

Bethel Gospel Chapel Awana Family Guide

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Mission Statement:

To reach young people and their families with the gospel of Christ and to train them to serve the Lord with their whole heart.

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Welcome Message

Dear Parent or Legal Guardian:

Bethel Gospel Chapel counts it a privilege to minister to your children and to your family. We want to first thank you for allowing your children to come to Awana. We trust your children will have a great time and that after their first visit they will not be able to wait for the next Awana Club meeting! This booklet provides important information about the Awana ministry here at Bethel Gospel Chapel.

The Bible, in Proverbs 22:6, instructs us to “*Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*”

Realizing that today’s young people are regularly confronted with significant, challenging issues, Awana’s Bible-based curriculum can assist you in establishing a firm foundation for children’s daily lives. Our leaders recognize that each young person is special to God, and also to us!

Christina Forsyth

Awana Ministry Director
Bethel Gospel Chapel

Ken Ferron

Pastoral Elder, Awana Liaison
Bethel Gospel Chapel

What is Awana?!

Awana stands for **A**pproved **W**orkers **A**re **N**ot **A**shamed (2 Timothy 2:15)

Awana is an international organization that offers resources to help the overall ministry of the local church with community outreach, discipleship, and leader development. It encourages children and young adults to grow in their relationship with Christ through Bible story learning, and with a particular emphasis on Scripture memorization.

The club appeals to children of all ages because of its exciting games/activities, award system, and special events. Awana now engages the lives of approximately 6.5 million children weekly around the globe, with tremendous growth in Africa and South-east Asia in recent years.

Children's lives are forever transformed. Volunteers grow as leaders. Families become stronger and churches build community through active involvement in Awana. Our world needs the hope that only Christ can offer. God is using Awana to raise up children, parents/guardians, and leaders who are devoted to knowing Scripture, loving the Lord Jesus Christ, and reaching others with His gospel of salvation and eternal life.

Awana not only has a "heart" for supporting the local church and ministering to children and adults but is foundationally interested in promoting the strength of each family unit. Families are encouraged to be involved in Awana programs through helping children to do their handbook work and to memorize their verses each week. They are also invited to take part in special events such as Awana Grand Prix and the Closing Program. Awana children's ministry provides the local church with a special means of reaching out to community families and sharing the love of Christ with all.

Awana Leadership

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Awana Clubs Offered at Bethel Gospel Chapel

Cubbies: This club is designed for 3 and 4-year-olds, for the two years before attending Senior Kindergarten in Ontario. Children must be 3 by December 31st of the current club year and must also be toilet trained.

Sparks: This club is for children in Senior Kindergarten through Grade 2.

Truth & Training (T&T): This club is for children in Grades 3 to 6. The Large Group time is experienced together while small group (Handbook time) is divided by grade.

Trek: This club is for children in Grades 7 to 9. Some Grade 9 clubbers choose to become Leaders within the Awana program once they have finished Year 2 of Trek.

Calendar & Important Dates

Awana Club meets each **Tuesday night September through April**. All regular club dates as well as Special Dates to take note of will show up on the Awana **2Tim2** (<https://bethelnorthbay.twotimtwo.com/>) website. Since dates are subject to change, please watch for any posted updates.

Missionary Focus:

November is our traditional Missionary Focus month. The Awana GO (Global Outreach) initiative is hosted by Awana International. As a local club we participate, raising funds for a particular country and cause associated with Awana International activities. This focus helps clubbers to be mindful of other clubs across Canada and globally, and the importance of the principle of giving to others in need. Information regarding each year's Missionary Focus, and any related instructions, will be communicated to each family during the Fall term.

Theme Nights:

Several times a year we will have a fun theme night at club. These will be clearly posted on the calendar and communicated via various channels in advance.

Grand Prix:

The annual car race is held on a Saturday in January. For those clubbers wishing to participate, car kits can be purchased beginning at the end of November on Tuesday nights.

Awards Ceremony:

The end of year ceremony will be held on the second last Tuesday of April. Parents and guardians are welcome to attend as we celebrate the accomplishments of all of our clubbers.

Awana Club Structure

The Cubbies program runs completely within the upstairs Cubbies room. During the evening, the Cubbies will go through a routine of handbook time, crafts, songs, puppet show and bible lesson, then snack and games.

