How To Have A Christ-Centered Youth Ministry In A Small Church Using Mentoring, Missions And Meetings

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ABSTRACT

HOW TO HAVE A CHRIST-CENTERED YOUTH MINISTRY IN A SMALL CHURCH USING MENTORING, MISSIONS, AND MEETINGS

by

Kris R. Eckenroth

Adviser: A. Barry Gane
Problem

As of 2005, there was only one Seventh-day Adventist church within the Pennsylvania Conference that was providing consistent youth ministry. Many of the churches have seemed to have had difficulty finding individuals who have both the experience and the necessary training to lead a local church youth program. Due to the absence of local church youth ministry, the needs of the youth are being unmet and many are leaving the church.

Method

The method used to address this problem began in 2005. Training sessions were provided to potential leaders within the churches in the Pennsylvania Conference. There
were five major training session weekends in which the foundational youth ministry elements of mentoring, missions, and meetings were used to help the local leaders develop a youth ministry at their church. In addition to these training sessions, the local leaders were given the opportunity to be mentored by the youth director for a period of one year. This project will evaluate the effectiveness of this local church youth leader development program. Eight youth leadership teams that were established as a result of this program filled out a twelve-question questionnaire that was used to retrieve date and measure results.

Results

The results showed the positive effect that this youth leader development program had on individuals from local churches who had a desire to have youth ministry in their church. Attendance from the training sessions showed that ten out of twelve churches that sent individuals to these trainings now have sustained local church youth ministries. Data received from the questionnaires revealed that many of the youth ministries are utilizing the areas of mentoring, missions, and meetings as foundational elements of their programs. The questionnaires also revealed that many of the youth ministries have not yet implemented all three foundations into their youth ministries.

Conclusions

This youth leader development paradigm is an effective program in developing youth leaders for the local small church who are capable in developing and sustaining a youth ministry program. The success of this program lies in more than just implementing programming based in mentoring, missions, and meetings. The training sessions and
mentoring by the youth director empowered the adults to initiate a youth ministry program based in relationships.
HOW TO HAVE A CHRIST-CENTERED YOUTH MINISTRY
IN A SMALL CHURCH USING MENTORING,
MISSIONS, AND MEETINGS

A Project Document
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by
Kris R. Eckenroth
October 2009
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Seventh-day Adventist local church youth ministry in the Pennsylvania Conference has historically focused on Pathfinders and Adventurers. There has been little emphasis placed upon providing ministries that cater to youth who are of the post Pathfinder age group. Statistics show that the number of youth who are leaving our churches post-Pathfinders are staggering. Roger Dudley, Director of the Institute of Church Ministry at Andrews University, has concluded that, “it seems conservative indeed to say that the church is suffering a loss of between 40 percent and 50 percent of its young adults.”¹ According to the 2007 Pennsylvania census, there were 2,738,621 young people under the age of 18 in Pennsylvania. It is clear that the State of Pennsylvania does not have a lack of young people within its borders. However, where we are falling short is in the area of reaching and retaining youth and young adults through youth ministry in our churches.

Purpose of the Project

This project will focus on small church youth ministry in the Pennsylvania Conference. As of 2005 there was very little youth ministry being done at the local level.

¹Roger Dudley, Why Our Teenagers Leave the Church (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 35.
With this in mind, the question arises, “If training were provided to individuals in these churches, would they then be able to have a sustainable youth ministry?” The purpose of this project is to provide training sessions in three specific areas and then identify whether or not these training sessions provided enough of a foundation for a successful local church youth ministry program. The question more clearly stated is this, “Can a small local church sustain a youth ministry program by implementing basic methods in the areas of mentoring, missions, and meetings?” When this study is concluded, information should be relatively clear and may contribute to helping the conference youth director know whether or not training sessions in these areas was enough of a foundation for sustainable youth ministry within the small local church.

**Statement of the Task**

The task of this project is to develop and evaluate a foundational guide that uses the vehicles of mentoring, missions, and meetings, as a way to enable youth leaders in the Pennsylvania Conference at the local church level to start and maintain a Christ-centered youth program.

**Justification for the Project**

As recently as 2005, there was only one local church youth ministry within the Pennsylvania Conference that was meeting on a consistent basis. With ninety-six churches in the Pennsylvania Conference, we can see that only slightly over one percent was involved in consistent youth ministry to the post-Pathfinder age group.

Youth ministry, even in its simplest form, has significant effects upon the post-Pathfinder age group. A study by Barry Gane found that youth who are exposed to
consistent youth ministry “had a lower likelihood of involvement in at-risk behavior,”^{2} experienced greater “satisfaction with their church and also of intention to be involved in it in the future,”^{3} and “were much more positive in their perceptions of the church.”^{4}

Both church attendance records and state census records have shown that there is not a lack of young people in Pennsylvania but a lack of leadership. Until leadership is developed at the local level, youth ministry within the Pennsylvania Conference will never reach its full potential of having its life-changing impact upon the youth.

**Definition of Terms**

The following terms are defined as they are used in this project. Other authors, studies or contexts may reveal different definitions.

- **Youth Ministry:** Encompasses ministry that is specifically offered to, for, or by young people in their local church setting and at the conference level.

- **Youth:** Will specifically refer to the individual and/or group of young people who are of the ages between thirteen and nineteen years of age.

- **Youth Group:** Refers to the local church youth ministry of which the youth are a part.

- **Youth Leaders/Workers/Ministers:** Denotes the individual or group of individuals who work within the context of the local church to provide youth ministry for the youth.

^{2} A. Barry Gane, “Youth Ministry and Beliefs and Values Among 10 and 19 Year-Old Students in the Seventh-day Adventist School System in North America” (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, 2005), 152.

^{3} Ibid., 154.

^{4} Ibid., 155.
**Small Church:** Will be defined as having a weekly attendance below two hundred.

**Sustainable Youth Ministry:** Will be defined as a youth ministry program that has been able to continue to provide youth ministry two to three times a month over a period of at least one year.

**Delimitations**

There is significantly more to youth ministry than the three foundations laid out in this paper. This paper, therefore, has three key limitations. First, only three foundations of youth ministry will be identified and clearly defined. There are innumerable programs and techniques; however we will only present three as a foundation for local small church youth ministry: mentoring, missions, and meetings.

Second, only the basic definitions in the context of relationships, essential for understanding the three foundations will be covered. As we look at mentoring, missions, and meetings, we will be covering the basic definitions and implementation techniques that can be utilized by a small church youth ministry team.

Finally, this paper will be looking to identify whether or not training in these three areas can be enough of a foundation for a leadership team within the local small church to launch a sustainable youth ministry program where youth are ministered to and hopefully retained.

**Methodology**

The methodology of this project took place by having done the following: present three major foundations of a Christ centered youth ministry through five major weekend
training sessions from 2005-2008, offer a one year mentoring relationship between the youth director and the local church, take and study a sampling taken by the youth director of youth leadership teams within the Pennsylvania Conference who have been trained in these three areas, and then report what is found as a result of the leadership teams who have been trained in the three foundations. This was accomplished by (1) providing training for the youth leadership teams in the areas of mentoring, missions, and meetings over a four year period; (2) documenting what each youth leadership team found as a result of following through on the information presented; and (3) reporting the results of the information reported by the youth leadership teams from a questionnaire that focused upon their youth ministries.

**Expectations of the Document**

The expectations of this project are twofold. Both expectations for this project deal with the effectiveness and ineffectiveness of the implemented paradigm. The researcher will take the information provided by the youth leadership teams, and use that information to conclude what within the paradigm proved to be effective and ineffective. The successful strategies will be placed within a manual to continue to empower youth leaders at the local level here in the Pennsylvania Conference. The strategies that proved unsuccessful will be adjusted based upon feedback given by the youth leadership teams.
CHAPTER 2

A THEOLOGY OF YOUTH MINISTRY IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

Being a Bridge

Discovering Jesus in a world of sin can be challenging at any age. During the time in their lives when young people are experiencing adolescence, they face countless decisions and challenges. Facing difficult decisions and these unprecedented challenges can be overwhelming for a young person who is going down a road they have never traversed. It is helpful when journeying into unfamiliar territory to have someone by your side who has the experience and knowledge from their own journey on this same road. As youth workers, we have the opportunity to assist youth in their journey from where they are now to a place near Jesus. Each young person will encounter a plentitude of questions and difficult decisions. This is precisely the reason why God calls adults to walk beside, support, and even carry young people as they journey towards maturity. The following parable will seek to illustrate the support youth need in a difficult world of sin.

Once upon a time in a far away country there was a swiftly flowing river, known as the great divide. This divide separated two very different countries. The people who lived in the south country had never crossed to the other side because no one in their entire country could swim. One day a young man, known by the name Friend, whom nobody had ever seen before, arrived in their small village. Everyone quickly crowded
close to the young man to hear where he had come from and how he had gotten to their side of the river. Friend introduced himself and shared that he was from the country of the north. Immediately everyone asked how he had crossed the great divide. He replied with the simple answer, “I swam.” Everyone in the village gasped! They had never met anyone who could swim. “How did you learn to swim,” asked the people of the south. “I was taught by the King. He gave me the ability.” Friend then described in detail how wonderful the other side of the river was. He shared how wonderful the other side was simply due to the presence of the great King. “You see,” said Friend, “the King has taught me many things. He is a merciful and a loving King. Oh, you have to come and meet him for yourselves.” The people of the south wanted to meet this great king they had heard about, but they knew it was impossible. No person from the south had ever crossed the great divide, they couldn’t swim. Then Friend asked, “Who would like to come to the other side of the river and meet my King?” The village chief stood up and told the young man that they all would like to go but could not. No one had ever crossed the river. Then Friend had an idea. “What if,” he said, “each of you, one at a time, climbs on my back as I swim you to the other side?” The villagers were silent. Friend invited the entire village to follow him to the river’s edge. “Who will go first?” Again there was silence. Then Friend noticed a young man quite a few years younger than himself. He walked over to this young man in the crowd and said, “Would you like to join me?” The young man in the crowd thought about it for a second and then consented. As the two men entered the water the young man from the village climbed on the back of the stranger from the other side. Friend began to swim as he was unable to touch the river’s bottom. The current was strong and swift, but within minutes the two had reached
the other side. Tired and out of breath, the young man asked how Friend was able to make it across the great divide. For the current seemed too strong and fast even for him. Friend simply replied, “It was the King who gave me the ability and strength. For through Him, I can do things which are normally impossible for me.” To both their surprise there, standing in the water’s edge, was the great King Friend had described. And it was the King who helped the young man from the south climb off his new friend’s back and exit the water. Friend made many trips across that river inviting and taking all who were willing to join him in the journey.

Young people today face a world of sin where it is not only unpopular, but looked down upon to be obedient to the word of God. The world offers glitz and glamour while shouting for the attention of young people. Still in the midst of it all, the still small voice of Jesus calls them to walk in a relationship with Him. How can young people make positive decisions, avoid pitfalls, and ultimately meet Jesus? God designed that young people would meet Him through adults, specifically parents. The homes of today rarely reflect the intention of God’s design. Therefore He calls adults outside of the immediate family to fill the void of often-absent parents. These adults are to offer their strength gained by life experience and a relationship with Jesus. As a relationship between the adult and young person is developed they can become a guiding map, a source of strength, and a bridge over troubled waters that lead the young person to Jesus.

The Lord Jesus gives us the perfect example of carrying others. It was His perfect life and shed blood that carried those who were unable to pass over the great divide. When sinful human beings believe in the power of the cross and the resurrection, they have put their faith in the power of Jesus to help their otherwise helpless souls. In effect,
Jesus bridges the gap from us to the Holy Father which was made by sin. Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God (Rom 5:1-2).¹

This was a journey no sinner could ever make. It was impossible for a sinful human being to meet the requirements of the Law. Only Jesus could live the perfect life required, and only Jesus could offer on Calvary the spotless life demanded. It was while on that cross that His shoulders bore the weight for you and me. It was not the weight of our physical bodies, but of our sins. This is a weight only He could carry. He paid our penalty meeting the requirements of God’s Law. Making God both just and the justifier of the human race. As Paul puts it in Eph 2:18: “For through Him [Jesus] we both [all] have access by one Spirit to the Father.” Jesus is our only reconnection. Ellen G. White says:

In the apostasy, man alienated himself from God; earth was cut off from heaven. Across the gulf that lay between, there could be no communion. But through Christ, earth is again linked with heaven. With His own merits, Christ has bridged the gulf which sin had made, so that the ministering angels can hold communion with man. Christ connects fallen man in his weakness and helplessness with the Source of infinite power.²

In the parable about Friend, we discover that he did four specific things. First, he went to a group of people who had never personally met the King. Friend left the comfort and familiarity of the north and ventured to a group of people who needed what the King offered. This parable speaks to the need for adults to enter into the world and

¹Unless otherwise indicated all Bible references in this paper are from the New King James Bible (NKJV).

²Ellen G. White, Steps to Christ (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1977), 10.
place where young people live in order to reach them for the King. Whether we are
talking about youth inside or outside of the church, the need for a personal meeting with
Jesus is the same. In fact, Jesus commands us to do exactly what Friend did. In Matt
28:19 Jesus tells His followers to “Go.” Adults who have met Jesus for themselves are
here commissioned to go to those who have never met and desperately need the King.

Second, Friend talked to the people that lived in the south. It is clear from the
parable that Friend had not met these people before. He had no previous experience with
them to draw on to initiate conversation. As uncomfortable as it was, Friend broke the
silence which began conversation. In Matt 28:19 Jesus goes on to say, “make disciples of
all.” Jesus commands those who have experienced His grace to go and live it out among
others, that they too might be a follower of the King. Adults who have found unequaled
strength in Christ during the difficult times of life are to share these experiences with the
youth of today. The followers of Jesus cannot accomplish this unless they go and boldly
interact with those they are called to reach. Friend had experienced the strength and
support of the King. He now intended to offer what he had received from the King to
others so that they might meet him for themselves.

