles. Please see Sarah or check out [unicefusa.org/trickortreat](http://unicefusa.org/trickortreat) for more information.*

## Youth Sunday

A huge “THANK YOU” to all youth who helped put together, plan and participated in Youth Sunday!

## Important Upcoming Dates!

October 18<sup>th</sup> – MercyMe Concert @ the Akron Civic Theater! This is not an “official” Youth Group outing, but all are welcome who would like to go! We are meeting at the church at 4:30 p.m., grab dinner in Akron and purchase tickets at the door. Tickets are \$15 per person and \$12 per person for groups 15+ . Hope you can make it!

November 20<sup>th</sup> – An Evening in Russia Auction. From 6:30–8:30 youth and their families can browse beautiful Russian icons, shawls, nesting dolls and other souvenirs. While you bid, listen to a live Russian Balalaika Orchestra play in the background. Food and coffee will be served and 100% of the funds raised will go towards the orphans at the “Renewal Orphanage” in Dmitrov, Russia.

December 5<sup>th</sup> – Hanging of the Greens at Hudson UMC (More information to follow)

December 6<sup>th</sup> – Search for the Christ Child at Hudson UMC (More information to follow)

December 8<sup>th</sup> – Confirmation Parent/Youth Meeting @ 7 p.m. at Hudson UMC

## Radically Active Disciples!

The next R.A.D Event will be Sunday, November 1<sup>st</sup> from 6:30–8:30 p.m.! We will be grocery shopping for needy families at the Hudson Giant Eagle. Each youth is asked to please bring \$10 for grocery donations and a “Parent Consent” form. Please contact Sarah if you have questions/concerns.

# October 2009

|                                                                                                                                                       |                                                |    |                                                        | 1                                                                             | 2  | 3                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                       |                                                |    |                                                        | 3 - 4:30<br>Drop - In<br>After School<br>Hangouts                             |    |                                                |
| 4                                                                                                                                                     | 5                                              | 6  | 7                                                      | 8                                                                             | 9  | 10                                             |
| Aldersgate<br>Choir<br>5 - 6<br>Youth Group<br>6:30-8:30<br>RAD<br>6:30-8:30                                                                          | 3 - 5<br>Drop - In<br>After School<br>Hangouts |    | 7:45 - 8:45<br>Breakfast<br>Club @<br>Hudson<br>Panera | 3 - 4:30<br>Drop - In<br>After School<br>Hangouts                             |    |                                                |
| 11                                                                                                                                                    | 12                                             | 13 | 14                                                     | 15                                                                            | 16 | 17                                             |
|                                                                                                                                                       | 3 - 5<br>Drop - In<br>After School<br>Hangouts |    | 7:45 - 8:45<br>Breakfast<br>Club @<br>Hudson<br>Panera | 3 - 4:30<br>Drop - In<br>After School<br>Hangouts                             |    | 10:00 AM -<br>Youth<br>Sunday<br>Rehearsal     |
| 18                                                                                                                                                    | 19                                             | 20 | 21                                                     | 22                                                                            | 23 | 24                                             |
| Youth<br>Sunday at<br>9:00 and<br>11:15<br>Services<br>No Youth<br>Group<br>No<br>Aldersgate<br>MercyMe<br>Conert:<br>Meet at the<br>church @<br>4:30 | 3 - 5<br>Drop - In<br>After School<br>Hangouts |    | 7:45 - 8:45<br>Breakfast<br>Club                       | 3 - 4:30<br>Drop - In<br>After School<br>Hangouts                             |    |                                                |
| 25                                                                                                                                                    | 26                                             | 27 | 28                                                     | 29                                                                            | 30 | 31                                             |
| Aldersgate<br>5-6<br>Youth Group<br>6:30 - 8:30                                                                                                       | 3 - 5<br>Drop - In<br>After School<br>Hangouts |    |                                                        | Sarah<br>leaves for<br>"Youth<br>Specialities"<br>Convention<br>in Cincinatti |    | Halloween!<br>Trick or<br>Treat for<br>Unicef! |