With our three older-age clubs (Sparks, T&T, Trek), every club night consists of the following three main activity rotation times:

Large Group Time

This is a whole-club time of singing and Bible teaching. All four clubs use Awana lessons/materials in preparing for this time. T&T and Trek curricula are set up to have clubbers progress through one handbook section per week, the Large Group Time devotional corresponds to the Small Group handbook content to reinforce the new learning. Sparks curriculum for the large group follows the Awana Sparks Large group book.

Small Group (Handbook) Time

This is a small group teaching time with a leader(s) and children of similar age/grade level. The leader(s) prays with the group and children complete their book sections and review weekly memory work. Children then recite memorized verses from their handbook to a leader or designated listener.

Sparks Note: Unlike the other three groups, Sparks work at their own pace to complete their handbooks. Completing two sections per evening has them easily completing their regular book. If they chose to do the book review and/or extra credit book they will need to increase the number of sections per evening. They are limited to reciting only two at a time with the listeners to ensure all clubbers have equal opportunity to say verses. They can return to the listener to complete additional sections only after they have returned to their handbook group to allow others a turn with listeners. The *Club Attendance Award* for Sparks is earned each quarter if the Clubber attends all, or nearly all (one absence is allowed), scheduled club nights. Excused absences include sickness, being out of town with family, mandatory school functions, or other reasons deemed by the Director to be an acceptable reason for club absence.

T&T Note: T&T clubbers complete one main handbook section each week. If they finish this main section, which includes the written Explore part and the recitation of the verses (review and new), they are then encouraged to

work on extra Silver sections (more written work) or Gold sections (memory work). Gold sections include four extra verses; these can be recited all at once with the listener, or, alternatively, one or two at a time to listeners.

Listeners are only allowed to give **two helps per section**, which includes help with the Bible reference. The listener then signs the handbook section that was completed within a single sitting/attempt. Sections are to be signed in chronological order whenever possible. Exceptions can be made with the club Director's permission. Clubbers may be asked to explain a verse in their own words after reciting it. This helps promote not only memorization, but retention and understanding as well. Parents/Guardians may check the handbook progress of their child at any point through the year by visiting the 2Tim2 website: <https://bethelnorthbay.twotimtwo.com/>

Group Activity & Game Time

All team games or activities take place in the multi-purpose room (i.e., the gym), therefore we ask children to wear pants or shorts, and running shoes. **If clubbers do not bring suitable shoes they may be asked to sit out of games.** Wet/outdoor footwear is not allowed in the gym, and it would be unsafe to have your child running in sandals or socks.

Points and Team Competition

For T&T and Sparks:

Teams will be assigned the first night of club and may be changed periodically to ensure balance (i.e., in terms of numbers or grades). Visitors may ask to be placed on the same team as the clubber who brought them. However, if that same visitor returns to club regularly, they may be placed on another team depending on total team balance. For some clubs, new teams are formed regularly throughout the club year.

Points will generally be awarded for the following items, but this may vary from club to club:

- Wearing the uniform
- Bringing their handbook
- Bringing a visitor to club
- Bringing a bible to club
- Attendance at club
- Handbook sections completed during small group
- Game time team points

Bonus points may be given at the discretion of the club leadership.

Completing Handbook Sections

The clubber must complete an entire section (all section answers, related word definitions, and memorized verses) during one sitting with the listener/leader. They cannot look at their handbook during the recitation of the verses from the book section.

Clubbers must recite sections with no more than two “helps.” Each help may include three words or less, or any other hint for the child. Clubbers must recite the full Bible reference (chapter and verse). If a leader supplies the verse Bible reference, this counts as one help.

Clubbers must answer any additional questions and complete any additional activities within the section.

Clubbers must pass sections in order, unless otherwise noted in the handbook or with permission of the club Director. All questions and any related word definitions must be in their own words.

Awana Fee Policy

An annual registration fee due prior to the first night of club. This fee is used to offset a portion of the full cost of the Awana program.

Payment of the fee also shows children that their parents/guardians understand the importance of the Awana program as a part of their child's overall Christian education.

Registration Fee per clubber	\$35.00
Uniform (unique for each club)	\$20.00
Handbook	\$15.00
Cubbies/Sparks Book Bags (Optional)	\$10.00

Note: Please note that Awana materials (i.e., handbooks, shirts, bags) will not be distributed to clubbers until registration is completed and payment of all relevant fees is received. If you have any questions about this process, please contact the Awana Ministry Director.

