

We would like to thank you for your willingness to be a part of the Gainesville Aid Project this year!

Enclosed you will find a Registration Form, a Permission to Attend Form, basic instructions and rules for the session and other information to help make your GAP experience a positive one. Please make copies of the Registration / Permission Form, for each participant attending.

The Registration Forms and Permission Forms are due on April 30, 2011 along with the remaining registration fee of \$40 per person attending. If the remaining fees are not received by this date your spots for GAP may be forfeited and given to groups on the waiting list. The fees cover all meals, lodging and a T-shirt for each youth (drivers may purchase T-shirts for \$10.00 each). **Deposits are non-refundable.**

The GAP committee and staff are working hard to make this a most meaningful experience for your group.

A GAP weekend can be one of the most rewarding spiritual events in the life of a young person. It can also be one of the most fun experiences ever had, young or old! We are excited about having your group attend this year's session and are looking forward to seeing you here. Please let us know if there are any questions you have or if there is anything we can do to help you prepare your group for this experience.

Registration will be held at the Antioch Campground, on Antioch Campground Road. This is also where the lodging is. If you need directions, please call ahead of time, and we will gladly provide them for you.

I Am...
Working in HIS Service,

Sonya Parker
GAP Registrar
770.932.1850

Basic Instructions

We are looking forward to seeing you and sharing a GAP weekend with you. Before you come, there are several things you need to know:

Registration begins at 3:00 p.m., Wednesday, June 22, 2011, and will be held at the Antioch Campgrounds. The weekend benediction will take place after lunch on Sunday, June 26, 2011. **All participants are expected to arrive on Wednesday and remain throughout the session. No one is allowed to participate part-time.** Only GAPpers who meet the registration requirements, on the first day, will be allowed to stay at the campgrounds. No participant will be allowed to stay off site during the session.

GAP is a volunteer program, and that poses unique challenges and requirements for all who participate. One of these unique challenges is getting the youth to the work sites each day. We ask that your group bring one *driver and vehicle* for every 5 or 6 youth in your group. We understand that it may not be the most economical situation or may not even be possible for some groups, and that is quite alright. Very simply, it helps us to have more than one driver for each work team, since most of the veteran leaders at GAP drive pick-up trucks. It's kind of difficult to fit 6 youth and one or two leaders into the cab of a truck. Once again, this is a volunteer program and this system has worked well over the years. To qualify as a GAP driver, the adult must be 21 years of age or older with a valid license and insurance. If you have any questions concerning this, please, feel free to contact us.

Participants will need the following:

- Bible (GAP is, after all, a Christian mission camp)
- Work clothes (3 days worth; no shorts or open toed shoes are allowed on work sites)
- Work gloves (yes, we work and blisters hurt)
- Sleeping bag or bed clothes
- Towels and Toiletries (toilet paper is provided...)
- Shower shoes
- Flashlight
- Insect repellent and sun screen isn't a bad idea
- Shorts and t-shirts appropriate for recreation and worship

The campground is unattended, for the most part, during the day. We strongly discourage bringing radios, CD players, unnecessary jewelry, etc...

What is GAP?

GAP is the Gainesville Aid Project.
GAP is helping people in need.
GAP is meeting new friends.
GAP is eating lots of good food.
GAP is sleeping in places you never thought you would sleep.
GAP is fellowship like you have never experienced it before.

GAP was started in 1980, at Antioch United Methodist Church, in Gainesville, Georgia. GAP is a local mission ministry that serves the Northeast Georgia area. The regular sessions of GAP are held during two different weeks of the summer, from a Wednesday afternoon to a Sunday afternoon. Nightly worship, during each session, is held at the historic Antioch campgrounds, in a rustic wooded area. The campgrounds are also where the “GAPpers” bunk during each session. Sunday morning worship, meals, singing and group building activities take place at Antioch UMC. GAP is truly an experience that changes the lives of youth.

Who will we work for at GAP?

GAP works for the elderly, the disadvantaged or just someone who needs a little help. We may clear a field or build a wheel chair ramp. We may just sit and visit. One is just as important as the other is. It all depends on what the client wants.

Why should we pay to come and work at GAP?