Third, Friend invited the people of the south to journey with him. Inviting
someone into your personal space can be intimidating and a lot of work. Friend knew
that if he was going to help anyone cross the river, he would have to physically help
them. Youth ministry that attempts to work on the periphery of youth will never be the
bridge they need. In order for the young man to get to the other side, Friend had to get
wet. He also had to allow the young man to climb on his back. Carrying people is hard
work. It can be tiring, time consuming, and awkward, but absolutely necessary for youth to venture through the rapids of life.

Fourth, Friend taught the young man about the King. In Matt 28:20 Jesus says that we are to “teach them.” Upon reaching the other side of the river, the young man asked Friend how he was able to make it across. Friend told the young man that it was only through the strength and ability given by the King. As adults who love Jesus obey His command and enter into the world of young people, Jesus will use them to become the needed bridge to Him. As a relationship develops between the adult and youth on the journey, the youth will inevitably begin to ask questions. These questions will be moments when the adult can teach the youth about Jesus.

Youth ministry is a ministry of intentional bridging. It is commonplace for each of us to alert those we come into contact with about the new supermarket, a great website, or an engaging and thought-provoking book. By telling others about these different things we in effect bridge them or connect them to what they had not known before. It is what we liked about the new grocery store, how helpful the website was, or how difficult it was to put that new book down, that we express to others. Our personally-relayed experience is an attempt, purposeful or not, to bridge others to what we experienced. This is the very thing we are called to do in the lives of youth. There are countless young people, who have never, “been to the other side,” met Jesus. It is our calling, which will become our greatest joy, to invite young people to be close to us as we move with them to a place they have never been, with the King.

The Example of Jesus

God has called adults to be His physical presence in the lives of young people. It
is by His grace He has allowed youth ministers to be used in His process of bridging the gap between the sinner and the Savior, more specifically, youth and Jesus. Symbolically speaking, He allows us to be the bridge in the life of a young person. The story of Friend and the young man was simply a parable. In Matt 4, a real life example of how Jesus interacted with young people can be seen. His example is similar to the parable and is found in verses 18-20: “And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He left their nets and followed Him.”

In the beginning of this story Jesus is found taking a walk by the Sea of Galilee. He comes upon two young men who “are apprentices, learning the family business. . . .” In any case, they fall into the category of senior youth or young adults. I do not believe that Jesus just happened to be passing by the sea. But even if He did, He made every happenstance into an intentional moment for ministry. In the picture of this account we find Jesus ‘hanging out’ with intention. He places Himself in the very location where the young people He desires to reach are. He does not go to the Temple and hope they come to Him. In order to reach these specific youth, He goes to where they are. The youth minister that desires to reach youth must obey the command of Jesus to “Go” and follow His example of being where the youth are. Jesus lives by example and goes to where the young people are whom He intends to reach.

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4 Ibid., 132.
In Matt 4:19, Jesus talks to Simon and Andrew. This point is easily passed over. It does not seem like that big of a deal. However, we can see that if He had not talked with them, He would have never reached them. Talking to youth with whom we are unacquainted can be difficult, even awkward, but is absolutely necessary. Within these initial first conversations, it is necessity to learn the individual youth’s names. This first step is often overlooked and thought of as unimportant. The learning of youth’s names is the first major step in bridging them to Christ.

I had just moved into a new area where I had been appointed to be a state wide youth director. On a Tuesday night I was visiting with a youth group. I knew several of the youth from recent visits to this particular church. After being at the church for several minutes I ran into a twelve year old girl by the name of Jennifer. I knew her name because during a prior visit to this church she was baptized. So when I saw her I immediately said, “Hi, Jennifer.” She was shocked. She stopped dead in her tracks and said, “How do you know my name.” I replied by telling her that I had witnessed her baptism several weeks before. Then she said something to me I’ll never forget. “You’re creepy.” These two words have to rate high on the list of things youth leaders do not aim to hear from their youth. With that said, she ran off. Two weeks later I was again at this same church working with the youth and leaders. Jennifer was there. I was awkwardly anxious to see how she would react to me, “the creepy youth pastor”. As I was walking from the fellowship hall of the church to the main hallway, I was suddenly almost tackled as I was embraced from behind by Jennifer. After several seconds she let go and with a huge smile exclaimed, “Hi, Pastor Kris!” Then she began to tell me detail after detail of everything that had happened in her life for the past two weeks. How did this happen? I
talked to her and called her by name. It is amazing how something so simple can make such an impacting difference.

Jesus did not talk to Simon and Andrew in a shallow way. His words were direct and specific to what He was trying to accomplish. Of course this does not limit the youth leader to conversations with youth that are deep and meaningful. But it does remind people that their conversations are meaningful and should at the very least edify the youth in some way. Many adults feel that the youth dislike being talked to and noticed by them. I have found it to be the opposite. I hear time and time again how the youth notice the churches where adults approach youth and initiate conversation.

During the brief conversation across the waters of Galilee, Jesus invites Peter and Andrew to “follow” Him. His words were an invitation to a relationship. An intimate walk is offered. Jesus has invited these two young men into His personal space. He has invited them to be a part of His life. The effective youth worker will do the same. In order to truly reach young people we must be willing to take on the responsibility of inviting them to walk with us. Jesus knew that He would have to pay the price if they accepted His invitation. There would be numerous late nights, moments of disappointment and even frustration, but He knew their journey together would pay dividends for eternity.

It is during this journey together, that Jesus was able to teach Peter and Simon about the principles of the Kingdom of God. They saw firsthand the life and love of the One who would become their Savior. Our living example, Jesus, went to those who needed Him, He talked with them, He offered a relationship to them, which gave Him the opportunity to teach them. Together they walked countless miles on dusty roads. It was
on these journeys that Peter and Andrew, along with ten other disciples, asked questions that gave Jesus further opportunity to teach them about the Kingdom. In the same way the Holy Spirit will provide opportunities for youth leaders to teach questioning youth about the Kingdom of our King. As a relationship develops between the youth and adult, the youth will ask the adult for the answers to the questions they are currently facing. These conversations can only take place if adults take the initiative to go, talk to, invite, and share with the youth.

The example of Jesus fits the small church situation. Within small churches, youth leaders have the ability to work with one or two, as opposed to the masses. Youth leaders must seek to impact the few rather than the crowd. If youth leaders attempt to impact the crowd and neglect the moments of the journey with individuals, they will find that their youth ministry will have few long lasting results.

In Matt 17, Jesus has three of His twelve disciples join Him on the journey up a mountain. Here in this story we see Jesus intentionally provide opportunity for the three to experience God for themselves. Jesus called twelve men to be His disciples. Critics may have observed the selection of so few and wondered why He chose to spend the majority of His time with such a limited number, especially in light of the enormity of His mission. Contrary to possible opinion, Jesus takes it a step further and chooses three of the twelve to deepen relational intimacy. In the life of any leader there are limits to time, energy, and opportunities for relational intimacy. Jesus, Lord of Heaven and Earth, took on the form of humanity and experienced these limitations. For this reason, Jesus shows leaders how to make the greatest impact upon the lives of those they intend to
serve. His example is most evident in His relationship with the three: Peter, James, and John.

In Matt 17:1, the Bible begins the story by saying, “After six days.” The discipling and mentoring process that Jesus was taking the twelve disciples through was extremely intentional. This process may have appeared to have little structure; however, notice the amount of time and energy Jesus spent with the twelve, “six days.” In later verses we will see how Jesus selects three of the twelve to join Him on the mountain. It is possible to feel badly for the nine who would miss the experience that would take place on the mountain. However, when people see how much effort Jesus made to develop the other nine, they see that Jesus’ method of developing His twelve young followers consisted of time alone with them. Jesus is often found teaching the masses, but His greatest impact seemed to be upon the twelve as a result of moments like the disciples experienced during the six days alone with Him.

In order to reach His followers on a deeper level, Jesus selects three from the elect twelve that they might experience God in the way that He does. “Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves.” This verse is very clear. Jesus did not look to see who would end up following Him on the mountain. He also did not look for volunteers. What He did do, as the Bible says, He took these specific three. In the same manner that He had selected the twelve, Jesus selects three of His disciples to join Him. The word translated as took in the Greek is paralambano. Paralambano literally means to join to one’s self.\(^5\) Jesus allowed these

three young men to be connected to Him on the journey up the mountain. Verses 1 and 5 provide details of their experience. Jesus “led them up on a high mountain by themselves . . . a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!’” It is quite probable that Peter, James, and John had been on this mountain before. It seems safe to say that though they might have been there before, they had never witnessed anything like this. What was the difference? Why was this time so incredibly different from other trips to the mountain? The answer lies in whom they had traveled with. On this specific journey Jesus had called them to go with Him. He had joined Himself to them so that they, through Him, might experience the voice of God. Because they were with Jesus, Peter, James, and John were able to experience the relationship Jesus had with His Father. Their connection to Him, allowed them to experience a heightened level of spirituality. By joining Himself to the three, they saw the place of intimacy that He longed for them to grow into. Without this journey, they eventually may have grown to this point. However, this event expedited their spiritual growth.

Youth leaders often ask how they can have their youth experience God as being real and how they can assist their young people in substantial spiritual growth. The example of Jesus answers these questions through the journey on the mountain. Jesus invited Peter, James and John to join Him on the journey up the mountain. It was during this journey, that the three disciples experienced God in a way they never would have on this particular day. As a result of being invited by Jesus and joining Him on the journey up the mountain, they, through Him, experienced God. What an extremely relevant paradigm for youth leaders today. Young people can experience the God we have come
to know and love through the joining of young and old in an intentional relationship.

My Bridge

I grew up in the ghetto. Okay, it may not have been the typical urban ghetto. It was a Christian ghetto. In addition to my family there were two other Adventist families in the same rural neighborhood. They were not only of the same faith but members of the same church. My parents had an enormous impact upon me. I consistently saw them reading their Bibles and praying. They did not only talk faith but lived it. In addition to a Christian home, as I mentioned before, I had the privilege of Christian neighbors. These neighbors were a wonderful influence also. But in spite of all that, it was not enough. It took someone outside my family and outside my neighborhood, who was willing to allow me to walk beside them to see Christ in a new way. This is where Pastor Dave came in. Pastor Dave was the new state wide youth director (same position I have now). He was into sports, had a great sense of humor, and had a tremendous speaking ability. It was while on a mission trip to the Dominican Republic that Pastor Dave and I became better friends. I would say that it was at this point that Pastor Dave allowed me to begin a walk beside him to become my bridge to Jesus. Our days in the Dominican Republic consisted of many things. There are four components that stood out for me: work at the construction site, basketball right before supper, evening worship, and the retirement of everyone to their respective sleeping quarters. Of these four, which do you think had the most significant impact upon me? It was not the work at the site and it was not the worships. It was time on the basketball court with Pastor Dave and the time each night as all us guys were going to bed. On the basketball court several of us especially bonded with Pastor Dave as we worked together as a team to play the game of basketball.
After a day of extreme activity we all welcomed those primitive bunks. Most of the guys fell asleep quickly. But many nights my best friend John and I would stay up talking with Pastor Dave. We told him about all of the drama that was happening between us and the girls we liked. But something else happened. Pastor Dave shared with us some of his stories. We heard how he met his wife. We heard how he ever so smoothly proposed to her. We also heard how it was to be a dad, the father of a little girl. I had always looked up to Pastor Dave. I had known who he was for years, but during this mission trip something changed. It was our relationship. He now knew me a lot better and I him. On this trip Pastor Dave did not only talk to me but allowed me to enter the sphere of his life. That meant something. Whether Pastor Dave knew it or not he now had tremendous influence upon me. If he had said that Jesus loved me, I would have believed him and would have wanted to do something about it. Chap Clark writes that, “Youth ministry, then is the call of the church to relationally pass on the gospel to adolescents in any cultural or environmental setting.”6 That mission trip was the genesis of a walk, a journey that I took beside a young pastor who became my mentor. This was the start of a journey that passed on the gospel message through the vehicle of a relationship. I went from an indifferent adolescent to the youth director for Pennsylvania. What made the difference? What was in the middle? It was God leading a young person in His path using a bridge by the name of Pastor Dave.

In Judg 6 we find the story of Gideon. In verse 11, he is threshing wheat in the winepress. This is unusual. Typically farmers thresh wheat not in a winepress but on a

6Chap Clark, Starting Right: Thinking Theologically about Youth Ministry (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2001), 43.
threshing floor. Gideon is hiding out. For years the Midianites have been destroying the food of the Israelites and Gideon is trying to prevent that by hiding. Fear seems to be something that has taken over his life. Not only is he afraid of the Midianites but he also is afraid of his father and all those who worship Baal. Gideon is well aware that the God of Heaven has commanded them to worship Him only. Gideon does nothing. He seems to be a young man full of fear and self. But notice what happens just verses later.

So Gideon took ten men from among his servants and did as the Lord had said to Him. . . . But the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon; then he blew the trumpet, and the Abiezrites gathered behind him. He also sent messengers to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali; and they came up to meet them. (Judg 6:27, 34)

In v. 27 Gideon tears down the altar to Baal. In v. 34 Gideon is sending out word throughout all Israel for men to join him in a battle against the Midianites. To top it all off Gideon, by the command of God, leads 300 Israelite men against the 120,000 soldiers of the Midianite army. The primary weapons for battle against Midian are trumpets, pots, and torches. With only a fraction of soldiers and unconventional weapons, God gives the victory to His general Gideon (7:21-22). What made the difference in this young man? How did he go from a fear filled, self-serving young adult, to a mighty leader for the God of Israel? The answer is found in Judges 6:11. Here we find a biblical model for bridging youth to God. “Now the Angel of the Lord came and sat under the terebinth tree which was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon threshed wheat in the winepress in order to hide it from the Midianites.” We can infer that the angel is sent on a mission from God to accomplish something in the life of Gideon. But he does not run into the winepress and blatantly issue God’s plan and message. His first action is to sit. He sits under a tree and waits.

