

PINE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Pine, Louisiana

PINE FIRST BAPTIST YOUTH MINISTRY

Code of Conduct

For Students, Leaders, and Volunteers

Adopted by the Core Youth Committee
Pine First Baptist Church • Pine, Louisiana

2026

Jeffrey DeLee, Youth Pastor & President

PREAMBLE

The Pine First Baptist Youth Ministry exists to glorify God by making and maturing disciples of Jesus Christ. Every gathering of this Ministry — whether a Wednesday teaching night, a monthly fellowship, a retreat, a mission project, or any other event — is an expression of that mission. The conduct of every person present at any Ministry event either advances or hinders that mission.

This Code of Conduct is not a list of arbitrary rules. It is a reflection of the character that Scripture calls every follower of Christ to exhibit — and a practical framework for maintaining an environment in which the Word of God can be heard, relationships can be built, and young people can be formed as disciples. It applies to all students, adult volunteers, subcommittee members, Covenant Serve Team members, and any other person participating in a Pine First Baptist Youth Ministry event in any capacity.

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. — Ephesians 4:29

But as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” — 1 Peter 1:15–16

SECTION 1: SCOPE AND APPLICATION

1.1 Persons Covered

This Code of Conduct applies to:

- All students (Grades 6–12) participating in any Ministry event
- All Covenant Serve Team members (ages 18–26)
- All adult volunteers, subcommittee members, and chaperones
- Any parent, guardian, or visitor present at a Ministry event

1.2 Events Covered

This Code of Conduct governs conduct at all Pine First Baptist Youth Ministry events, including but not limited to:

- Weekly Sunday worship attendance and Sunday School
- Wednesday Night Youth Group
- Fellowship nights
- Fall and Spring annual retreats
- Mission projects and community service events
- Family fellowship events
- Any other gathering organized under the authority of the Youth Ministry

1.3 Online and Digital Conduct

This Code of Conduct extends to digital communications conducted within the context of the Ministry — including group chats, social media exchanges, and any electronic communication among Ministry participants related to Ministry activities. Conduct online is subject to the same standards as conduct in person.

SECTION 2: SPIRITUAL EXPECTATIONS AND ATTITUDE

The Pine First Baptist Youth Ministry is, first and foremost, a spiritual community gathered around the Word of God. Participation is not merely recreational or social — it is an engagement with the living God and His people. Every participant is expected to:

- 1. Come with a teachable spirit.** We gather to hear, study, and apply the Word of God. Participants are expected to engage respectfully and attentively during all teaching sessions, devotionals, and small group discussions. Disruption of teaching time is a serious matter.
- 2. Pursue unity.** We are a body. Divisiveness, cliques, exclusion of others, and social cruelty are inconsistent with the character of Christ and will not be tolerated (Romans 14:19; Ephesians 4:3).
- 3. Respect spiritual leadership.** Students and volunteers are expected to honor the authority of the Youth Pastor, subcommittee leaders, Serve Team members, and adult volunteers. This does not require silent agreement — questions and honest dialogue are welcome — but public disrespect, undermining of leadership, or defiance of reasonable instruction is not acceptable (Hebrews 13:17).
- 4. Protect the reputation of Christ and the Church.** Every participant represents Pine First Baptist Church and, far more importantly, the Lord Jesus Christ. Conduct at Ministry events — and conduct visible to the community around us — should honor that representation (Matthew 5:16).

SECTION 3: BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS

3.1 Language and Communication

- Profanity, obscene language, crude humor, and sexually suggestive speech are prohibited at all Ministry events.
- Gossip, slander, and speaking disparagingly of other participants, leaders, or the Church are prohibited.
- Speech that demeans, mocks, or belittles another person — including sarcasm used as a weapon — is prohibited.
- Honest disagreement, hard questions, and open discussion are welcomed and protected.

3.2 Physical Conduct

- Physical aggression of any kind — fighting, pushing, hitting, or threatening physical harm — is prohibited and may result in immediate removal from the event and suspension from the Ministry.
- Appropriate physical affection (a handshake, a side hug) is permitted. Romantic physical contact — kissing, prolonged embracing, or any sexual contact — is prohibited at all Ministry events.
- Vandalism or damage to any property — retreat venue facilities, church property, or the property of others — is prohibited. Participants responsible for damage may be required to compensate for repairs.

3.3 Substances

- The use, possession, or distribution of alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, marijuana, or any controlled substance is strictly prohibited at all Ministry events and on all retreat properties, without exception.
- Participants who arrive at a Ministry event under the influence of any substance will be removed from the event and their parent or guardian notified immediately.
- Prescription medications must be disclosed to the designated adult leader at retreat events and administered in accordance with the Ministry's medical protocol.