Registration and ***Plan-to-Protect*** Policy

At Bethel Gospel Chapel, we take our responsibility seriously in providing a safe environment and preventing the abuse of children entrusted to our care. Bethel Gospel Chapel has a protection plan for children, youth, and adults which establishes the criteria for ministry personnel recruitment and screening, as well as child and youth protection procedures.

As part of the online registration process, an information and consent form will be completed online by a parent or legal guardian for each child joining the AWANA Club. This form includes crucial contact information, allows families to share any relevant medical/allergy information, and is mandatory for all off-site trips that may occasionally be planned. It also includes the statement "I give permission to Bethel Gospel Chapel to use any image or likeness of my child for promotional purposes." Please note that in our Awana ministry, photos/videos of children are taken only by our directors and/or administrators and are only used for internal promotional announcements and for our weekly Prayer Partner emails. No photo/videos of children will be shared online via social media platforms. Registration for Awana is done online at <https://bethelnorthbay.twotimtwo.com/>

To learn more about our ***Plan to Protect*** policy, please contact the Awana Ministry Director or Mr. Irving Sloss (sloss.irving@gmail.com) who oversees the *Plan to Protect* program relating to several BGC ministries.

Awana Parking Policy

To increase children's safety, especially during the winter season, we block off the full lower parking lot prevent children from having to cross the main drive. All vehicles must drive fully up the hill (without stopping at the main entrance), and park in an available parking spot. Parking spots reserved for those with an accessible parking permit must be respected – please only use those spots if you have a permit.

Volunteers without young children are asked to park in the upper parking lot to allow extra space for parents. Please consider backing into your parking spot in order to allow for improved sightlines when leaving the parking lot.

Awana Cancellation Policy

In the event of severe weather and/or road condition concerns, the Awana Ministry Director will gather information throughout the day and then make a formal decision at 4:00pm about the evening club. If a cancellation is decided on, you will receive an email from your child's club Director thereafter. Information will also be posted on the registration website and online using other channels. Unless otherwise notified, club will run as scheduled.

Please note that cancellation of some/all school buses in our area does not necessarily mean that our club will be cancelled.

Awana Drop-Off and Pick-Up Policy

All clubs begin promptly at 6:00 pm each Tuesday.

Drop-Off: Children can be dropped off at Club as of 5:45pm, but no earlier. Upon arriving to your club starting location, please ensure that leaders are present and ready to receive your child. All clubs begin promptly at 6:00 pm each Tuesday. Please assist your younger children in hanging up their outdoor coats in the designated spots and changing outdoor footwear if required.

Cubbies: Check in for children is upstairs in room 209.

Sparks: Check in for children is in the front foyer.

T&T: Check in for children is in the front foyer.

Trek: Check in for children is upstairs in the Trek room.

Pick-Up: Children must be collected promptly at 7:45pm. Cubbies and Sparks must be signed out in-person by an approved parent/guardian.

Cubbies: Sign-out is in front foyer.

Sparks: Sign out is in fellowship hall.

T&T and Trek clubbers will be dismissed from their club rooms and will meet parents in the front foyer or parking lot, they do not need to be signed out by a parent.

Awana Code of Conduct

Clubbers are expected to:

1. Show respect for God's House, God's Name, and God's Word.
2. Show respect for God-given authority. All participants should interact with a positive and Christlike attitude towards other Awana clubbers and our volunteer leaders.
3. Show respect for church property and the property of others.
4. Arrive in uniform with their handbook and indoor shoes.
5. Participate fully in all planned activities: Large Group Time, Small Group Time, and the Group Activity Time.
6. Walk (not run) at all times when not in Group Activity Time.

It is important that Awana is a safe environment where respectful behaviour and children are able to know, love and serve Christ. Every effort will be made by our volunteer leaders to manage groups and encourage acceptable behaviour in line with the above expectations. Behaviour that is not aligned with these expectations is first addressed by our leaders and club directors. If, after several attempts to remind the clubber of expectations and redirect them, the inappropriate behaviour persists, it will be brought to the attention of the Awana Ministry Director. The following steps will be followed:

1ST NOTICE

After receiving reminders about appropriate behaviour, if the child continues to behave inappropriately, a formal warning will be given. The clubber is quietly taken aside by the Club Director and Awana Ministry Director, the situation is explained, and the incident is formally recorded in a discipline logbook.

