



STONE HILL CHURCH

## What is AWANA?

AWANA is an international, Bible-centered ministry founded over 60 years ago by Christian men who saw a need for children to be reached with the good news of Jesus Christ. AWANA has grown from its beginnings in a church basement in the Chicago area into a ministry that reached over 2 million children around the world. Currently almost 30 thousand churches, spread out over 100 countries, use the AWANA program.

AWANA stands for **Approved Workmen Are Not Ashamed** and is taken from 2 Timothy 2:15, *“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.”*

The key focus of AWANA ministry is Scripture memorization, understanding and application. The AWANA handbooks clearly present the Gospel at an age-appropriate level, and initially focus on establishing a personal relationship between each Clubber and Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. The memory work, Bible studies and other fun activities continue to carefully give each Clubber a Biblical worldview by building up their Bible knowledge and instilling in them a love and respect for God and His Word.

AWANA curriculum materials are designed to help GrownUps and churches guide children in spiritual growth, and are based on the following master life threads:

- Teaching respect for God and His Word.
- Building wisdom through Bible knowledge and understanding.
- Helping children and youth demonstrate grace in relationships.
- Giving them a sense of destiny and purpose.
- Encouraging them to see things from God’s perspective.

## Who can participate in AWANA?

AWANA is open to any child, regardless of whether they regularly attend our church, another church, or no church at all. AWANA clubs are available for preschool age children (3-year-old, potty-trained),

Kindergarten-Second Grade, Third-Sixth Grade, Middle School and High School.

## What are the AWANA Clubs?

AWANA offers different clubs depending upon the age of the children. Home school children should be placed in class with children of the same age.



Cubbies is designed for 3-4-year-old kids for the two years before attending kindergarten. Cubbies must be 3 by Sept. 30 of the current club year. Classes are co-ed.

Kindergarten through Second grade students attend Sparks. Clubbers in the Kindergarten class must be 5 by Sept. 30 of the current club year. Classes are co-ed.



Third through sixth grade students in T&T are divided into small groups based on age and gender. All kids work through the same book at the same pace.

LiT is our combined program for our Trek (7-8th grade) and Journey (9-12th grade) Clubbers. One period includes a lesson, one is handbook time, and one is for practicing leadership in the other clubs (hence the LiT – Leader in Training). Classes are co-ed.



## Why does AWANA collect dues and what are they used for?

**AWANA collects dues of \$40 per child.** These dues help us to offset the cost of awards and other special events we have during the year. If a Child registers after February 1, fees are \$25/child. Please make checks payable to Stone Hill Church and print AWANA on the memo line. Scholarships are available upon request.

Every child must wear their uniform vest/shirt during AWANA nights and the handbook for the year must be purchased. Vests and T-Shirts do not always have to be purchased every year. If a child needs an

additional handbook, or loses it during the year, then all additional or replacement books can be purchased for \$10/book.

### **AWANA Club Meeting Information**

**AWANA meets every Wednesday from 6:30–8pm.** For security purposes, please be sure that ALL your Clubbers are checked in using our electronic check-in system. Our Welcome Desk sits right at the entrance of our Children's Wing. We do our best to start and end on time so please be prompt in dropping off and picking up your Clubber(s). GrownUps must pick up their Clubber(s) no later than 8pm. If a different GrownUp will be picking up your Clubber(s), please notify us in writing and on the registration form.

**Their Safety, Our Priority:** Besides our check-in/out system, all our AWANA Leaders have been interviewed by our leadership and background checked. All leaders are identifiable by their club uniform.

**In case of inclement weather:** If we need to cancel the club due to weather, we will do so by 3pm the day of the club. Please check Stone Hill's website – [www.stonehillprinceton.org](http://www.stonehillprinceton.org). After 5pm, there will be a recording available on the church office phone line (609-924-3816). In case of poor weather (e.g., thunderstorm or flooding) and you are delayed in picking up your Clubber, you can be assured that a leader will always remain at the church until the last Clubber is picked up.

**In case of an emergency:** If we need to evacuate the building, do not attempt to pick up your Clubber from their classroom. Instead, please make your way to the shed at the back of our parking lot. We will take all the Clubbers to that location. You can locate your Clubber(s) by their group uniform. A leader will be with them and our regular check out process must happen before kids are released. Please do not leave with your Clubber until an "all clear" has been given. We need to be sure that all Clubbers are accounted for and avoid having rescue teams looking for children who are already out of the building.