3.4 Technology and Devices

- Personal devices (phones, tablets, earbuds) shall be silenced and put away during all teaching sessions, devotionals, small groups, and worship. Leaders may designate specific device-free windows during retreats.
- Photography and video recording of other participants requires their consent. Recording of teaching sessions for personal use is permitted but shall not be posted to social media without the Youth Pastor's approval.
- The viewing of pornographic, violent, or otherwise inappropriate content on personal devices at any Ministry event is prohibited and is grounds for immediate removal.
- No participant shall use any device to bully, harass, threaten, or demean another participant within the context of the Ministry.

3.5 Honesty and Integrity

- Lying to Ministry leaders — including misrepresenting one's whereabouts, conduct, or the conduct of others — is a serious violation of trust and will be treated as a conduct issue independent of whatever conduct was being concealed.
- Theft of any kind — of property belonging to another participant, the Ministry, the retreat venue, or any other party — is prohibited and will result in removal and, where appropriate, referral to civil authorities.

SECTION 4: RETREAT-SPECIFIC STANDARDS

Overnight retreats carry additional responsibilities and risks. The following standards apply specifically to all Fall and Spring retreat events, and to any other overnight Ministry event.

4.1 Curfew and Room Boundaries

- A curfew will be established and communicated at the start of each retreat. All participants are expected to be in their designated sleeping area by curfew.
- Males and females shall not enter one another's sleeping quarters or bathrooms at any time. This standard applies to all participants, including Serve Team members and adult volunteers.
- Participants who leave the retreat facility grounds without express permission from the Youth Pastor or a designated adult leader will be considered in violation of this Code and may be sent home at their parent's or guardian's expense.

4.2 Chaperone Authority

- Adult chaperones have full authority to enforce this Code of Conduct and to instruct participants regarding safety, schedule compliance, and appropriate conduct. Participants are expected to comply with reasonable chaperone direction.
- A chaperone who observes a serious violation of this Code is authorized to contact the Youth Pastor immediately, regardless of the hour.

4.3 Medical and Emergency Protocols

- All participants must submit a completed medical waiver and emergency contact form prior to any overnight event.
- Any prescription medications must be disclosed to the designated adult leader, stored securely, and administered according to the instructions of the prescribing physician.
- Any injury, illness, or medical concern must be reported immediately to the designated adult leader. Leaders will not delay seeking medical attention for any participant out of concern for the event schedule.

4.4 Packing and Personal Items

- Participants shall not bring weapons of any kind — including firearms, knives (other than small pocket tools), or any item intended to cause harm — to any Ministry event.
- The Youth Pastor or a designated adult leader reserves the right to inspect bags at retreat events when there is reasonable suspicion of prohibited items. This search will be conducted with a same-gender chaperone present.
- Participants are responsible for their own belongings. The Ministry is not liable for lost or stolen personal property.

SECTION 5: STANDARDS FOR LEADERS AND VOLUNTEERS

Those who serve in leadership — as subcommittee members, Covenant Serve Team members, adult chaperones, or in any other volunteer capacity — are held to a higher standard of conduct. Leaders are not merely rule-followers; they are examples.

Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned. — Titus 2:7-8

5.1 Personal Character

- All leaders and volunteers are expected to model the conduct required of participants in every respect. A leader who violates this Code is subject to the same or greater consequence than a student.
- Leaders shall not form exclusive romantic relationships with students they are serving in a mentorship capacity.
- Leaders shall conduct themselves with discretion in all one-on-one interactions with students. No adult leader shall be alone with a student in a private, unobservable setting. The two-adult rule applies: at least two adults must be present or visible whenever a leader interacts with a student privately.

5.2 Doctrinal and Ministry Fidelity

- Leaders and volunteers serve under the authority of the Youth Pastor and the governing documents of the Ministry. They shall not teach, model, or advocate positions that contradict the Statement of Faith in the Pine First Baptist Youth Ministry Constitution or the doctrinal direction of Pine First Baptist Church.
- Leaders shall not undermine the Youth Pastor's authority, teaching, or decisions in the hearing of students or their families.

5.3 Mandatory Reporting

- Any leader or volunteer who has reasonable cause to believe that a student has been abused, neglected, or is in danger — by any person, inside or outside the Ministry — is required to report that concern immediately to the Youth Pastor and, in all cases required by Louisiana law, to the Louisiana Child Protection Hotline (1-855-452-5437). The duty to report is not contingent on certainty — reasonable suspicion is sufficient and required.
- Failure to report known or suspected abuse is a serious violation of this Code and may result in immediate removal from all leadership roles within the Ministry.

5.4 Background Checks

- All adults serving in ongoing leadership or volunteer roles within the Ministry — including subcommittee members, Covenant Serve Team members, and chaperones — shall complete a background check through Pine First Baptist Church prior to assuming their role.
- The Youth Pastor reserves the right to decline or revoke a volunteer role based on the results of a background check, consistent with the Church's policies.