2ND NOTICE

If the clubber continues to create disturbances, they are given a second warning. The Awana Ministry Director explains the situation, records the incident in the log, and the parent/guardian receives a phone call home with relevant information.

3RD NOTICE

If misbehavior continues, the child is removed from their activity. The parent/guardian is called to pick them up immediately. The child may return in **two weeks' time**, provided

they are prepared to follow club rules. A discussion with the Awana Ministry Director will happen prior to their return.

Awana Book Awards

CUBBIES: On completion of the clubber's handbook, Cubbies receive a Handbook Award. Clubbers may also receive special recognition for completing special day sections and/or other extra credit work.

SPARKS BOOK AWARDS: In the Sparks club, a clubber can earn a First Book Medallion, a Second Book Medallion, and a Third Book Sparky Sculpture Trophy. There are also additional Frequent Flyer books that earn clubbers a Frequent Flyer pin upon completion.

TRUTH AND TRAINING (T&T) & TREK BOOK AWARDS: In the T&T and Trek clubs, there are seven possible awards for book completion.

1st Book Medallion (Alpha Award) is awarded for completion of one handbook (from Grade 3 through Grade 9).

2nd Book Medallion (Excellence Award) is awarded for completion of two handbooks (from Grade 3 through Grade 9).

3rd Book Medallion (Challenge Award) is awarded for completion of three handbooks (from Grade 3 through Grade 9).

4th Book Trophy (Timothy Award) is awarded for completion of four handbooks (from Grade 3 through Grade 9).

5th Book Medallion (Milestone Award) is awarded for completion of five handbooks (from Grade 3 through Grade 9).

6th Book Trophy (Meritorious Award) is awarded for completion of six handbooks (from Grade 3 through Grade 9).

7th Book Medallion (and special prize) is awarded for completion of seven handbooks (from Grade 3 through Grade 12).

Note: If a clubber is in Grade 6 or higher and has earned their Excellence Award, they can attend **Awana Scholarship Camp**. Ask your Awana Ministry Director for more details regarding this opportunity.

Note: The **Awana Journey Program** for Grade 9-12 students is offered at Bethel as a self-directed program. Ask your Awana Ministry Director for details.

Regular Communication with Families

Our 2Tim2 website (<https://bethelnorthbay.twotimtwo.com/>) features a monthly calendar of events, often with specific information about particular clubs. We will also post any weather cancellation notices on the main page by 4:00pm of any given club night. Regular communication with families, organized by the club Directors, will take place in each club via email. A private group facebook page is also hosted by Bethel Gospel Chapel as a place for announcements and information to be shared by the Awana program leadership. Occasionally, a printed handout message may also be sent home with children regarding news about special events.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: What do we do during inclement weather?

Cancellation Protocol: See above for the cancellation policy.

Q: What is the Grand Prix and who can participate?

The Awana Grand Prix is a model car race. Clubbers may purchase small kits that include a pine wood block (either a full block or a partially pre-carved block) and plastic wheels to construct their cars, usually with the help of a parent/guardian. During the Grand Prix, car entries are grouped into two combined club categories (Cubbies/Sparks and T&T/Trek) and compete separately for both speed and overall car design prizes. Cars cannot be reused from one year to another. All clubbers must purchase a new car for the current year.

Q: How can a parent/guardian be involved?

The success of your clubber's Awana year depends greatly on the involvement of you, the parent/guardian. Here are some ideas to get you thinking about ways to help your child have a super year:

- **Help your child complete their book sections each week**
- Check the **online 2Tim2 calendar** regularly for club updates and events. Read any **notices received** from club Directors **via email**—they are important and may require preparation (e.g., theme dress-up nights, special events, weather cancellations)!
- **Volunteer to be an Awana listener or leader.** We could use help listening to all the sections the clubbers have come prepared to recite. Help us in nurturing God's love in these young hearts.
- Attend **special events** in which your child is involved.
- **Encourage your child in their efforts.** Help them to understand the importance of memorizing scripture, and in becoming involved in various club and church activities as one way of serving God.