### **Can I contact my Clubber during the club?**

The church office is closed after 5pm. In an emergency during an AWANA evening, you can reach our Director Becca Gater at (732)581-3207.

### **What do kids do at AWANA?**

The club meeting is divided up into three parts:

**Council Time** – The time when Clubbers come together to learn a Biblical lesson. Clubbers regularly hear the gospel message, apply truths of scripture to daily life, and gain tools for Biblical living.

**Game Time** - The Clubbers have fun while learning to be a part of a team. The games are designed to allow each Clubber to participate and encourage team spirit.

**Handbook Time** – Each Clubber will have a handbook to work in. Clubbers are encouraged to complete one handbook each year. Leaders work in small groups with the Clubbers to listen to them recite the sections they have prepared.

### **Section Completion Standard**

A Clubber needs to recite the required material in the handbook section to their leader. Clubbers will be given a maximum of two helps or prompts per section. That means only two hints to complete all the required work and verses exactly as they appear in the text. A section may include more than one verse and the references must also be learned. GrownUps should not sign their Clubber's handbook sections at home. Clubbers must complete all handbook requirements to earn the book award.

### **Does the club have snack time?**

Only our youngest club, Cubbies (ages 3-5), has snack time. However, we do have a few celebrations throughout the year at which we serve snacks. We have an AWANA birthday party each October, a Christmas party, and an end-of-the-year party. If your Clubber has a

food allergy, please let us know so that we can be sure to keep them safe. Many children with allergies bring their own special snack on these nights.

### **AWANA Parent Involvement**

Our goal as an AWANA ministry is to help and equip GrownUps as they guide their family's spiritual development. We strongly encourage you to work with your Clubber (s) in their AWANA handbook! No matter what your Clubbers' ages are, they will need help with their Bible memorization. Encourage your Clubber to work on their books during the week, so they are prepared on club nights. Handbooks are also a great tool for family Bible memorization.

Find what incentives work for your Clubber! We will offer incentives and awards throughout the program, but you can also reward your Clubber for meeting your expectations as well! GrownUps are invited to visit their Clubber's club anytime! Just be sure to stop by the Check-In Desk and let us know.

In Deuteronomy 11:18-21, God instructs parents to

*"Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land the Lord swore to give your ancestors, as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth."*

We encourage you to:

- Make sure your Clubber(s) arrive on time with their uniform, handbook, Bible, athletic shoes, and jacket if needed.
- Make AWANA a priority in your plans. Be committed to working with your Clubber(s) at home and encourage and congratulate them on their accomplishments.

- Pray for our church, AWANA club, leaders, and Clubbers.

### **What is the Open House?**

There is a lot to learn about AWANA and we want you to get off to a great start. Join us on **September 16**, and we will explain how AWANA works and how to help your Clubber.

### **Club Standards**

Sickness: Please follow the illness standards set forth by Stone Hill Kids. We ask that you do not bring Clubbers who have colds to share. Please make sure Clubbers are fever- and diarrhea-free for 24 hours (without medication) prior to coming.

AWANA Discipline Rules: We expect our Clubbers to follow the behavior rules set by their leaders. We expect them to stay with their group and not wander around the church building unsupervised. We also observe the "5-Count" and the "3-Count".

If a leader needs to get a group of Clubbers quiet, the leader will raise his/her hand and begin to count down from five. Clubbers are to immediately come to order. We use a 3-Count system for discipline. If a Clubber receives three warnings, he/she will be removed from the club area, and the leader will call the director/commander to call the Clubber's GrownUps if necessary.

Clubbers should:

1. Be on time. The club starts promptly at 6:30 and ends at 8:00 pm.
2. Be in Uniform. Clubbers should wear their uniform vest or shirt and gym shoes.
3. Be Prepared. Clubbers should bring their handbook and be ready to pass sections.

4. Be Respectful. Clubbers are expected to listen to leaders and to follow directions.

Our AWANA Store has a small box of gently used items to offer to those who need them. Donations of reusable uniforms and items are accepted.



### **Who leads the club?**

The AWANA club is overseen by Becca Gater, our Family Discipleship Coordinator. Also, each of the 4 different age groups of AWANA – Cubbies, Sparks, T&T and LiT, has its own director. In addition to group directors, there are several adult and teen leaders in each group. Our Secretary provides the much-needed organization to our clubs, handling registration fees, uniform, and books payments, tallying points, and supplying information for parents. You can ask any questions at the Welcome Desk or email [awana@stonehillprinceton.org](mailto:awana@stonehillprinceton.org)

You are always welcome to come and talk to us in person. You will also receive emails throughout the year, containing updates and reminders about events, and can talk with any of the leaders via email. You can also call the church office at (609) 924-3816, and we will help put you in touch with your Clubber's leader.