There are youth within our realm of influence that may respond immediately to a
call from the pulpit. But often we find that there has to be something more. This something more is typically a Spirit-led relationship. The Angel intentionally positions himself to come into contact with the object of his mission. In order for the youth minister to impact youth he or she must be where youth are. Too often the youth leaders will in the churches await for the miraculous arrival of young people. But for the most part they do not come. And if they do, it is only for a few short hours once a week.

Pete Ward, author of *God at the Mall*, shares the conclusion he came to as he pondered why he was unable to reach groups of young people. “The solution I quickly came to was that in order to meet groups of young people I would have to find a way of going to the places where they naturally ‘hung out.’” In retrospect it was not Pastor Dave’s worship thoughts that made the most impact upon my life. It was his constant presence during times other than work and worship. He was there “hanging out” at the basketball court, by the pool, and at the tables during meals.

Pete Ward describes relationships in this way. “Relationships are the fuel on which youth work travels.” These relationships become high octane fuel that propel the mission and purpose that God has called the youth worker to do. As a youth worker we have been sent on a specific mission by God like the Angel sent to Gideon. But like the Angel, blatantly proclaiming our mission and message usually is not the best course. Typically, like the Angel, we must spend time in the presence of youth in order to gain the right to proclaim it.

God’s method of youth ministry is simple and straightforward. God calls adults

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8Ibid., 52.
to spend intentional time with young people, period. As illustrated by the parable, personal stories, Bible stories, and example of Jesus, I believe God’s design for youth ministry is founded in personal relationships. In obedience to the command of Jesus and by following His example youth workers must go, talk, invite, and share. It is a personal relationship with an adult that God uses to bridge the gap between Himself and a young person.
CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE CONTRIBUTING TO THE UNDERSTANDING
OF CURRENT YOUTH MINISTRY TRENDS

Introduction

Chapter 2 helped us discover God’s process for bridging youth to Jesus. This process involves an adult who is willing to go, talk, invite, and share. These four steps are the process of God’s relational method of youth ministry. Chapter 3 will look at the literature contributing to current trends in youth ministry. Specifically in the areas of three foundational elements that create opportunity for this process to take place. The three elements are: mentoring, missions, and meetings. This chapter will also share trends in current literature pertaining to relationships and the questions youth have during their journey through adolescence.

The three m’s of youth ministry that have been selected are three of the main foundational elements that seem to be woven into most successful youth ministries. This section will seek to define these elements.

Mentoring

Mentoring and discipleship are often mistaken for each other. “Discipleship focuses on helping groups of students develop skills and giving them tools they need to
become mature Christians; mentoring is all about one-on-one relationships.”¹ Without one-on-one relationships, local church youth ministry will never be effective in reaching their youth. “Small church youth ministry begins and ends with relationships. . . . To be effective in ministry, youth leaders need to build relationships with teenagers.”² It is not an option. Relationships are the means to the end in reaching the youth God has called the small church to reach.

The term mentor comes from this type of relationship. There is a story behind this term used today.

Before going off to fight a 10-year war against the Trojans, Odysseus entrusted his young son, Telemachus, to a wise friend, Mentor, to be educated and trained in Greek customs and practices. After running into some trouble, Odysseus returned instead 20 years later and discovered that Telemachus was a mature and accomplished man. Mentor had guided Telemachus as he grew and matured. This is the origin of our word mentor.³

In the absence of his father, Mentor developed a relationship that allowed him to instill values and ideas into the life of Telemachus. As society and culture have changed, parents no longer live and work with their children as they did centuries ago in the rural farm setting. The void that present day occupations and cultural norms have left, has created the need for additional mentoring outside of the home. This change in the family dynamic has caused many youth to lose, “a safe place and clear mentors at an age when

¹Rich Grassel, Help! I'm a Small Church Youth Worker! (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2002), 97.

²Rick Chromey, Youth Ministry in Small Churches (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 1993), 57.

³Ibid., 98.
they should be forming an integrated sense of self. They depend increasingly on media for support and instruction.”

The book *Friends in Faith* describes mentoring as a journey. “On the journey of mentoring, adults and youth are called to be partners. God calls an adult with much life experience to walk on a quest of faith with a younger person with less life experience.” It is during this journey, or quest of faith, that the adult mentor will have the opportunity to act as a road map guiding them to the best destination possible. The mentor will ask such questions as, “Here are three roads you might want to take. The choice is yours. Let’s talk about the consequences of taking each road. And by the way, here are the three roads you might want to avoid.” The size of the small church makes it conducive for these types of relationships. “Through a personal relationship with a mentor, a young person can learn what it means to be a mature Christian.”

Emmy E. Werner, of the University of California, studied a group of 500 Hawaiians who lived among some of the most difficult circumstances, which included poverty and addiction. The study was initiated due to the fact that such a high percentage of this group grew up to be what is known as resilient. Resilient being when, “children . . . grow up in abusive situations and then go on to live happy and productive

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5 Charles Kishpaugh and Barbara Bruce, *Friends in Faith: Mentoring Youth in the Church* (Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 1993), 2.


7 Chromey, *Youth Ministry in Small Churches*, 61.
lives.”\textsuperscript{8} Werner, as a result of her study, concluded that the, “strongest predictor of resilience was, ‘an adult mentor outside the immediate family . . . , who gave them a sense of being loved and important.’”\textsuperscript{9} The support shown by a mentor has a long lasting effect upon the life of a young person.

The mentoring relationship can begin in several ways. It can come about at the request of the young person or at the invitation of the elder. In order to ensure that this relationship has its maximum impact, there should be a covenant made between the mentor and mentee. This covenant should include the time, place and consistency of the meetings, the areas of life that the mentor has permission to ask questions about, and areas in which the mentee desires accountability. This covenant should be written out and could look something like this.

For the next three months we agree to meet once each week on Wednesday at 3:00 PM (unless we select an alternative time). We further agree to discuss our time together with our families except for those things we have agreed at the end of a session are confidential. We further agree to be honest in our discussion, reserving the right to be silent on questions. We further agree to care for and support each other with our actions and prayers.\textsuperscript{10}

It is during this process that the mentor must ask questions that help lay the framework for time together. Similar questions like the following must be asked to arrive at covenant statements like our example. “Do I have your permission to ask you difficult questions and enter, as a friend, into all the areas of your life?”\textsuperscript{11} This type of permission

\textsuperscript{8}Clark, \textit{Starting Right}, 147.

\textsuperscript{9}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{10}Kishpaugh & Bruce, \textit{Friends in Faith}, 58.

\textsuperscript{11}Grassel, \textit{Help!} 99.
will open the door for the mentor to ask the pertinent questions that will help the mentee choose the best road on their journey.

Jesus modeled effective mentoring among His disciples. He calls His church to follow His example and engage in this type of intentional ministry to the youth. When we fail to do so, the youth will search and find replacements to guide them. “It is only when the church and family abandon their role of helping young people navigate the passage to adulthood that teenagers look to their friends, their music, and the media as surrogate mentors.”

Mike Yaconelli shares his view on mentoring and the true role of the church.

Not youth church, or contemporary church, or postmodern church. Just plain, boring, ordinary church. Yes, that’s right. Church. The place where people who don't know each other get to know each other; where people who normally don't associate with each other, associate; where people who are different learn how to be one. . . . Mostly, church is the place where we can grow old together. And it turns out that growing old together is still the best way to bring lasting results with students. Growing old together is where we teach (and learn from) each other what discipleship means in the everyday world. . . . Somehow, being with a group of diverse people week after week caused a bond to be formed—a family was created, and community happened. The mystery of community became a reality. Community isn't complicated. It's just a group of people who grow old together. They stick with each other through the teenage years, marriage, children, getting old, sick, and finally dying—all the while teaching each other how to follow Christ through the rugged terrain of life. . . . Maybe the body of Christ is the place where youth ministry was supposed to happen all along. . . . [Real] youth ministry would happen when all of the adults decided to connect with all of the kids and do church together.

Missions

In the book of Matthew, Jesus says,

I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you

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visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me. Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You? And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me. Matt 25:35-40

I have sought to illustrate through this paper that youth ministry is about building relationships with youth in order to love them and bridge them to Jesus. The area of missions provides an opportunity to do just that. Jesus plainly states in Matt 25 that when we serve others, we are actually having moments with Him. Jesus will never seem more real to young people than when we are serving the least of society.

Many youth ministries are reluctant to involve their youth in mission opportunities fearing that the work involved will deter the youth from wanting to be a part of such a laborious effort. Anthony Campolo says he believes the exact opposite.

I believe that the church that calls young people to engage in ministry to the community by helping the poor, working for racial equality, caring for the elderly, and improving life for the disadvantaged, will find that it will attract numerous young people who are looking for the fulfillment that comes from investing their lives in the service of others.\(^\text{14}\)

Campolo goes on to confirm the connection between service and the realness of Jesus. Through these activities they will come to see that Jesus is not only interested in saving them from sin and getting them into heaven but also wants to make them into instruments through which He can do His work in the world.

Young people involved in social action will come to understand that God is infinitely concerned with what happens to refugees from Cambodia, the isolated elderly in urban high-rise apartments, the derelicts on skid row, the poor in Appalachia, and the victims of racial segregation. They will come to know a God who is angry when a multinational corporation pursues exploitive policies in a Third World nation, or when politicians promote policies which serve special interest groups at the expense

of the poor. They would come to understand that God is One who is joyful when there are opportunities for oppressed people to gain dignity. In short, social action programs help young people to understand something of the nature of God and to gain an understanding of why God chose to save them from sin and make them into new creatures.\textsuperscript{15}

Hands-on activity for God will take the theory of Christianity and put the young people into real life situations that they can see and touch. Many of our young people have heard the stories and sermons a hundred times about the life-changing love of Christ, but have never had the opportunity to see it put into action through missions and service. Experiences that youth have in moments of missions and service will teach life lessons not soon to be forgotten. “It’s not news that experience can be the best teacher. However, we often forget this truth in our Christian education programs, in which we read about things, talk about things, sing about things, and pray about things, but rarely do things—real things, not simulations.”\textsuperscript{16}

Rick Chromey suggests that the youth of the small church follow a three step progression that will engage them in missions and service. These three steps are to be done in a way that trains the youth to see the needs of others and takes action on their behalf. As the youth are given opportunities to experience the mission and service of Jesus, they will grow in their own ability through the Holy Spirit to see needs and take appropriate action. As the youth experience each successive step, their love will grow for those they serve both near and far.

Chromey provides three progressive steps that he says the youth should take.


“First, take the message to your school and homes. Then take it to the surrounding community. . . . Then look beyond to the nation and world.”

Looking at your home or school environment as a mission opportunity may seem rather odd to a young person. This initial stage of the three step progression is crucial. It is within this first step that the eyes of the youth are being trained. Typically youth will see things at face value. The things at home or school are the way they are. However, when the eyes of the youth have been trained to see the problems, issues, and circumstances at either location as an opportunity for God to use them as the conduit for change, their eyes begin to regularly see what they once left unnoticed. It is almost as if their eyes, or hearts, become sensitive to what God is passionate about. Chromey suggests that the youth ministry encourage the youth to look for these types of opportunities to serve in the areas and with the people in which they spend the most time. Mission and service opportunities may include: tutoring a sibling or classmate, cleaning the house for the extremely busy parent, encouraging classmates to respect the teacher, becoming friends with the friendless student, sharing a testimony of Jesus with a parent or relative, etc. More often than not, opportunities abound in both these areas. Teaching youth to see and be sensitive to the needs around them is a major building block in spiritual development.

The second stage in the progression is for the youth to take missions and service to the community. The book *Outreach Ministry in the 21st Century* provides numerous ideas for mission projects or service ideas for the community. This book suggests a

17 Chromey, *Youth Ministry in Small Churches*, 63-64.

18 Ibid.
number of ideas that can potentially address the needs of the community. These ideas include a community carnival, a town festival, a sharing of the arts event, an MLK celebration day, and a community Christmas party. In order to serve a community effectively, the needs of the community must be known. How do we come to know the needs of our communities? Christians have to immerse themselves in the lives of those who live around them. Young people seem to have a much easier time doing this than those who are older within the church. But it is more than worthwhile to instill within them the belief that knowing those within your community is part of the Christians’ calling. Dan Kimball, author of *They Like Jesus But Not the Church*, says that he “was so wrapped up in being busy with church that I became isolated from any true friendships with those outside the church.” In our youth groups it can be very easy to create an environment that does the very same thing with our young people. If we are not intentional about making sure that our activities are not solely about those at the church, then they will soon become just that. This is precisely the reason why this paper will suggest the use of the inside-out method of youth ministry as prescribed by Pete Ward in his book *God at the Mall*. The inside-out method ministers to the youth in the church, while seeking to involve their friends in all youth activities. The inside-out method will be further defined and discussed in Chapter 4. If a youth ministry program solely serves and builds relationships with those already claiming to be Christians, then we are doing

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our youth a great disservice. Kimball says that “having relationships only with Christians made it difficult to obey the teachings of Jesus about being on a mission for Him and being salt and light to the world. It was like being a missionary to the Buddhists in China but hanging out only with Christians all the time.” Youth need to know that the Gospel message has been given to us by Jesus to share with those around us.

The third step is taking mission and service to the nation and world. How can the youth group of a small church serve the nation and world? This seems like a relevant question since the resources of the small church are typically so limited. To answer this question, we need to look to the example of Jesus. His task was beyond large. He was given the job of telling the entire world that the kingdom of God was here. How does one person reach an entire world? The answer to this question is provided to us in the stories of individuals who encountered Jesus. Jesus reached the world by reaching individuals. He impacted one heart at a time. Those He impacted then carried their experience to someone else, and His impact multiplied. This is the answer for the youth group of the small church which desires to fulfill the Gospel commission of reaching the world with the love and message of Jesus. Those who desire to make an impact for Jesus can do so by serving those which serve. There are numerous missionaries overseas who are daily impacting people of other countries. Youth groups in small churches can support that impact by supporting or serving the missionaries.