SECTION 6: SOCIAL MEDIA AND PUBLIC REPRESENTATION

The Ministry does not maintain an official public social media presence without the approval of the Youth Pastor. When participants post about Ministry events on personal accounts, the following apply:

- Content posted about Ministry events should accurately represent the Ministry and reflect the character expected of all participants under this Code.
- No participant shall post images or videos of other participants without their consent.
- No participant shall post content that mocks, demeans, or misrepresents the Ministry, its leaders, or its participants.
- Complaints or grievances about the Ministry shall be addressed through the proper process described in Section 7 — not aired publicly on social media.
- Violations of these standards that damage the reputation of the Ministry or the Church may be treated as conduct violations subject to the discipline process in Section 7.

SECTION 7: DISCIPLINE PROCESS

The goal of all discipline in the Pine First Baptist Youth Ministry is restoration, not punishment. Every step of the process is designed to call the participant back to the standard of this Code, to the character of Christ, and to full participation in the community.

7.1 Graduated Response

Discipline shall be proportionate to the offense and to the pattern of behavior. The following graduated steps apply in most situations, though the Youth Pastor retains discretion to skip steps in cases of serious or immediate violations:

1. **Verbal Warning.** A leader or the Youth Pastor addresses the issue privately with the participant, clearly identifies the violation, and calls for correction. This is the standard first response to minor infractions.
2. **Parental or Guardian Notification.** For any recurring issue or any violation of moderate seriousness, the Youth Pastor or designated leader contacts the participant's parent or guardian to inform them of the concern and discuss a path forward.
3. **Removal from Event.** A participant who is actively disrupting an event, refuses to comply with a leader's reasonable instruction, or has committed a violation that makes their continued presence harmful to others may be removed from that event. The parent or guardian is notified and is responsible for arranging transportation.
4. **Temporary Suspension.** For repeated violations or serious single offenses, the Youth Pastor may suspend a participant from Ministry events for a defined period. Reinstatement requires a conversation with the Youth Pastor and, in most cases, a meeting with the participant's parent or guardian.
5. **Referral and Permanent Removal.** In cases of severe or dangerous conduct, or where a participant has failed to respond to repeated intervention, the Youth Pastor may refer the matter to the Senior Pastor and consider permanent removal from Ministry participation. Permanent removal is a last resort and shall involve the Senior Pastor.

7.2 Immediate Removal

The following violations shall result in immediate removal from the event without progressive steps, and will be reported to the Senior Pastor:

- Physical assault on any person
- Sexual misconduct of any kind
- Possession or use of a weapon
- Possession, use, or distribution of alcohol, or illegal drugs.
- Any conduct that purposely places the physical safety of any participant at risk
- Discovery of pornographic or illegal content on a personal device at a Ministry event with or without intent to distribute.

7.3 Leader Discipline

A leader or volunteer who violates this Code is subject to the same graduated process, with the additional step of notification to the Senior Pastor at Step 2 or higher. Immediate removal of a leader is warranted in all the same circumstances listed in Section 7.2. Removal of a leader from their appointed role shall follow the process described in the Youth Ministry Constitution, Article VII.

7.4 Appeals

Any participant or leader who believes a disciplinary action was unjust may appeal in writing to the Youth Pastor within fourteen (14) days of the action. If the concern involves the Youth Pastor directly, the appeal may be directed to the Senior Pastor. The decision of the Senior Pastor is final in all matters within the Ministry.

7.5 Pastoral Priority

In all discipline, the Youth Pastor will seek to address the spiritual root of the conduct, not merely the behavior. Parents are partners in this process. The Ministry does not pursue discipline as an adversarial proceeding — it pursues it as a pastoral one.

SECTION 8: PARENT AND GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents and guardians are partners in the discipleship of their children. The Pine First Baptist Youth Ministry explicitly affirms the primary responsibility of the family in the spiritual formation of the next generation (Deuteronomy 6:6-7). To that end, parents and guardians are expected to:

- Read and sign the Parent/Guardian Acknowledgment Form at the bottom of this document, affirming that both they and their student have reviewed this Code.
- Reinforce the standards of this Code in the home, particularly regarding digital conduct, language, and attitude toward spiritual authority.
- Communicate promptly with the Youth Pastor or the Vice President if they become aware of a concern involving their student or any other participant in the Ministry.
- Respond promptly to contact from Ministry leaders regarding their student's conduct.
- Model the spirit of this Code in their own interactions with Ministry leaders and with other families.

Parents who have concerns about Ministry decisions, leadership conduct, or the handling of a discipline matter are encouraged to contact the Youth Pastor directly. The Ministry is committed to transparency and honest dialogue with families.

SECTION 9: ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND AGREEMENT

This Code of Conduct is adopted by the Core Youth Committee of the Pine First Baptist Youth Ministry and is effective as of the date August 2, 2026. It shall be reviewed annually by the Core Youth Committee and updated as needed.

By signing below, the student, parent, and/or leader acknowledges that they have read, understood, and agree to abide by this Code of Conduct in full. A signed copy will be retained on file by the Youth Ministry.

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