### **What is the Grand Prix?**

The Grand Prix is a very exciting event for kids and families and is like the Boy Scout Pinewood Derby. Clubbers purchase kits at the club for \$5 and design cars from small blocks of pine. To help, we host two-three Build Nights a few weeks before the Derby, when Clubbers

can bring in their kits and get their cars cut out by our woodworking volunteers.

There are so many different possible shapes, anything from a standard looking race car to a banana to Noah's Ark! We have seen some gems! You can find a huge number of ideas on the web. After the car is shaped, Clubbers can paint and decorate it, attach the wheels, and then it is ready to go!

Our Grand Prix happens on a Saturday, with an optional tune-up on Friday night. Awards are given for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd in Speed, and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd in Design. The Grand Prix is a great event for Clubbers, a unique experience for the whole family and the perfect event to invite a friend.

### **What is the Winter Contest/Can Do Contest?**

Beginning in January, AWANA hosts a contest for Sparks and T&T to encourage Clubbers to continue working hard on their books during a historically slow time. The Winter contest typically runs between 6 and 8 weeks. During the Contest, members of the Sparks club receive small prizes for each section of their book they complete each week. We also track the number of sections completed by the entire club during this time, usually represented on our bulletin board by jewels, stars, or another item. For the Can-Do contest, members of the T&T club earn a can of soda for completing missed sections in their books or memorizing additional Scripture during a quarter.

### **What are shares? Where can my Clubber spend them?**

Shares are paper money which Clubbers can earn throughout the year while they participate in the club. Shares are earned for coming to club prepared (e.g., wearing your uniform, bringing your handbook and/or Bible) but they can also be earned by bringing a visitor, attending an outing, or being on the winning team during Game Time. Often a "secret" share will be awarded to one boy and one girl during the club for good behavior.

Clubbers accumulate their shares throughout the year and are given a chance to “spend” them at our AWANA Store Night (December). We assemble a collection of new, gently used, and donated items which the Clubbers can buy with their shares. Store nights are always quite exciting, and they are often the source of presents for the family.

### **What is Awards Night?**

For the last meeting of the year, we invite parents and family members to join us as we celebrate all the Clubbers have accomplished during the year. If your Clubber has finished their handbook, they will receive the award for that book. Clubbers who are not able to complete their books still will receive an award recognizing their hard work. The event ends with dessert! This is always a fun and joy-filled event, so please be sure to come!

### **Cubbies – 3 to 5 years old**

AWANA Cubbies is for preschool children who are no more than two years from entering Kindergarten and are potty-trained. Cubbies’ GrownUps work directly with their Clubber(s) throughout the week in the scheduled handbook section as active participants in their Clubber’s spiritual development. Clubbers learn key truths about God, Jesus, salvation, and the Bible through memorizing shortened passages of Scripture as well as games and activities.

All Cubbies will begin in the Apple Acres Entrance Book. Once they complete the Apple Acres book, they will receive their AWANA Handbook. Cubbies will work together on the same handbook section each week. If your child is absent, he or she can choose to make up the missed sections. As Clubbers progress through their handbooks, they earn award patches to display on their blue vests.

AWANA Cubbies are dropped off in their room (Pre-K Room) after being checked in. Snack, Lesson, and Handbook time take place in the Cubbies room. Games take place in Harris Hall on occasion. **The book for the 2026-2027 school year is Honeycomb.**



### **Tips on How Parents Can Help their Cubbies**

- Establish a regular time to work on the book with your Clubber.
- Check the schedule and calendar for what section to work on for the next week.
- Read each week’s verse to your Clubber and follow the instructions.
- Listen to your Clubber recite the verse and sign your name. Be encouraging!
- Only one section will be done per week. The Cubbies will all recite the same verse each week.
- Find a special place at home to keep your Clubber’s book and uniform, so it can always be found on Club Nights.
- Be sure your Clubber wears their uniform vest to club. The uniform is where their awards are displayed. This motivates them to learn and work on their books.
- Bring your Clubber to the club on time, so we can begin and end promptly. Be sure to come to the Cubbies Room to pick up your Clubber after club.

