

## Meet Bekah Siau, our new youth pastor



First of all I would like to say that it has truly been a privilege and a blessing to begin to get to know you all and to be welcomed with such open arms. For those of you to whom I haven't yet had the chance to introduce myself fully, I'd like to now take some time to give you a brief snapshot of my life leading up to my partnership with you at Suffern Presbyterian Church.

I grew up in the Syracuse area (Central New York). I am the second-born of 10 kids, yes all by the same parents. My parents made church a priority and at a very young age instilled in us the importance of church attendance and being active in our local church. My mother home-schooled (and continues to home-school) all of us all the way through high school. She made sure that we were well-rounded and kept us very involved in both our community and church body. Being home-schooled, and coming from a large family were probably the two biggest struggles I encountered during my high school and middle school years; it just wasn't "cool". By God's grace I have come to realize that being 'cool' isn't everything and I

didn't remain bitter towards my parents or siblings. Today I am grateful to my parents and couldn't imagine life any other way. I gave my life to Christ at a very young age, and as I grew in my faith and learning at church I really made a conscious decision to follow Christ and model my life after His when I was in middle school. In high school I was very involved with my youth group, on the youth group leadership team and in our worship band. I also attended three mission trips (NYC, Orlando, and Caracas, Venezuela) all three of which helped to shape my spiritual growth and develop a strong heart for evangelism. I graduated from high school at the age of 17 in 2002 and that fall I attended Onondaga Community College in Syracuse studying photography. During that year, I kept coming back to the question, "How am I going to use photography for ministry?" So I pursued the desire for a more ministry-minded major and made a last minute decision to attend Nyack College. At Nyack I studied Youth Ministry and later combined that with Sociology. It was there in my first year (2003) that I met Carl and Jenny Whitlatch and started Young Life training. Since then it has been one thing after another further confirming my involvement with young people

in this area. This brings me up to the past 5 months. As my graduation neared I had to make decisions about my future. I had made a commitment to Carl and Jenny to help out with Young Life for the summer and then I planned to move back home to Syracuse to find work there. When Jenny mentioned to me that she would be stepping down from her position at the church, questions started stirring inside me: Was this the place for me? Is this where God wanted to take me for the next couple years? Long story short after much prayer and thinking I came to realize that Suffern would be a perfect place for me to start out, and at a timing that only God could ordain. This arrangement also works well for the teens because I don't have to "replace" anyone. Jenny will still be around so they can continue a relationship with her. Instead, my hope is to come alongside of what Jenny has already established and help to further lead the kids to Christ. One thing I would ask is for your continued patience with me, since I am still young and not as experienced in life. In addition, while I do have a bachelor's degree in Youth Ministry and Sociology I don't claim to have it all figured out yet. I am still working on becoming better conformed to the likeness of Christ. I want to again thank you for your prayers and support and for your partnership in seeing the importance of leading kids to Christ.

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Bekah Siau and Chelsea Dramen survive "Crud Wars" at Wyldlife Camp in Rockbridge, Va.