Ah yes, the question as old as time (or at least as old as GAP). The money that is paid as a registration fee covers the overhead for GAP. All the food we eat, all the electricity we burn, etc... The only profits earned at GAP are spiritual.

Why do we have to wear long pants to work sites?

Safety, safety, safety. We do use lawn mowers, weed eaters, chain saws, and other sorts of cutting tools. Long pants will help protect someone in the rare event of a mishap. Also, there is always the possibility that poison ivy/oak and briars will be present at a work site and long pants will help prevent contact with these little nasties. No open toed shoes, either, only shoes or boots can be worn on a work site.

Rules for GAP:

- Safety first.
- GAP is a smoke free environment. Use of tobacco products, alcohol and illegal substances is prohibited.
- Any driver must be 21 years old to drive a vehicle at GAP. If you have someone who is under 21 and driving, they must leave their vehicle at the church or the campgrounds for the duration of GAP.
- Do not, under any circumstances, dump debris or garbage at the campgrounds.
- Quiet time begins at 11:00 p.m. Youth should be preparing for bed and heading to their tents during this time. It is the responsibility of each group leader to enforce this rule.
- All guests and visitors are required to leave by 11:00p.m.-no exceptions.
- Lights out at 12:00 midnight. It is the responsibility of each group leader to enforce this rule.
- Any youth out after lights out with, shall we say, less than honorable intentions, will be required to leave GAP for the remainder of the session. Sorry, no refund either.
- No riding in the beds of pick-up trucks or on trailers.
- All youth should be belted (seat belted, that is) when riding in any vehicle equipped with seat belts.
- All electric accessories should be un-plugged before leaving the campgrounds.
- During a GAP session it is sometimes necessary to leave the church or campground, however, this is strongly discouraged. If it is necessary to leave for a short period, a qualified adult should be present and a designated GAP staff member should be notified.
- The tents at the campgrounds belong to individual families. Treat them as if you were staying in someone else's home. Do not use any of the appliances in the tents and do not move items from one tent to another.
- Clean up the tents your group is staying in each day. Trash bags are available to keep garbage in.
- The campground is unattended during the day, while GAP is working. We strongly discourage bringing any radios, unnecessary jewelry, etc.
- Vehicles should stay outside the circle of tents at the campgrounds. There is ample parking and an access road around the campground.

Rules For Evening Worship at GAP:

- There is a path of silence from beyond the circle of tents to the worship area. Please observe silence while going to and coming from worship.
- Do not bring any food or drinks to worship.

As a youth leader, it is your responsibility to enforce these rules with your group and help GAP staff members maintain these rules with all the participants. As a youth leader, it is also your responsibility to make sure your youth are at the church or campgrounds at the appropriate times, and to help other youth leaders with their youth. The GAP staff works very hard to maintain a reasonably tight schedule, and we need your help to be sure everyone's experience at GAP is the best it can possibly be.

Things You Probably Should Know:

YOUTH LEADERS NOTE: Read over this section carefully and share it with your youth group.