Youth groups of small churches should seek to make an impact in the lives of individuals throughout the nation and world. Such missions and service might include: care packages for missionaries overseas, opening your home to a missionary family on

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22Kimball, They Like Jesus, 39.
furlough, sending shoes to children without, and short-term mission trips.

Mission is about living out the love Jesus has shown humanity. Missions and service should be a foundational element of each and every youth ministry. If we are intentional, missions and service will not be something we do once a month, but something that is an integral part of who our youth group is. We should always, “seek to find ways to make our ministries shelters for the outcasts and havens for the oppressed—in this way, every youth ministry gathering is an opportunity to help youth practice their love for/with others.”

Meetings

Meetings are the typical method used to address the youth at large. Meetings include worship, Bible study, discussion groups, concerts, drama presentations, church services, vesper programs, rallies, retreats, etc. Although one meeting may be different from the next, the purpose of meetings is to prepare the young people to experience the presence of God both corporately and individually.

There are two types of meetings: The first we will call the teaching meeting, and the second we will call the inspirational or experiential meeting.

The teaching meeting will attempt to help “groups of students develop skills and give them tools they need to become mature Christians.” These skills, or tools, are given to the young people to assist them in their own personal development of a relationship with Jesus. The tools will include teaching the youth to pray and how to

23Clark, *Starting Right*, 163.

study the Bible. It can also include a discussion on how to apply the message of the Gospel to a person’s daily life.

The second type of meeting, the inspirational or experiential, “should have to do with the fascination, discovery, and experience of God.” This type of meeting may include a drama performance, a concert, a narrative sermon, or an object lesson. The purpose of this type of meeting is to allow the youth to see, hear, and even feel what God is like through the selected medium.

Without a doubt, there is often overlap between meeting types. A particular meeting may, by definition, be both a time of teaching and inspiration. It is often by design that those who are planning the meeting or event will include things that intentionally teach and things that are intended to inspire. Most small group meetings will tend to be more of the teaching style, while larger group gatherings tend to focus more on the inspirational with a teaching element during the message.

Social events, sporting activities, and outings can work as an integral part of both teaching and inspirational or experiential meetings. When the social event, activity, or outing is planned with determined intentionality, it can provide the object lesson needed to drive home the point of the teaching or God experience.

Meetings are often viewed as the answer to what should be done for young people. When small churches discover that their youth’s needs are not being met or that they are leaving the church, it often results in the small church wanting to do something to reverse the trend. Rarely is there anyone with youth ministry experience. The church

25Grassel, *Help!* 89.
is often at a loss for what they should do. After sitting down and attempting to come up with a solution, they often end up deciding to provide a meeting for them.

In studying the research and what has been written on retaining our youth, it seems that the small church’s conclusion is partially correct. Doug Fields’ answer to a frequent question will help us find the complete answer to the best approach that addresses our youth’s needs. He says that he is regularly asked, “How do I grow my youth ministry?” His response is. “Nurture them! Take care of the students God has entrusted to you.” Fields defines nurturing as “faithfully helping them (youth) grow in their relationship with God.” In order to nurture them in a setting where they can hear, be heard, grow, and be part of a close community, the small group meeting is ideal. Too often in the small church we attempt to replicate the large church worships with our limited resources, including people. The large group meeting has its place but will never be able to achieve the intimacy a small group meeting can. The small group meeting provides a great setting to nurture youth.

After implementing small group meetings at his church, Doug Fields said that these type of meetings “helped close our back door; we no longer had students leaving as fast as they were coming.” In his book Purpose-Driven Youth Ministry, Fields says that small groups will benefit youth in at least four ways.

26 Doug Fields, Purpose-Driven Youth Ministry (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998), 137.
27 Ibid., 137.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid., 139.
30 Ibid., 140.
1. **Small Groups Allow Students to Be Known.** Even in the small church setting, there is the likelihood that the leaders may know all the names of the young people, but never take the relationship past formalities. The small group allows the students to be known by the adults in leadership. Knowing who the youth are and what they are dealing with will greatly enable the leader to address their needs. In a large group meeting or in a social setting, the youth are unlikely to open up and become vulnerable. The small group provides a safe environment where the details of their lives can be shared.

2. **Small Groups Make Students Verbal.** The small group provides the opportunity for young people to express themselves and react audibly to a given situation. “In a small group an emotional platform is created where students can express their opinions and not feel left out.”

31 People in general, whether young or old, typically will share more in a smaller group setting. Once a group expands past seven or eight members, many people tend to feel intimidated and refrain from sharing. As youth become verbal and share their stories with each other, “they begin to have a sense of acceptance. . . . When students feel cared for and accepted, they begin to open up.”

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3. **Small Groups Allow Students to Personalize Their Faith.** The small group allows the youth to discover how the message of the Bible applies to real life. Within this type of ministry “God’s Word can be made relevant, applying it to the everyday lives of our students. It is in the context of small groups that we can deal with in-depth questions, doubts and struggles, showing how God’s Word is as current today as it was the day it

31Fields, *Purpose-Driven Youth Ministry*, 141.

was written.”

It is during these group discussions that the youth are able to make the connection between the physical and spiritual, thus personalizing faith.

4. **Small Groups Encourage Accountable Relationships.** As Bible truth is realized by the youth, they will often make a decision to make it part of who they are. This decision, often made known to others through the opportunity to share in a small group setting, is given a venue for accountability. Jim Burns says, “Spiritual application plus accountability equals dynamic spiritual growth.”

When young people are part of a small group where they know they are loved, valued, and safe, they often share and welcome accountable relationships that will ultimately foster spiritual growth. These accountable relationships can be viewed as positive peer pressure. The term peer pressure is often viewed in a negative sense; however, within the context of the small group, a version of peer pressure can actually help individual youth remain true to the positive decisions they have made. Today’s culture of single parent homes has left a void for so many young people. In the absence of true family units, the peer group “becomes the family of the teenager.”

Within the small group, the youth can find the natural accountability their hearts desire.

Meetings can take on dozens of formats, objectives, and styles. Within the small church context, small group meetings seem to be an ideal format that caters to the scaled-down resources of the small church. It is within this setting that the small church can build quality relationships with their youth in order to bridge them to Jesus.

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34 Ibid.

Relational Youth Ministry

In order for mentoring, meetings, and missions to have the impact discussed in the previous sections, relationships must be developed between the youth leaders and youth. This section will discuss current literature trends in relational youth ministry.

Youth leaders within the local church seem to consistently ask a similar version of the following question. “What is the most significant thing we can do to impact the lives of our youth?” Whether the youth leader is a seasoned veteran or new to youth ministry, this question arises as a direction for the ministry is considered. Quite often there is too much focus placed upon how successful a program may turn out, as opposed to considering how successful the ministry was in reaching people. “Programs only exist to build and strengthen relationships with God and with one another! Relationships are key to a healthy youth ministry!”36 The simple answer to the question raised by so many in youth ministry is revealed by the testimonies of innumerable young people who recount moments of conversation, recreation, listening, and physical presence that communicated the young person’s value in the form of a relationship. Pastor Doug Fields of the Saddleback Church shares the story of Jamal who stopped attending the youth ministry and wrote Pastor Doug this note: “Doug, if you ever stop playing games and start caring about people again, let me know. When I became a number and not a person, I felt like it was time to find another church family.”37

Pastor Doug learned a lesson that sheds valuable light upon the focus of youth

36Doug Fields, Your First Two Years in Youth Ministry (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2002), 82.

37Ibid., 85.
ministry. Pastor Doug says that he “soon learned that students care more about the friendships than the flash.” Specifically in the small church context, those leading the program often only feel validated and “successful” if the numbers of those in attendance is high. True success should be judged by those in leadership having at least one significant relationship with their youth. It is these individual relationships that will have the greatest impact upon the lives of each young person. This type of relational youth ministry has become extremely popular over the last two decades in large churches. Many small churches have felt inadequate with little resources to sustain a continued youth ministry. However, relational youth ministry is ideal for the small church with limited resources. “The strength of the small church is its ability to create, nurture, and build relationships in an intimate setting. While many small churches may struggle to produce a formal youth ministry program, many of them can mentor quite well.”

Small churches are often looked at as having a total disadvantage in all areas of youth ministry. Although small churches are limited in some areas, they are not when it comes to the opportunity to build meaningful relationships between the adults and young people.

A little more than a century ago, relational youth ministry was something that did not happen as much at church but at home among the family and extended family. If we take a step back into the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, we see that a major cultural shift was taking place that dramatically impacted the development of young people. This was primarily due to the industrial revolution. For nearly the entirety of earth’s history, young people quickly made the transition from young person to adulthood

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38 Fields, *Your First Two Years*, 86.

seemingly overnight. As soon as they were able to go to work and add to the workforce on the farm or in an apprenticeship capacity, they did. Around the beginning of the twentieth century; this tradition changed. Modern technology took the place of the apprentice and the number of hands needed on the farm. “With the apprenticeship dead, the family farm gone and the machine producing more with fewer workers, young people found themselves with little to do. The rapid passage from childhood to adulthood had ceased.”40 Prior to the industrial revolution it was ingrained within the children that they were a necessity to the success and survival of the family. Children were given responsibility and at the same time surrounded by their family and extended family the majority of the time. Now with the rise of modern industry, family members were separated for many hours each day, particularly by the men, due to employment away from home. Prior to this

there were no problems of the father’s being away for many hours, for he and his wife worked side by side on their small holding or in their cottage industry and Dad was at home all the time. The extended family was within close reach and many people lived and died within a few miles of their place of birth.41

Two major cultural shifts took place for young people during the rise of the industrial revolution. One, the need for young people to ‘grow up’ earlier and enter the work force at such a young age ended. Thus giving the youth little to do. Two, the young people were no longer continually surrounded by adult figures in their lives who could assist in decision making and character development. These changes paved the “way for a new understanding of the young as a cohort needing specialization through a lineal stage of


41Ibid.
education, thereby making a way for the arrival of the ‘adolescent’ and the church and parachurch ministries began to give specific attention to them.”

The term adolescence has often been described in churches, classrooms, and television. But what does it mean and who does it describe? The following section will address these two questions.

**Effective Youth Ministry Answers Questions**

Chap Clark says that the term adolescence, which means, “to grow up,” is a term that has its origin within the last 100 years. It is the period of time in every person’s life where a person goes from, “puberty to adulthood or maturity.” Adolescence, which is starting earlier in the lives of each generation, begins somewhere at or just before the teen years and typically ends in the early twenties. In addition to physical changes, “the primary and most basic goal of adolescence is known as individuation.”

The term individuation means “becoming one’s own person.” In this process a young person is developing their individual identity and personality, deciding who they are and who they want to be. Clark identifies three basic tasks that are accomplished during this process:

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43 Clark, *Starting Right*, 44.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid., 47.

1. The task of discovering identity, in answer to the question, *Who am I?*
2. The task of accepting responsibility for one’s life, or achieving autonomy, in answer to the question, *Do I matter?*
3. The task of reconnecting in appropriate ways to others in community, in answer to the question, *How do I relate to others?*

Young people going through this process may do things and say things that are quite questionable. Youth in the midst of this process will try to answer these questions through trial and error. They will often do or say something out of the ordinary to discover the response they receive from those around them. In addition to the response, internally, the youth will in some form ask themselves how they felt after their actions. The youth will then gain answers to the three questions through moments like this of trial and error. These are ways in which those going through the process may attempt to answer the three questions.

As youth workers it should be their goal to provide the answer to these questions that young people have. The three questions can be accurately answered by the Word of God. In the Bible, God reveals the answers to all those going through individualization. However, youth often need someone to bridge them to what God is offering. The most powerful tool in working with those who are involved in this process is the one-on-one relationship. The three questions defined by Clark will now be addressed by involving these types of relationships to aid youth in their journey for answers.

1. *Who am I?* Erik Erikson was one of the first to have written and formulated theories about youth and their quest for identity. In his book, *“Identity: Youth and Crisis,”* Erikson states the following. “If the earliest stage bequeathed to the identity crisis (is) an important need for trust in oneself and in others, then clearly the adolescent

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47 Clark, *Starting Right*, 55.
looks most fervently for men and ideas to have faith in, which also means men and ideas in whose service it would seem worth while to prove oneself trustworthy.”

According to his studies, during this phase, youth are looking for someone or something to trust in. As youth ministers it is our greatest desire to have our youth learn to trust and serve Jesus. Due to the abstract nature of a spiritual relationship, youth rarely correlate their need on their own with what Jesus has to offer. This is where youth ministry has its need and purpose. As adolescents enter this stage of development it is their natural instinct to desire individuals and purposes in which they can believe.

Throughout history, young people have grown up in a very integrated community where they worked and were taught by relatives and those of the community. Because of a weaker sense of community beginning in the nineteenth and especially in the twentieth centuries, young people have had to seek out individuals, ideas, and worthwhile purposes to which to cling. The children were given responsibilities to work directly with their families each day. But as Gane described, this not only gave them a sense of belonging, but a sense of being needed. Although the term and stage of adolescence was not recognized centuries ago, the need of young people for something to have faith in and serve could be readily found both in their families and community living.

In direct contrast to the life of young people centuries ago, Gane points us to David Breskin who describes the situation many youth face today.

