

# Created by God

You are invited to join the Created By God Group, the Spiritual Formation Team and the Ministry Council in celebrating the success of Faith UMC's 1st annual Created By God (CBG) experience!

Created By God is a resource for fostering a spirit of celebration in children entering 4th grade through 6th grade as they come to know themselves to be lovingly created by God. Parents are equipped with material to continue the conversation and formation. The curriculum provides a study of self esteem and human sexuality with a Christian foundation. The material was co-written by an ordained United Methodist clergyperson and published by the United Methodist publishing house, Abingdon. The Biblical passages selected for inclusion are ones that:

- recognize and celebrate sexuality as a good gift from God
- affirm growth and change as part of God's plan for life
- suggest guidelines for loving relationships that focus on intimacy
- challenge young people to assume responsibility for making careful and prayerful decisions
- lift up a God who is infinite in love and forgiveness

13 'tweens' registered for the 4 sessions. The youth began and ended each session with a Bible story and singing in the Sanctuary with ALL the other Camp-Read-A lot (CRAL) kids. During the Created By God sessions the kids explored the Bible, participated in the CRAL service project, played games and had discussion about how God is working in and through each one of them in this season of personal and relational change.

Overwhelmingly the kids reported (through data collected in post tests) that they "liked being with other students, had fun, and felt positive and secure." When a parent of one of our CBG students shared with her Masters program in Counseling continuing education professor that Faith UMC was offering this program for 4th to 6th graders in self-esteem and human sexuality the professor said, "Wonderful! This is precisely the age at which the church needs to begin accelerating the cultivation of awareness around bodies, beliefs, relationships and responsibilities. In these last years before teenager-hood, young persons are still willing to listen to a rational presentation, ask questions, and be unafraid to mispronounce a term or two. The church is the perfect place to have a conversation about God's gift of sexuality. It is not being had in the same spirit elsewhere."

The Created By God Group is already planning for next summer—look for details to come! Should you have any questions about Created By God at Faith please feel free to talk with any of the members of the CBG ministry group:

- Rev. Cara Stultz Costello
- Michael Farmer, Lead Teacher—Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health
- Dr. Pam Hoalt, Professor of Public Health—Malone University
- Jennifer Everetts, M.Ed in Child and Family Development—Canton City Schools
- Cheryl Wahl, Teacher—Faith Friends Preschool
- Dr. Roger Baker—OB/GYN
- Missy Jones, Clinical Counselor—Akron Children's Hospital
- Kathy Schmucker—FUMC Director of Spiritual Formation