- The youth you bring with you will be split up. GAP tries to get as many youth from different churches in a work team as possible. If you bring a large group, some of the youth may be in the same work team. This encourages friendships and is a built in “ice breaker” that has been successful since the beginning of GAP.
- The cabins at the campgrounds are referred to as “tents”. They are very old and most of them have hay for a floor. Some of the tents have pet names, like “The Barn”. They are part of the GAP experience and part of what makes this mission different from all of the others.
- Your group will be assigned to a tent, males in a male tent and females in a female tent. You will be assigned to a tent.
- Each youth group will be assigned “K.P.” duty or bathhouse duty during the session.
- It is a GAP tradition to give gifts to each member of the work team you participated in. These gifts can not be store bought and should not be brought with you. Gifts should be made or found during a GAP session. Usually, they are fairly easy to come up with and should be very simple in nature. You can give a different gift to each member of the group or the same gift to each member of the group. If your group built a wheel chair ramp, then some scraps of wood from the project are a common gift. If your group painted for two days, then paint scrapings, old paint brushes, a paint stirrer or even a wiping rag can make a good gift. Encourage the group of youth you bring to be creative. There is no such thing as a bad GAP gift. Gifts are given on Saturday night, before worship, during each session of GAP.
- Be sure that the youth bring the appropriate clothing and enough of it to GAP. Workdays are on Thursday, Friday and Saturday of the session. To insure safety at the worksites, long pants are required. No open toed shoes are allowed on a work site, only shoes or boots should be worn. Tee shirts are great, but please be sure that if they are printed, they are appropriate. In the afternoons and evenings, shorts and Tee shirts are quite acceptable, as well as sandals or other footwear. Hats are good for keeping the sun off one’s face and neck and sun-block is not a bad idea. Dress for Sunday morning worship can be casual or dress. Many GAPpers will wear a GAP Tee shirt and shorts to Sunday morning worship, others will wear traditional church dress. Worship each evening of GAP is always casual.
- Adult chaperones are asked to make plans to stay for the entire session. It is strongly recommended that your church bring one adult for every 5 GAPpers.
- All meals are provided. Lunch is packed sandwiches and is ordered the night before a workday. Snacks are provided after evening worship. Since the workdays can be very hot, GAP provides plenty of water and sports drinks for each work team. GAP encourages each team to take plenty of breaks to replenish fluids during the day. First aid kits are also provided for each work team.

Hints for a Successful GAP Experience

First and foremost is to remember that we are here to serve God. The GAP motto is “God’s love, through our service, bridges the GAP.”

The second most important thing to remember is SAFETY FIRST! Any situation can be dangerous if it is treated too casually.

Each GAP we try to be a true Christian community, in which persons love, help, encourage, and accept one another. This means going the extra mile to avoid leaving others out or becoming “cliquish.” Boyfriends and girlfriends should avoid inappropriate behavior, as well.

Each day’s work activity is carefully planned to provide the opportunity for Christian mission. In many cases, you will see much more to be done than you can accomplish. This can be very frustrating for work-oriented people. Other times, the work can be completed in a short time by a diligent team. In either case, plan to spend time each day reaching out to the people you are working for. Don’t be so focused on the work aspect of a site that you miss the opportunity for direct human contact and interaction. They are essential to everyone’s life and can become a precious memory for both the client and the GAPpers.

Those who have attended GAP before will naturally have expectations about this GAP experience, based on their previous one. Sometimes when we expect certain things to occur, we are disappointed when they don’t happen. Each session is unique. Whether you have been to GAP before or not, expect this session to be the best one. As with most things, we receive in proportion to what we expect and what we give. Your GAP experience can lead you to new insights about yourself, new appreciation for your friends and family, and new awareness of the meaning and importance of Christian mission in our world.

Bring enough clothing for the entire session. Many of the work sites involve yard work, painting or even pressure washing. Work clothes will get dirty, smelly, wet or even ruined. Please be sure to bring enough clothes for three full work days and, at least, three full evenings of recreation and worship.

Finally, we do have to be strict about quiet time and lights out. These are requirements of the Antioch Campground Trustees, and a general courtesy towards those who live near the campgrounds. It is also, potentially, dangerous for the youth to be wandering the campgrounds in the dark of night, as it would be anywhere else. We value the safety and spiritual experience of all who attend GAP, and do not wish to risk it over foolish behavior. We appreciate all leaders assisting with this.

Guidelines for GAP From the Antioch Campground Trustees

As of January 1, 1995

- GAP must request, each year, with dates, for use of the campground.
- First clean up each year, of the campground, will be primarily the responsibility of GAP.
- GAP must get permission, each year, from the tent holders for use of their tents.
- All electrical appliances must be turned off when no one is on the premises.
- No dumping of anything (debris, garbage, etc...) on the campgrounds.
- The number of GAP personnel will be limited to 90.
- No camping tents or trailers will be permitted.
- GAP must furnish their own insurance.
- Trustees and tent holders will not be held responsible for any injuries or liabilities during GAP.
- People must be instructed to take care of the campgrounds and GAP is responsible for any damages.
- There will be no driving of vehicles inside the circle of tents.
- GAP will not move anything from one tent to another.
- Use of tobacco is prohibited. No smoking, by ANYONE, on the campground property.
- Appliances in the tents will not be used.

Campground Trustees