American parents spend less time with Johnny than any other parents in the world. While he’s a teenager, they spend an average of 14 minutes a week communicating with him. By the time Johnny graduates from high school, he’ll have spent more time with his blue, flickering electronic parent than doing anything else but sleeping; he’ll

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have seen 20,000 hours of TV, 350,000 commercials, about 18,000 killings. The family doesn’t talk—they watch. On TV, problems resolve themselves in 30-minute spans. It’s his only problem-solving role model, and it’s unrealistic.50

Youth have a need for someone to lead them to their greatest desire. I believe that this great desire has been placed upon all hearts as part of the God’s design. Jesus in Desire of Ages, and as Ellen G. White describes Him, is truly what youth need. Programs, church services, and Sabbath School classes are important. But it is only when these are accompanied by a Spirit-led relationship that we will have our greatest effectiveness in bridging young people to Jesus. This is why youth ministry is so imperative. People do not have a choice whether to become involved in youth ministry, because if they choose not to, youth will undoubtedly find something else to put their faith in and serve. During this time when questions are being asked, youth ministry has the opportunity to provide our youth with the answers. It is the role of youth ministers to relationally make clear what the Bible clearly tells. “But as many as received Him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will or man, but of God” (John 1:12-13).

2. Do I matter? Young people have a desire to feel valued. They long to know and feel that they are loved for who they are. Children that grow up in homes where they are regularly told that they are loved are impacted. However, if, as the child grows and matures, the actions of the parents are incongruent with the words they are telling them, they will notice. “Teenagers do not just collect more information as they mature through childhood into young adulthood; they actually change in the ways they think about that

50David Breskin, “Dear Mom and Dad,” Rolling Stone, November 1984, 43.
Young people will actually begin to analyze the words they are being told versus the actions of those around them. Words and actions need to be congruent.

I have visited many churches to sit down to meet with the youth. It does not matter where but many of the youth give the same report. “The church,” they say, “repeatedly says that they believe in the youth and want to have us involved in the church. But when it comes time for nominating committee, or planning the evangelistic series, we have been left out. They say one thing, and do another.” The youth take notice of the incongruence between what is said and what is done.

It is not merely enough to tell a young person that they matter. A young person must be shown they matter. To a young child it may have seemed that telling them they were loved or mattered was all it took, but as youth grow and learn to process information in a more mature way, it takes much more. Words may or may not have a lasting impact upon the lives of youth, but when a life is offered up and time is given sacrificially for the sake of a youth such intentionality leaves its lasting mark. It is not our job as youth ministers to merely tell the youth about God, but to bear witness through the fruits of a life surrendered to God. Kenda Creasy Dean refers to this kind of life as a, “God-bearing life.”

The Eastern Orthodox tradition calls Mary Theotokos, or “Godbearer,” because she brought God into the world. In the biblical witness, God seems especially fond of calling on unlikely suspects for such missions. Young people—impetuous, improbable choices by all accounts—figure prominently among God’s “chosen” in both the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament. And while God does not ask any

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of us to bring Christ into the world as literally as did Mary, *God calls each of us to become a Godbearer through whom God may enter the world again and again.*"52

The most effective way in which youth will receive the answer to the question that they have, “Do I matter?” comes through intentional relationships that bridge them to the God we have come to know and love. God gives us the opportunity to bear Him to the youth again and again. God-bearing relationships only happen when a youth worker is consistently in and among youth. We have the opportunity to impress this message from God about His love on the hearts of our youth. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

3. *How do I relate to others?* In question three, youth are trying to discover how they can have their ‘separateness’, while still maintaining their significant relationships. This creates the opportunity for adults outside the family to assist. There is a certain depth to a relationship that is needed. It goes beyond the “hellos” and “goodbyes,” and journeys into the specifics of “How did your math test turn out?” Youth may not, and probably do not realize, their desire for adult relationships. There are many youth that have to live with the fact that they only have one parent in their lives. Even those blessed with the presence of both parents still seek out adults who invite them to join them on the journey.

The need for guidance in the lives of young people and specific measures to address adolescence, propelled a man by the name of Robert Raikes of London, England to set forth to meet this need at the height of industrialization. “Concerned for the

overworked and undereducated children . . . by their unsupervised delinquency, Raikes developed what he called ‘Sunday school.’” These schools, which taught basic reading, writing, and morals, were replicated in the United States. This was extremely significant because they “became the first distinct ministry to youth in America.”

From the moment these first initiatives in youth ministry were implemented, the question of what type of programming would be most effective was asked. In one form or another, churches had to ask themselves, “What is the most significant thing we can do to impact the lives of our youth?”

Through the years this age specific ministry to youth has evolved. Beginning small on Sunday mornings with people like Raikes in the late nineteenth century, and then growing by leaps and bounds between 1900-1940, youth societies dominated the church landscape. Most denominations had formed some type of youth society to address the needs of their young people. Within these societies, youth were engaged in many social and physical activities and at the same time were held accountable for the responsibilities placed upon them by the Bible and their church. From 1940-1950 “what became important was evangelistic engagement through nationalistic and relational strategies.”

It was during this time period that the basic form of a relational model of youth ministry was implemented. With such organizations as Youth for Christ and Young Life coming on the scene, youth ministry took this new turn as para-church organizations led the youth in a movement based on relationships. By the late 1960s and

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54 Ibid.

55 Ibid., 48.
into the 1970s, these para-church organizations “continued to dominate age-specific ministry to youth.”\textsuperscript{56} However, things were changing. Many large churches were allocating a significant amount of their resources toward hiring a full-time youth minister. In addition, they were providing larger and larger budgets to fund the programming designed and led out by these new staff members. For a time the programming side of youth ministry seemed to be what was thought of as the “silver bullet” of youth ministry; however, it was quickly realized that although programming plays a significant role within youth ministry, true ministry must be based upon significant relationships. Jim Burns and Mike DeVries write that “long-term positive influence on the lives of students comes from people, not programs. Programs are a framework in which ministry exists. Programs don’t minister—people minister.”\textsuperscript{57} As we take a look back into history, we discover what it was that really created the need for this age specific ministry. It was the vacuum of the industrial revolution that drew adults out of the immediate lives of young people. The young people, who, for most of history, had had adult family figures in their lives for the majority of each day, now were left to seemingly fend for themselves. The real loss created by the industrial revolution was the loss of relationships between the younger generation and the older. Youth ministry has experienced numerous fads over the years, but has come back full circle to focus upon what the advancement of modern technology took away. “In the past, good youth ministry was often seen as primarily program-oriented: rallies, events, and other elaborately orchestrated gatherings. However, today we have come to realize that long-term influence with lasting impact

\textsuperscript{56}Root, \textit{Revisiting Relational Youth Ministry}, 59.

\textsuperscript{57}Burns and DeVries, \textit{The Youth Builder}, 23.
comes from significant relationships and role models.”\(^{58}\) What modernity took away from young people in the form of relationships, youth ministry aims to restore. The following section will illustrate a youth ministry model for the small church.

**A Model**

In July 2006 I met with the pastor and fifteen members of a local church. This church was one of the larger churches in the Conference. The church’s weekly attendance averaged around 175. They had at least fifteen teenage youth who were currently attending the weekly service. The pastor and adults who attended this meeting were quite concerned that nothing was happening for their teenage young people outside the normal church times. During our time together it became abundantly clear that they wanted to do something for their young people, but had no idea of how to go about it. Whether they would have been able to express it or not, what they were essentially asking me for help with was for a youth ministry model they could implement and follow. Knowing their situation, which included the existence of youth already coming to the church, I suggested that they follow the Inside-Out model of youth ministry.

The Inside-Out or Nucleus Fringe model is called this “because it starts with young people who are inside the church.”\(^{59}\) The first step for this particular model begins with those intending to initiate such a program gathering the existing youth into some type of meeting or gathering. The existing youth, or nucleus, are then informed when, where, and how often this group will be meeting. “Through a combination of social

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\(^{58}\) Burns & DeVries, *The Youth Builder*, 23.

\(^{59}\) Ward, *God at the Mall*, 7.
activities and a program of teaching, prayer, and worship, the group is encouraged and built up in the faith.” 60 As this new youth ministry begins, those on the inside, also referred to as the nucleus group, are “encouraged to invite other young people to join the group.” 61 This strategy intends to utilize the relationships that inside youth have with young people outside the church. This method provides the youth worker with access to both those on the inside and their friends, those on the outside. When the local church’s youth ministry is designed in such a way, evangelism is woven directly into all their programming.

Being a part of a youth ministry leadership team will demand that the leadership have the ability to communicate between both adults in the church and the youth. These two groups live in two different cultural worlds. Once contact is made with the youth, local church youth ministry has begun. The youth leaders of any youth ministry are immediately exposed or given access to a subculture different from their own. “Youth ministry is shaped by youth culture, but it is also shaped by the culture of the church.” 62 The subcultures of youth from both the inside and outside speak and live culture languages different from that of the church. “This means that Christian youth workers also must be culturally bi-lingual.” 63 The youth worker must be able to understand and function within the cultural worlds of the church at large and the young people. Youth leaders need to be able to communicate with church leadership in order to keep them

60 Ward, God at the Mall, 14.
61 Ibid.
62 Ibid., 80.
63 Ibid.
informed and maintain their trust. This is especially the case in the small church setting. Rich Grassel says, “In the small church, it’s all about the relationships.” Grassel is not only talking about the relationship between the youth leader and youth, but specifically between the youth leader and church leadership. He further says, “Success and failure in your ministry will be determined more by the quality of your relationships with church members.” Youth leaders need to have or develop the ability to step into the worlds of both the old and young, so that the ministry to the young can go forward.

The ability of the youth leader being culturally bi-lingual, will greatly aid the leader’s communication with the church. Some leaders have an easier time than others stepping into the world of a younger generation. When a youth ministry endeavors to work with church kids and non-church kids, they will be attempting to reach two totally different sub-cultures. However, for the purpose of communicating the Inside-Out model, it will be assumed that both groups are one in the same. One of the measurements of the youth leader’s effectiveness will be gauged by their connection with the young people and how well they have been able to help them answer the developmental questions they experience during adolescence. In order to gain the ability to influence the young people, the adults must be able, as we stated before, to step into their cultural world, also known as incarnational ministry.

Incarnational ministry is a relational outreach approach to ministry that follows the model demonstrated by Jesus. Jesus left His world in Heaven and entered our world here on Earth that we might experience the glory of God. If we look at the culture of the

64 Grassel, Help! 38.
65 Ibid.
adults in our church and the culture of the young people, both from within and without, we will immediately discover that the two groups are from different worlds. For any adult youth leader attempting to make successful contact with the young people, they must be willing to be incarnational like Jesus.

Jesus became like us and dwelt among us for the expressed purpose of allowing us to see His glory. The incarnational ministry that Christ entrusts to the church is for the same purpose. Youth workers are allowed to cross the boundaries of the adolescent community when they become like kids and dwell among them so that the reflection of Christ’s glory may be seen through the youth worker. 66

Pete Ward describes five stages for relational outreach. 67 His model is specific to the Outside-In model as adults step outside the church walls to reach youth. I am suggesting that this relational model can be used as adults try to step outside their cultural world and into the world of youth they intend to minister to. If youth workers are able to follow through with incarnational models such as Ward’s five stage relational model, they will have set the stage for a better opportunity to minister to the youth in such a way that effectively answers the questions of adolescence.

1. Contact: Contact is the initial stage where the youth worker will intentionally make their first attempt “to connect with the group” 68 they desire to develop a relationship with. Often times this can and should be done in a social and non-threatening environment where the young people feel comfortable and at home. Contact should be done in such a way where the youth worker can connect “with individuals or groups of young people in ways that lay aside normal adult authoritarian roles. . . . It

66Clark, Starting Right, 295.
67Ward, God at the Mall, 55.
68Ibid., 57.
means that when we first make connection with a group of young people we accept them as they are. . . . Contact is first and foremost about spending time with a particular group of young people.”

2. *Extended Contact:* The second step in this relational model is extended contact. This stage addresses the question: How can relationships between workers and young people deepen? Youth workers are often able to make the initial contact with young people and achieve some level of success in developing a positive rapport. The problem arises when the youth worker does “not manage to move beyond the first level of relationship building. Conversations between workers and young people can remain on a fairly superficial level. The result is that intimacy and sharing has sometimes failed to materialize.”

Extended contact provides the opportunity for the youth worker to take relationships with youth to a deeper level. It “really can be anything. The keys will be that it is something which interests the young people concerned and that it allows for some kind of deeper sharing.” This kind of relationship will take time and a significant commitment on the part of the youth worker. Youth will notice the difference between the “too busy” adults, and the youth worker who is willing to become part of their lives.

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69 Ward, *God at the Mall*, 58.

70 Ibid., 61.

71 Ibid.

72 Ibid., 63.
When youth workers are “willing to do something with a group, the worker is signaling that the group members are significant.”

3. **Proclamation:** The proclamation stage answers the question: How do I share the Christian message with the young people I have come to know? Ultimately it is the goal of the youth ministry that the young people being ministered to gain the ability to answer the questions of adolescence by understanding who they are in Jesus. Once youth workers have established contact and deepened the relationship with extended contact, they must move on to the next “challenge of finding an appropriate way to share the gospel story.” There will be a change in the relationship between the youth and youth worker.

The youthworker needs to come to terms with a movement from being an adult friend who occasionally organizes trips and events to being someone who overtly tells the gospel message. . . . This may sound very intimidating and somewhat of a daunting prospect. The key, however, will generally lie in the extent to which the youthworker has established a caring and credible presence among the group of young people.

The relational foundation that the youth worker lays prior to proclamation will determine much of how the youth respond. “Contact ministry is the bedrock upon which incarnational work is based.” Upon this strong foundation, a way is paved for the opportunity to proclaim the story of Jesus. Pete Ward quotes Jim Rayburn by saying that youth workers should “earn the right to speak.” Ward continues by saying, “By this he

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73 Ward, *God at the Mall*, 62.