### **Sparks - Kindergarten through Second Grade**

Sparks Club is for children in Kindergarten-Second Grade. The Sparks program contains memory verses of gradually increasing difficulty, teaching children more about Jesus, God, and His Word. Sparks’ Handbooks provide a complete overview of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation and coincide with the grade each Clubber is in:

- Kindergarten-Hang Glider Book: Genesis-Joshua
- 1st Grade- Wing Runner-: Judges-birth of Christ
- 2nd Grade- Sky Stormer: birth of Christ-Revelation

All Clubbers in the Sparks program will begin by completing the Flight 3:16 booklet, only then they will be able to work on their handbooks. Clubbers can complete more than 1 section per week. AWANA Sparks rotation includes Games, Council Time, and Handbook time.



### Kindergarten Progression (Hang Glider)

Flight 3:16 → Handbook → Review (either in the handbook or by purchasing the Hang Glider Frequent Flyer Cards) → Frequent Flyer Cards. A Kindergarten Clubber must stay in the Hang Glider series for the club year. They may not progress into the WinRunner Series.

### First Grade Progression (Wing Runner)

Flight 3:16 → Handbook → Review (either in the handbook or by purchasing the WinRunner Frequent Flyer Cards) → Frequent Flyer Cards. A new 1st grade Sparkie must complete the Flight 3:16 Entrance Brochure, then start on the Hang Glider Handbook. They do not need to complete the review or Frequent Flyer cards of the Hang Glider Series. After having completed the Hang Glider handbook, they may proceed to the Wing Runner series. A First grader may not move into the Sky Stormer Series.

### Second Grade Progression (Sky Stormer)

Flight 3:16 → Handbook → Review (either in the handbook or by purchasing the Sky Stormer Frequent Flyer Cards) → Frequent Flyer Cards. A new 2nd grade Sparkie must complete the Flight 3:16 Entrance Brochure, Hang Glider Book and Wing Runner Book before moving on to the Sky Stormer series. Any second grader who is “catching up” may complete any/all of the three handbooks one time through. If they complete all three, they are eligible to earn the Sparky Plaque to be presented at the award ceremony.

As Sparkies work on their handbooks, they receive awards to be displayed on their uniform. Awards are described in the handbooks, and they include patches, Sparks Pilot Wings, jewels, review patches and extra credit pins. We ask that you pace your Clubber to stay within the curriculum. Depending upon the amount of time left in the year will determine what supplemental memory work should be encouraged. Check with your Clubber’s leader for additional information.

### Truth & Training – 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

The name Truth & Training reflects the passion of AWANA to teach 3rd through 6th grade Clubbers the truth of God’s Word and to train them to follow Christ in their daily lives. This ministry helps Clubbers build a firm foundation for their faith, hide God’s Word in their heart and apply the truths of Scripture in their life. This ministry will help Clubbers see the world through God’s eyes.

Clubbers must complete the Start Zone before moving on to the handbook of that year. Different from Sparks, T&Ts move together through the year in the same book. There are four books: Agents of Grace, Evidence of Grace, Grace in Action and Discovery of Grace. **The book for the 2026-2027 school year is *Agents of Grace*.**

### Leaders in Training (LiTs) – the after years

LiT is our Trek and Journey clubs with a twist. It includes rock solid Biblical teaching, scripture memorization and relevant, contemporary application, PLUS an opportunity to serve. Trek (7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade) and Journey (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade) Clubbers have council time together. Then Trek Clubbers serve in our other clubs while Journey Clubbers have handbook time. Then they swap – Trek has handbook time while Journey serves. It is biblical study and practice at its finest.

### Club Awards

All Clubbers who progress in their handbooks will receive awards to be displayed on their uniforms. When a Clubber completes a handbook, they are eligible to receive an award at the Awards Ceremony at the end of the club year. All Clubbers present at the ceremony will be recognized and will receive a certificate. Cubbies will receive their award on the last club night of AWANA. All Clubbers must complete all sections in their handbooks by the last night of AWANA to receive an award at the Closing Ceremony. Please notify us at the Welcome Desk if your Clubber has participated in an AWANA club elsewhere and has received Awards.

Please help to pace your Clubber(s) during the club year to avoid massive memorization in April. The goal is to encourage our Clubbers to learn God's Word and to get it as deep in them as possible! It is not about checking a box or receiving an award. Encourage your Clubber(s) to develop good habits of spending time in God's Word! It will come back to bless them in the years to come!