

## Athens Young People's Group History

The Athens Young People's Group was formed in 2006 out of a bid committee's attempt to bring GCYPAA (Georgia Conference for Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous) to Athens failed. In the wake of the unsuccessful bid, AA members Chad, David, Alicia, Kelly, and Andy decided that Athens needed a young people's group similar to those in other cities. In the fall of 2006, the fledgling group met once a week at the Jittery Joe's coffee roaster near downtown Athens. The group began to pick up steam over the next few months and in February of 2007 the members found a permanent home in the Firestone room (named because it was the old Firestone Tire garage) at Redeemer Presbyterian Church in downtown Athens. The group began meeting twice a week on Tuesday and Saturday at 7:00pm and flourished into the summer of that year.

It was in August of 2007 that the Cobb House was sold and closed its doors to AA meetings. This had a huge impact on the Athens Young People's group. The Happy Hour group and Noon Cobb group moved from the Cobb House to join the Athens Young People's group at the Firestone Room. When this happened, the deacons at Redeemer began to charge each group a flat rate for using the room. This rate was significantly higher than the rate the Young People's group had been paying. A few months later, the other groups left Redeemer Presbyterian for various reasons. However, the now higher rent remained in place for the Young People's group, and eventually this would have an impact on the mostly student attended meeting.

The meetings continued to flourish through the winter, but soon fell upon difficult times. In early 2008 the group elected to add a Big Book study meeting on Thursday. The addition of the third meeting was met with excitement and commitment by many members at first, but over the course of the year attendance began to drop on Thursdays. This drop in attendance seemed to spread to the Tuesday and Saturday meetings as well. By January of 2009, attendance had dropped to disastrously low levels. The group, which consisted of only a handful of members, was not making enough to pay rent and had already begun to use up its prudent reserve.

In the summer of that same year, the group, which had gained some newly sober but active members, voted to drop the Thursday meeting and focus on the two discussion meetings. The members began filling important service positions within the group. Over the next two years, The Athens Young People's group managed its low funds as well as it could and tried to build membership by focusing on solution centered meetings and sponsorship.

In the spring of 2012, the group's membership had become quite strong again, and its members elected to reach out to a new location that might offer a bit of relief from the financial burden of its location. Charlene C. and others had started a campus meeting at Christus Victor Lutheran church on Lumpkin Street. She reached out to the pastor of the church to see if the young people's group could begin meeting there, and the pastor agreed. The campus meeting dissolved, but the Young People's group stayed at the new location.

Since its last move, the group has become a well--attended and well--funded meeting. Its membership is the highest it's been since the group's origination.

The Athens Young People Group continued to meet at Christus Victor Lutheran church from mid-2012 until late 2016, wherein a decision was made to relocate. After considerable deliberation in Group Conscious, the Athens Young People group moved into the Living Hope Church on Lexington Road on March 1st, 2017.

Pursuant of notable renovations implemented by the church throughout early 2017, the attendance and self-supported funding of the Young People's group returned to figures similar to those seen prior to relocating to the eastside.

# ATHENS YOUNG PEOPLE'S GROUP

Living Hope Church

2150 Lexington Rd.

Athens 30605