74 Ibid., 68.

75 Ibid., 67.

76 Ibid., 68.

77 Ibid., 61.
[Rayburn] meant that we should have been around enough to be known and to get to know young people before we set about talking about Jesus.”\(^7^8\)

Ward offers two possible methods that can be used for proclamation. First, he suggests that the youth worker obtain permission from the youth to do something more spiritual. It is always important to obtain permission from the youth you work with to take things to the next level. Youth appreciate, even those on the inside, the opportunity to have a part in any movement within the relationship. Once permission is given, the youth worker could have a discussion “based upon a previous experience”\(^7^9\) the group had together. This experience could have been “a visit to a church or the ongoing activity of telling stories about Jesus.”\(^8^0\) Ward states that “in this way the idea could be presented as a question, ‘How would you feel about doing something like the church service we went to, but with better music?’”\(^8^1\) This type of discussion opens the door for the youth worker to hear and to be heard.

The second method Ward describes involves the organizing of a special trip or camp that will focus on spiritual things. It is important to advertise the event as having significant spiritual components. Leaders do not want youth to feel tricked into attending a weekend about Jesus. Those attending the weekend will most likely come because of a certain amount of comfort in talking about Jesus, or because of a comfort based upon their relationship with the youth leaders. During this weekend, the story of Jesus needs to

\(^7^8\) Ward, *God at the Mall*, 68.

\(^7^9\) Ibid., 69.

\(^8^0\) Ibid.

\(^8^1\) Ibid.
be shared. Ward suggests using the following pattern for evangelistic talks:

Start with an experience of the young people themselves.

Tell a relevant story about Jesus.

Link the experience of the group and the Bible story.

Explain what this means for the young people.

Shut up.\(^2\)

During the trip, this pattern is repeated during each meeting. The following topics should be covered: Who was Jesus? What did He say? What did He do? Why did He die? How can we meet Him today?

4. **Nurture:** The fourth step in this process is nurture. “Nurture will generally involve some kind of group work. Young people who have decided to follow Jesus need a place where they can think in more depth about their decision. . . . The nurture group therefore needs to focus upon developing . . . the right kinds of spiritual skills, e.g., methods of prayer, discussion, and worship.”\(^3\) The question that always surfaces by leaders is, “How do I do that?” The answer lies in small group meetings. The youth leaders need to arrange meetings for a smaller group of the youth group to come together and discuss spiritual things. It does not have to be at the church. This can take place in a home, at the local pizza parlor, or at a park. The youth leader is simply trying to set the stage and atmosphere where the youth can discover spiritual things for themselves with the support of the leader. “The role of the youthworker in this situation is primarily to act as someone who ‘translates’ biblical stories or insights from church history and theology

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\(^2\)Ward, *God at the Mall*, 70.

\(^3\)Ibid., 72.
into the present day context of the group. . . . The youth worker tells stories and offers insights from his or her own experience and study.”  

As the spiritual element of the group grows, “conversations about faith will begin to permeate the activities.” This is precisely what the youth leader is hoping will happen. The youth will begin to associate everyday life and situations with spiritual things. As this takes place, it will begin to “look a little more like the kind of relationship Jesus developed among His disciples, with questions and answers, stories and explanation coming as the disciples accompanied Jesus on journeys or at meal times.”

5. Church: “The question for this stage is, ‘How can the young people who have come to faith find a place in the church?’” Whether the young person started as part of the inside or outside group, they now need to find where they fit in the body of Christ. The assumption is often made that the inside youth are already part of the church. It is true that they attend on a regular basis but, quite often, up until this point, they have been uninvolved, uncommitted, and unnoticed. Now is the time within the five stages to further involve them. For those from the inside, this may mean further or more intentional involvement. For those from the outside, this may be their first try at church participation. For the small church, asking or involving the youth provides additional much needed help. Most of the small churches “have ministry holes they need to fill, and

84Ward, God at the Mall, 71.
85Ibid., 72.
86Ibid.
87Ibid., 73.
asking the youth to help is an excellent idea.”

Ward says it is important to remember that no youth leader should ever “seek to control young people, [but should] simply offer choices.” This is the role of the youth worker for the youth who have accepted Jesus. Grassel takes a quote from *Four Views of Youth Ministry and the Church* and says, “Youth ministry is not about finding an extra place for yet another ministry, but about finding a place for youth within every ministry.”

“Youthwork has as its goal the desire for young people to become independent of the youthworker.” Unfortunately, there are times and instances when the youth have a hard time finding their place within an existing church or church service. Sometimes it is necessary to encourage the youth to start something new. While the youth worker will want to work alongside the youth, they will need to allow them “to find their own direction independent of [the] youthworkers.” If the scenario of needing to start something new occurs, the youth worker will need to be a resource and guide, as opposed to a dictator of the new ministry direction. It is vital to remember that the youth workers are there to help the youth find their place in the church. God has designed each young person with gifts, talents, and enthusiasm to be used in His church. This passion within each young person will thrive when they find the place they were designed for.


89Ward, *God at the Mall*, 74.

90Grassel, 84.

91Ward, 74.

92Ibid.
CHAPTER 4

LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR A YOUTH MINISTRY

Introduction

In order to lay a solid foundation for a youth ministry, there are five specific steps. Step one is the development of a team of people to plan and implement the youth ministry. Step two is the development of a mission statement. Step three seeks to assess the needs of the youth. Step four explores and documents all possible resources. Step five develops and implements programming based upon steps one through four. These five foundational steps will be discussed in this chapter.

Developing a Team of People

One of the small churches in my Conference had just elected a married couple to lead their youth ministry. Soon after I heard of their appointment, I arranged a time to sit down with this couple and their pastor to discuss the direction of the youth ministry. When we met, they presented their plans in great detail. Their plans for the upcoming year were quite impressive. They had formulated all kinds of programs to address nearly every real and felt need the youth of their church were experiencing. After they had made their presentation, I asked them one question, “Who else is on your team?” I specifically asked this question for the sole purpose of seeing whether they planned on implementing all of these wonderful programs on their own, or if they had developed a team of people to partner with them. After I asked the question, they paused, looked at
each other, and then explained that there were other leaders who would help them. If there were other leaders, I thought, where were they? Why were they not at this meeting and were they really invited? My fear was that this couple would try to do it all. Yes, the ideas and programming was great, but I was afraid that before too long they would become overwhelmed and burn out. Unfortunately, I was right. Six months later they resigned from the youth ministry discouraged and tired.

Developing a team of people is the first task in starting a youth ministry in the local church. A youth ministry will only be as good as the people who lead it. Too often individuals, as shown by our example, try to do it all. This points to the importance of having a team to lead and work in youth ministry. Doug Fields says that “being part of a team will lengthen your work in youth ministry and strengthen your church.” Without a doubt, developing a team will demand additional time and energy at the front end of the ministry development and the implementation process, but will pay its dividends shortly into the process. Some of your greatest difficulties in team building will turn out to be your greatest blessings. Duffy Robbins puts it this way,

Frustrations are a normal part of any team effort. . . . But there are also in team ministry deep satisfactions: the friendships melded through shared memories, the allegiance forged by standing shoulder-to-shoulder in ministry, the privilege of watching God use your combined efforts to do together what you could not have done alone, and the pleasure of being with fun, resourceful Christians who are just crazy enough to want to work with teenagers. What it amounts to is blessing indeed!²

Doug Fields, author of Your First Two Years in Youth Ministry, has outlined

¹Doug Fields, Your First Two Years in Youth Ministry (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing, 2002), 172.

²Robbins, This Way to Youth Ministry, 521.
several reasons why each youth ministry should have a team.\textsuperscript{3}

1. \textit{With a team, you don’t bottle-neck growth.} For those with a passion for youth, there seems to be an innate desire to be there to support and care for them. The tension arrives when the leader realizes that as an individual he or she cannot be everywhere at once and the person only has a limited amount of time. Typically, youth leaders find that there are more youth, more issues, and more situations demanding attention than they as individuals can apply attention to.

For the youth leader who insists on doing it all themselves, they will quickly find that the ministry will become, as Doug has referred to it, bottle-necked. You may find that youth are coming to the programs and that they are forming relationships among each other. Initially the youth leader may glory in the success of the ministry; however, this is when the real youth ministry begins. Each young person requires significant time. The youth will have real questions from real situations in their lives and will be looking for help, encouragement, and advice. These issues require significant attention. One leader can only address a fraction of the needs that come from working with young people.

The difference is seen when the youth leader empowers and develops a team of people to work with him or her. The needs of the young people can be addressed by the varied skills and talents of the team members. When the youth worker works alone, the needs of the young people become backed up and put onto a waiting list. But if there is a team, the team can work together to keep the young people’s needs met. Not only are the

\textsuperscript{3}Fields, \textit{Your First Two Years}, 172-178.
needs of the youth met, but the team of youth workers will enjoy ministry as they are
given the opportunity to employ their passion and gifts. “When we learn to allow others
to have some of the credit, take over portions of the ministry, and invest in relationships,
the result is a team that soars with enthusiasm.”

2. ***With a team, you will have more energy and last longer in youth ministry.*** One
of the major themes that I have seen in youth ministry, especially in small churches, is the
turnover of leadership. The popular phone message or typical e-mail will say, “This
year’s youth leader is. . . .” The amount of turnover is remarkable. The common thread
found among most of these churches is the lack of a supporting team. “Most discouraged
and fatigued youth workers are usually ministering all by themselves. Doing everything
alone is draining.” As exemplified by our story of the couple who was wanting to do it
all, those who try to do it all will most likely end up as they did, tired, stressed, and out of
youth ministry.

3. ***With a team, your church is stronger.*** There is strength in numbers. This
statement is true not only because more bodies create a larger base of muscle, but because
the more talents that are woven together in the form of a team or body, the more they will
complement each other to produce a better result. Many talents and gifts are only semi-
effective on their own. But when they are used in conjunction with someone else’s
talent, they complement each other. For example, someone who plays the drums may be
an excellent drummer. There are very few people who can put on a drum concert in
which people will attend; however, when the talented drummer plays within the context

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4Fields, *Your First Two Years*, 172.

5Ibid., 173-174.
of a band, suddenly the rhythm, beat, and melody, produced by all the instruments joined
together, will create a sound that will reach a larger audience. “No matter how much you
love God and students or how gifted you are, you’ll never be able to accomplish as much
on your own as you can with teammates.”

4. With a team, your impact broadens. When a team is employed, the different
personalities, tastes, backgrounds, and interests will all work together to reach and speak
to a more varied audience. The problem with the singular youth leader is that his or her
traits will only speak to a small group of people. However, when there is a team, the
chance of making a greater impact is increased through the diversity of the team and their
ability to connect with a variety of people. “The more varied your team members, the
more varied the students you’ll be able to care for.” As opposed to dividing the group,
diversity among leadership strengthens the team by applying the varied traits in the
needed and appropriate areas. “The beauty of working with a diverse group of
volunteers—young and old, athletic and musical, quiet and outgoing, and so on—is that it
gives students opportunities to see what Christian commitment looks like when it’s
shaded by different types of personalities.”

5. With a team, you’ll have more fun. The first church that I worked with here in
Pennsylvania in 2006 began with nothing. They had very little. They had no previous
program, no leaders, and only a handful of young people. As we began to dream and
vision of what God could do in and through this church for youth, a small team of leaders

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6 Fields, Your First Two Years, 172.

7 Ibid., 177.

8 Robbins, This Way to Youth Ministry, 526.
began to form. This small team would evolve into a committed diversified leadership team. This team meets the first Thursday of each month to review and make plans for the upcoming month’s youth ministry. Much of what needs to be done could probably be done in about an hour; however, with this group what should take about an hour is extended to two hours at least. Why is this? This group has so much fun together that it takes longer. They rarely get through an agenda item before several jokes have been made, a story told, or an inside joke is remembered. This kind of camaraderie not only makes some of the difficult times easier, but makes what would be considered by many as work, fun.

**Developing the Right Team of People**

In the small church setting it can be difficult to find not only help with the youth ministry, but quality help. In some instances, especially in a small church, there might be the need to involve some of the less than desirable volunteers, just to make the ministry possible. It is good to always keep in mind both the physical and spiritual well-being of the youth. Obviously, this is not promoting the involvement of those of questionable character in the youth ministry; however, the church leaders may need to utilize someone whose energy level resembles that of a log to assist in supervision, set-up, clean-up, and other details. Jim Burns encourages the church to make sure that those becoming part of the team, “must [at the very least] love kids and be willing to spend time with them.”

Ideally, the church leaders choose and then ask individuals to be part of the team. If the church truly wants quality, they need to prayerfully seek those whose gifts would

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benefit the team and ultimately the youth. Duffy Robbins has boiled down the search and selection process to four fundamentals: Call them, Court them, Coach them, and Cover them. These four resemble the actions of Jesus and Friend from the theological chapter.

Call Them: There are two primary ways to invite individuals to become part of the ministry team. The first way is the public appeal from the front of a meeting or worship. This rarely effective method informs the congregation of the youth ministry’s need. This method quite often falls short of providing the desired results. Very few people respond to this type of invitation and if they do, typically they are not the individuals that you had hoped would respond.

The second, and typically more successful approach, is when current youth leaders invite others personally. Within the context of the small church, individuals are used to being asking to take responsibility or help with numerous jobs at the church. This makes it all the more important for the youth ministry leadership to use the most effective methods when it comes to inviting desired team members.

Robbins says that “one is more likely to invest in the broker’s recommended stock when he/she knows the broker has already invested in that same stock.” When volunteers who have personally invested themselves into something invite others to do the same, the response is typically positive. When someone who is in a paid position makes the invitation, others are less likely to respond. The same invitation can be made by the youth director or pastor, and will prove to be less effective than the invitation given by a current volunteer to a potential volunteer.

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10 Robbins, This Way to Youth Ministry, 544.
11 Ibid., 545.
Court Them: Working in youth ministry can be one of the most rewarding and enjoyable ministries in the local church; however, at the same time, it can also be exhausting, lonely, frustrating, and seemingly unsuccessful. It is vitally important to recognize the need to frequently encourage those who are involved in the youth ministry. “The average volunteer youth workers receive affirmation and encouragement for approximately the first four weeks of their labors.”12 It is typically after those first four weeks that youth leaders will need the most encouragement. As the leaders begin to experience the time commitment, criticisms, and lack of desired results, it is at this point that many volunteers choose to quit. However, if those in leadership are intentional with their “courting” of their leaders, even small things meant to encourage can make a huge difference. “One must not underestimate the power of symbolic rewards.”13 It can be something as small as a special pen, an e-card, or a t-shirt. These small rewards can produce the needed lift in the spirits of an overworked youth leader. Robbins says, “Good youth ministry leadership courts volunteers, makes them feel appreciated, makes them feel wanted, and lets them know that their ministry is an important one.”14 With limited resources in a small church in terms of individuals that have the gift of working with young people, it is crucial that the head youth ministry leader or pastor court team members. This courting, will prolong the amount of time youth leaders stay in ministry.

Coach Them: You can almost hear a sigh of relief within some small churches

12Robbins, This Way to Youth Ministry, 547.
13Ibid., 550.
14Ibid., 547.
when someone finally agrees to be the youth leader. Many new youth leaders hesitate in
taking the position, not because they do not have a love for young people, but because
they are not sure how to start, lead, or grow a youth ministry. Unfortunately for the
newly appointed leader, they are not the only one who does not have a clue of what to do.
Often times the pastor, head elder, and other leadership have little youth ministry
experience on which to base advice. So what typically seems to happen is that the new
youth leader tries to do something by planning a Saturday night activity, a weekend
camping trip, or a community outreach. When the event fails, then the leader becomes
discouraged and questions their calling into youth ministry.

What is missing is the proper coaching and intentional training that is needed. If a
small church youth ministry is lucky enough to have several seasoned veterans, then this
coaching and training can begin with them; however, many small churches have no one
with any kind of experience that can be passed from one leader to another. Just because
the coaching and training is not available at the local church, it does not mean that the
idea of coaching and training should be thrown out the window. Youth leaders should
seek out opportunities to be coached. Within the Seventh-day Adventist denomination,
most conferences have youth directors who can be a starting point for the local leader.
Whether the youth director has experience in local church youth ministry or not, they can
most likely point the local leader to available seminars and trainings. Making sure that
local church youth leaders are coached is vital. Coaching provides the much needed
support that small church youth leader’s need.

**Developing a Mission Statement**

Step two in this process is the development of a mission statement. “A mission
statement gives a reason for doing what you are doing.”\textsuperscript{15} Quite often youth ministry in the local church will launch without clear objectives or goals. Duffy Robbins suggests that each youth ministry should begin “with the end in mind.”\textsuperscript{16}

I have encountered several youth leadership teams that have resisted taking the time to formulate a mission statement. I cannot say that I entirely blame them. Many leaders have endured long hours of mission statement construction only to have this well-built statement hang unused and forgotten on the church’s wall. However, if used correctly and intentionally, a mission statement can become quite a tool to assist a team in staying focused.

With all that said, how does a team construct its own mission statement? First of all, begin by having the team list their ideas of why they will be doing what they are suggesting of doing with the youth. The mission statement should be “broad enough to encompass all that ministry defines as its mission, but brief enough to be stated in a single sentence.”\textsuperscript{17} As the team lists all of the mission purposes, they will begin to see several common ideas that are repeated by the use of different words. Connect these common ideas together and list the three most prominent ideas mentioned. Look and pray over which of those listed clearly states the mission of this ministry. Often the word identifying the mission will be in the form of a verb. “Typically, a mission statement combines a verb and one or more infinitives in a statement that is compelling, concise,

\textsuperscript{15}Clark, \textit{Starting Right}, 114.

\textsuperscript{16}Robbins, \textit{This Way to Youth Ministry}, 426.

\textsuperscript{17}Ibid., 433.
meaningful, and action-oriented.”¹⁸ An example is given by Fields: “Our youth ministry exists to reach nonbelieving students, to connect them with other Christians, to help them grow in their faith, and to challenge the growing to discover their ministry and honor God with their life.”¹⁹

Once the mission statement is completed, it can be put on the wall and forgotten. Just kidding. Now is the time to actually use it to help the ministry stay focused on the “why” of the ministry. Fields writes that this kind of statement will help youth ministry leadership do the following: First, it will, “make sense of your programs.”²⁰ How many times have people been a part of a youth program and thought to themselves: “What are we really accomplishing?” The fact of the matter is they may or may not be accomplishing meaningful things; however, they will never know why they are doing what they are doing until the mission and purpose for their activities is clearly identified.

Second, a clear statement will help “utilize your volunteers more effectively.”²¹ When the statement of mission is clear, volunteers, which is almost always the case in the small church, can be used in a defined role for a defined purpose. I have worked with a number of groups where those who had agreed to help in the youth ministry felt lost and useless amid a night of youth ministry that seemed more like chaos. When the “why” is clear to those leading the team, it can be clearly communicated to those whom they ask to join their efforts.

¹⁸ Robbins, This Way to Youth Ministry, 433.

¹⁹ Fields, Purpose-Driven Youth Ministry, 57.

²⁰ Ibid., 56.

²¹ Ibid.
And finally, a clear statement will help “provide direction for your students’ spiritual maturity.” Attempting to grow youth in their spiritual walk can seem like a task of enormous proportions to a small church youth ministry team. Not only does the small church lack a full time youth pastor, but they are often without means to provide impressive worship venues like those provided by large churches. However, when the mission is clear to the team, they will then be able to think outside the box of traditional methods and create new ways that can potentially accomplish their mission of spiritual growth for the youth without the large church resources.

**Determining the Needs of Your Youth**

Step number three in our series of five for laying the foundation for solid youth ministry is identifying the needs of the young people the leader intends to reach. The identification of needs is known as an assessment. This assessment will assist the team in being intentional in its appropriation of resources as implemented in programming. The needs assessment along with step number four, resource assessment, will provide the formula for program development.

Chap Clark organizes the needs of youth into three categories: general, specific, and individual needs. Each category narrows the scope of focus. The assessment will begin by examining the general group of young people and progressing to the individual. The youth leadership team will need to sit down and perform this assessment as a group. This task is often much easier and more accurate within the small church as opposed to...
The youth leadership team will need to sit down and perform this assessment as a group. This task is often much easier and more accurate within the small church as opposed to the large church setting. Most small churches, since they are small, have the ability to make significant relationships that in the large church would remain superficial. The small church can take these relationships to a deeper, more meaningful level.

Within the context of the needs assessment, the youth leadership team can then use their knowledge of their youth that they have gained through meaningful relationships, to accurately assess their young people.

The first area of assessment is the general needs of the youth. General needs are just that. They are the needs that are generally universal to those who are traversing through adolescence. Examples of general needs would include relationships, salvation, service opportunities, guidance, information about dating, and sexuality.

An assessment of specific needs takes things one step deeper and tries to see if there are some prevalent needs that may not be universal to the entire group, but specific to a large percentage of the group. Examples of specific needs would include single parent homes, a group of homeschoolers, a group of public schoolers, and pockets of youth from areas such as the inner-city or rural towns.

The final area to look at is the individual needs of the youth. This assessment will seek to identify unique needs that need to be addressed by the team. Individual needs include drug addiction, learning difficulties, language barriers, and physical limitations.

There are all kinds of ways and tools that can be used to discover your youth’s needs. Tools would include a survey or a questionnaire. These types of tools, especially when given the opportunity to rename anonymous, can provide very specific information
of where the needs are. These surveys can be made by the leadership team. They can be very simple in the way that they directly ask the tough questions that can reveal the real issues the youth are dealing with. Many helpful surveys can also be found in youth ministry and adolescent psychology books. One such survey which the leader may choose to utilize is “Youth Survey” in Barry Gane’s book *Building Youth Ministry: A Foundational Guide.*

The second way to identify needs is to simply spend time with the young people the leader intends to reach. This should be done in both the formal and casual settings. As the leadership team spends time with the young people, the needs will become evident. Needs will become clear in the formal group setting; however, the more a leader can “hangout” with the young people in a casual setting, the deeper the relationship will be. Because of this personal relationship, more trust and sharing between the youth and the leader will take place. For those who really want to understand what their youth are dealing with, and how they are or are not coping with these issues, they will need to spend time in their world. “You can learn a great amount about the youth culture when you invade young people’s territory. Be a student of their world; watch and listen. . . . Your life will never be the same.”

### Resource Assessment

Step four in this process is the assessment of all available resources. This process will help the team clearly identify what is available to them in order to meet the mandate

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of their mission statement. The term resources “refers to anything that will positively or negatively impact a community’s ability to fulfill the stated mission according to the needs of students.”

Immediately a leader’s mind goes to the things that can be viewed as tools in their tool belt to minister to the youth. Typically the items mentioned are the things viewed as positive resources. Such things may include the room reserved for youth in the church, the twelve passenger van, and the amount of money for youth in the church budget. It is important for the leader to also identify the items that are at their disposal that can potentially work against them. Although these are frustrating and difficult to work with and around, they are important to identify as work begins towards developing programming. Once identified, it is much easier for the team to intentionally work around or creatively use for the positive.

The church often limits resources to tangible things such as money, vehicles, or floor space; however, Clark expands the normal definition to a much broader one by saying that “a resource may not be something wholly tangible, or even measurable, but it is very real.” This is one of those moments when the team should allow itself to freely brainstorm. Quite often what is thought of as a joke will lead into the discovery of a real resource. Examples of resources would include: money, adult staff volunteers, vehicles, facility, computer access, musicians. Examples of non-tangible resources would include: time, spiritual maturity of staff, and youth ministry experience among the staff.

In careful notice of all the steps thus far, the most time and paper was spent

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26 Clark, Starting Right, 117.

27 Ibid.
focusing on the most valuable resource of them all, people. As teams take time to identify resources, significant time should be given to examine the resources they have in people. The skills and experience shared among the leadership team and church community can be viewed as a real resource to be utilized.

In attempting to document all available resources, the team should intentionally keep the mission statement at the forefront. The team should be asking, “What resources do we have available to us that will aid in accomplishing our statement of mission?” This entire process, steps one, three, four, and five, all come together to lay the foundation to accomplish step number two, the mission.

**Developing and Implementing Programming**

As the youth director for a conference of nearly one hundred churches, I am often asked for a program that can be run in the local church for the youth. “Give us a program that other youth groups are using here in the Conference.” These churches are looking for a tried and true program that can be taken out of the proverbial box and applied to their local setting. They are, in essence, looking for a ministry model that can blindly be applied to their situation, at their church, for their youth.

Each step in this process has been leading the youth ministry team towards the forming of a personal ministry model. Each step aligns resources and provides both clarity and intentionality as a team progresses towards the formation of their own model. To be very specific, there needs to be a definition of what a ministry model is. “Simply put, a youth ministry model is a prescribed approach to operating a youth program.”

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model will reveal itself in the form of prescribed programming.

Unfortunately, there is no perfect youth ministry model that can be unwrapped and applied. Due to the fact that each community of believers is different, no one model can appropriately meet the needs of each and every youth group. “To create an exact replica of ‘what works’ in a different community, or family, is neither advisable nor even possible.”

Many churches have failed in their attempt to minister to their youth by attempting to apply a model without adapting it to suit their context.

One of the other pitfalls that I see many small churches fall into is the attempt to copy the ministry model of a church many times its size. “Too many small churches try to mimic successful youth programs in large churches. . . . They try to build a two-bedroom house with the floor plan of a Hollywood mansion. It just doesn’t work.”

The needs of the youth of both large and small churches may be similar; however, the strengths and assets of each will greatly differ.

The secret to successful program development is remaining true to the process of steps one through four. Ever keeping the mission of the ministry in mind, the team now needs to ask themselves, “In light of the needs of our young people and with respect to our available assets, what kinds of programming can we produce that will utilize these assets to meet the current needs?”

Each church’s youth ministry model is a programmatic design in response to a group’s needs and available assets. As a team progresses through each foundational step, they will be laying the ground work to create their own model. In step five, the formula

29Clark, Starting Right, 109.

30Chromey, Youth Ministry in Small Churches, 35.
is added together to come up with a programmatic response to the questions that have been answered. The team will need to look at each answer they came up with by reviewing the questions they were asked. What is our mission? Why are we doing what we are doing? What are the specific needs of our youth? What assets do we have available to us? Once they have reviewed the questions and answers, they will need to ask their team the following question: In response to the needs of our youth, while utilizing our available assets, what type of model or program will appropriately address these needs and fulfill our mission?

There seems to be some fear and trepidation by many leadership teams when it comes to stepping out and developing their own model that involves creating programming that fits the individual situation. Many teams feel that “it is easier to trust the ‘experts.’” However, leadership teams need to understand that “when the model was being formulated, the experts were not yet experts! They tended to simply ask some important questions and respond accordingly.”

Leadership teams of the past whose ministry model have now become legendary in the world of youth ministry had to in some way, shape, or form deal with the same problems and issues the teams of local churches are today. These pioneers of well-known ministry models seem to the rest of normal humanity as super-disciples who had an inside track on culture and ministry effectiveness. The assumption is that the inventor or initiator of a well-known model somehow came up with his ‘formula for success’ in an error-free ministry laboratory. But in reality every single new idea for ministry that ultimately becomes packaged as a model began when a church or group decided that something needed to be a bit different. Almost no one set out to develop a new, comprehensive model for everyone else to follow. Few start-up pioneers began with a vision designed to change the world—they simply

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31Dean, The God-Bearing Life, 111.
set out to change their world. The seeds were planted in response to a unique need and setting, and the founding group moved on from there.\(^{32}\)

Once a model is designed and programming is ready to be implemented, the team will need to understand that the model they initially begin with will change and evolve over time. As programming is implemented, the team will become aware of areas that need to be tweaked or altogether changed. They will discover what is and is not truly meeting the needs. As the ministry matures and finds itself five and ten years into the process of local church youth ministry, the youth leader will most likely find that the model he/she began with has dramatically developed over time. This mature, tried-by-fire model that the leader labored with and developed over time is the type of result leaders often see and covet from other successful youth ministries. Kenda Creasy Dean states that “a model is often more stumbled upon than strategically realized, and rarely do we get to see the dark side of the evolutionary process.”\(^{33}\)

Creating a Model That Fits

This chapter was entitled “Laying the Foundation for a Youth Ministry.” Its purpose was to assist local churches in doing just that. Through intentional efforts to develop people, a mission statement, and programming, each local small church can launch a successful youth ministry. I have chosen to not give my own model in this paper. Each small church’s dynamics will vary greatly. There will only be one constant. That constant is the need for relationships between adults and youth. Current literature on youth ministry emphasizes relationships. Mentoring, meetings, and missions are three

\(^{32}\)Dean, *The God-Bearing Life*, 110.

\(^{33}\)Ibid., 111.
main elements of youth ministry that will, when founded in relationships, answer the questions youth face as they go through adolescence. I would encourage youth leaders to spend significant time working through the process described in this chapter. It can be painstaking, but will be well worth it. The foundation that will be established will provide a firm platform for programming that meets the needs of the youth. This paper will spend little time providing a specific model. Youth leaders in the local church need to take the foundations presented and diligently seek to create a model in their setting. Clark says that “youth workers [need] to think beyond the simple question of what works in order to learn how to think. . . . It is important to let go of the need to copy and duplicate, and become men and women of prayerful thought and careful theological analysis and reflection.”

Models that work in small churches are models that have been prayerfully designed by leaders within the church. Successful models are created through prayer, analysis, and reflection. These types of models provide an atmosphere where adults go to the youth, talk, invite, and teach them.

As youth ministry teams labor with the formation of a ministry model, Clark makes a plea that teams keep these four things in mind.

*Pray, both individually and corporately. In every setting and with every decision, make Jesus Christ the Lord of your program, and not anyone else’s idea of what you should do. History, tradition, resources, expectations, and advice are all helpful and good in making large and small strategic and programmatic plans and decisions. But the Scripture is clear that God’s people called to leadership must devote a great deal of time and energy to prayer.

*Be theologically grounded and committed. First and foremost, youth ministry must be a theological task. Avoid any program, strategy, or decision that you are not thoroughly convinced is the most theologically appropriate course of action you can determine for your unique situation. Whether it is in fundraising, camps and retreats, mid-week programming, student leadership, or special event planning, make sure that

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34Clark, Starting Right, 109.
every person involved in your ministry can articulate the theological rationale for the strategy.

*Stay open to change. Those most dangerous youth worker is the one who thinks he has arrived at knowing how to do the task of youth ministry. Whether it is resilience in the way to do it or loyalty to a specific model or a subtle arrogance due to previous successes, it is the kiss of death to theologically and sociologically sensitive youth ministry. God is always moving—and always working—regardless of the cultural shifts and changes. We must be fresh in our openness to changing the way we bring the gospel to adolescents.

*Trust in the Incarnate God, not proven models. Jesus Christ is the Lord and He is therefore Lord over methods, strategies, programs, and models. As long as He reigns on the throne of your ministry, His kingdom will come.35

35Clark, *Starting Right*, 124.
CHAPTER 5

REPORT AND EVALUATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to report, evaluate, summarize, and conclude the findings from data collected from eight youth ministry leadership teams that participated in this training program over the last four years. This chapter will answer the following questions. How much did each team participate in the trainings? Did they participate in the year-long mentoring with the youth director? Did the youth ministries at the local level reflect what was presented at the trainings? Was this method successful in enabling local church leaders to have a sustainable youth ministry?

The Trainings

Major weekend training sessions were held during the following dates and covered the following topics: October 2005, Missions & Mentoring (appendix A); October 2006, Missions & Mentoring (appendix B); October 2007, Meetings (appendix C); April 2008, Mentoring & Meetings (appendix D); October 2008, Mentoring, Missions, & Meetings (appendix E). Samples of the material covered for each of the three foundational elements are provided in the appendices. There were a total of four weekend training sessions. The three foundational elements were covered ten times during these weekends. In addition to the four training weekends, a year-long mentoring relationship was offered to the youth leadership teams. In this relationship, the youth
director met with the teams each month to discuss and train them in the three foundation areas.

The Questionnaire

Eight youth ministry leadership teams from churches in the Pennsylvania Conference chose to participate in this sampling. The eight youth ministry teams represented all levels of participation in the training provided over the four years. Three leadership teams (Allentown, Grace, and Hampden) attended at least four out of five of the trainings. Two teams (Easton and Kingston) attended at least two out of the five trainings. Two teams (Boulevard and Hanover) attended at least one training. And one team (Spanish II) did not attend any of the trainings. Seven out of the eight teams took part in the year-long mentoring relationship with the youth director. These eight teams were asked to serve as focus groups. Each team filled out a questionnaire (appendix F) designed to reveal common themes among each group. The questionnaire consisted of twelve total questions that focused on the three main youth ministry foundations as identified in this project. The areas of focus were mentoring, missions, and meetings. One questionnaire was to be filled out by each of the local church youth leadership teams. They were invited to list their responses to each question as consensus was achieved by the group. Some of the questions may not have applied to the youth group if they had not implemented a particular foundation. Common themes that arise from analyzing the results of the questionnaire will be discussed, highlighted, and used to develop conclusions as to the success or failure of this youth leader training paradigm used for this project. This questionnaire was designed to help determine whether or not the youth leader training method was successful. The method would be deemed successful if those
who participated in the trainings were able to design and implement a sustainable local church youth ministry. From these eight completed questionnaires conclusions will be drawn.

Mentoring

1. *Does your youth ministry have an intentional mentoring program?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Mentoring Attended</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Allentown</em></td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Boulevard</em></td>
<td>1/4</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Easton</em></td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Grace</em></td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Hampden</em></td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Hanover</em></td>
<td>1/4</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Kingston</em></td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Spanish II</em></td>
<td>0/4</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Participated in the yearlong mentoring program with the youth director.*

The first question of the questionnaire asked the leadership teams whether or not their youth ministry provided an intentional mentoring program. Three teams said yes (Allentown, Easton, and Kingston) that they did have an intentional mentoring program and five (Boulevard, Grace, Hampden, Hanover, and Spanish II) said that they did not have this type of program (Mentoring: Yes-3, No-5). Seven of the eight teams had attended weekend trainings that focused on mentoring (Attended Training Weekends That Focused on Mentoring: Yes-7, No-1). Out of the three teams that said they did have a mentoring program, all three had attended at least two out of the four (50%) of the
trainings that focused on mentoring. Also, two out of these three had participated in the year-long mentoring with the youth director.

Out of the five teams that said they did not have a mentoring program, only one (Spanish II) of these groups had attended none of the trainings on mentoring. Two of the groups (Hampden and Grace) that did not have mentoring, had attended a significant amount of trainings. These two teams had collectively attended nine out of ten of the trainings focused on mentoring (9/10 training sessions but no mentoring). The reason this is significant is because this shows that two out of the five teams (40% of the non-mentoring churches) did not have mentoring but had attended 90% of the training sessions on mentoring.

For those who said that their youth ministry did not provide this type of program, they were asked to explain what challenges they faced that prevented them from having this type of ministry. Two of the groups (Boulevard and Hampden) said that one of the main reasons for a lack of this type of program was due to the issues that the leadership team had. One of these two teams (Boulevard) said that they, the leadership team, were “not able to be consistent or together on this issue.” The other team (Hampden) said that their “busy schedules and lack of planning” were some of the main reasons their ministry lacked mentoring.

Two leadership teams (Grace and Hampden) also said that they had a minimal staff or were the only adults on the leadership team. I had a sense from both of these comments and from the other questionnaires that many of the teams would love to provide this type of ministry but feel unable to do so due to a team that is maxed out on time and energy in providing their existing programming. A fear or feeling of an
inability to conduct such a program is what seemed to be the issue here. Mentoring takes the program from a group setting to a one-on-one intimate relationship. This seems to be a scary thing for some of the leaders. Seemingly, the teams put other types of programming as a higher priority over mentoring. One team (Grace) was only made up of one adult leader, which truly limits a youth ministry’s ability to be multi-faceted. The other team (Hampden) mentioned in this paragraph felt that their team was too small or had “minimal staffing” that rendered them unable to provide mentoring; however, this team is the largest youth leadership team in the Conference with nine members. For this particular group, it seems that providing mentoring is secondary to the programming they are currently providing.

Two leadership teams (Hampden and Hanover) said that they would need training to know how to provide mentoring. The first team (Hanover) out of these two said that they would “need training to see what this really looks like.” The other team (Hampden) said that they were prevented from having mentoring because of “possibly not knowing how to get started.” What is interesting here is that it is quite easy to see why the first team (Hanover) truly would not have known what adult to youth mentoring clearly looked like due to only attending one of the trainings on mentoring; however, the second team (Hampden) attended three out of the four training weekends that focused on mentoring and also participated in the year-long mentoring relationship with the youth director.

2. **What kinds of things are done to intentionally mentor your youth?**

This question was only answered by the three teams that said, “yes,” they were providing an intentional mentoring program.
The Allentown team, which attended three out of four trainings on mentoring and participated in the year long mentoring relationship with the youth director, said that the youth are “informed [that] they should consider greater service within youth ministries, and that mentoring can be provided if they were agreeable to the proposal.” The team reported that the following opportunities are offered to the youth who agree to participate in the mentoring program. The youth who choose to receive mentoring are then mentored within these opportunities.

- Adventist Youth program control and meeting management
- Plan and run the main worship service four times per year
- Youth-led week of prayer
- Weekly Bible studies for youth, led by youth.
- Community outreach and fund raising programs

The Allentown team has implemented a clear mentoring program. They utilize their programming as opportunities to mentor youth as individuals to lead in various leadership opportunities.

The Easton team, which attended two out of four trainings on mentoring and participated in the year-long mentoring relationship with the youth director, reported that their mentoring program consisted of “inviting teens from the neighborhood to a youth leader’s house where they sing, fellowship, pray, offer prayer requests, and spend time in Bible study.” Due to my knowledge of this particular youth ministry, they focus on a different crowd than most of our local church youth ministries. Easton, also known as Legit Worshippers, uses the Inside-Out model like our other groups, but has seen a different result. Instead of their group consisting of a majority of Adventist youth who
have invited a few non-Adventist friends, they have four or five Adventist youth who have invited fifteen non-Adventist friends. Consequently, the majority of their group is unchurched. The information provided in their report portrays more of a discipleship program as opposed to an intentional mentoring program. However, due to my knowledge of this group, they have recently began mentoring one particular young man who responded to the challenge offered by leadership to step up and learn to lead.

Judging alone from the data given in their questionnaire, Easton seems to have more of a discipling program as opposed to an intentional mentoring program. Undoubtedly, there are multiple moments where mentoring occurs. They plan their meetings with such intentionality that mentoring is something that often occurs.

The Kingston team, who attended two out of four trainings on mentoring but did not complete the year-long mentoring relationship with the youth director prior to this study, reported that they do the following to intentionally mentor their youth:

- Each youth is a shadow officer to an elected adult officer.
- Each youth takes responsibility for at least one non-Adventist youth/peer.
- Each youth is a prayer warrior.
- Each youth takes part in the outreach activities of the church, from the assessment phase to the actual implementation.

It is clear that the Kingston team is taking clear intentional steps to mentor their young people. The strategy that defines their mentoring program is the youth shadowing of an adult in church leadership. This particular strategy takes their program from discipleship to one-on-one mentoring. One unique detail for Kingston is that they have involved other adults in their mentoring program. Instead of only utilizing adults on the
youth ministry team to mentor, they are using numerous other local church leaders to
mentor their youth. This undoubtedly helps to unite this small church and distributes the
responsibility of youth ministry to those other than those on the leadership team.
Kingston also reports that two of their young people have been mentored by the youth
leaders in the area of preaching and have already preached their first sermons.

3. What has been the most difficult obstacle?

Two of the five teams (Boulevard & Spanish II) that said they did not have an
intentional mentoring program answered number 3 question. The Boulevard team
reported that their most difficult obstacle in launching this type of program was the lack
of “unity . . . as well as the level of commitment from” existing leaders. Spanish II
reported that their greatest obstacle was a lack of “enough adult support. The adults seem
as though they do not care what goes on.”

As for the three teams that reported having a mentoring program, one echoed
some of the same sentiments described in the previous paragraph. Allentown said that
“the most difficult obstacle seems to be . . . convincing adults that they can indeed
lead . . .” The adults in Allentown seemed to lack the confidence to work with the youth
one-on-one.

Three out of the five teams that answered this question referenced their greatest
obstacle as being some issue that centered on the adults either in the leadership team or
within the church. This particular issue refers back to the identifying reason why youth
ministry was not happening at the local church level in the Pennsylvania Conference.
The issue is not having enough youth or even youth who are willing to participate in
youth ministry, but the issue lies in the absence of adult leaders who are trained and
willing to work within this type of ministry. In referencing the adults, these three teams said that the problem was with the adults. They said the adults gave little support, lacked unity, and confidence.

The other two teams that have a mentoring program (Easton & Kingston), reported that their most difficult obstacle was the lack of consistency in which the youth were able to attend things that involved their mentoring program. Kingston said that the “youth’s availability or unavailability impacted the mentoring process.” This forced the leaders to create “alternative dates” and times, “in order to complete a particular program.” The Easton team reported similar frustration when they said that “getting them all [the youth] to attend consistently” is an obstacle. “They all come from difficult backgrounds and have problems.” It is due to these problems that the youth “are not always able to attend.” Two out of the three youth ministries that have a mentoring program said that getting their youth to attend with consistency is their greatest obstacle.

4. What results have you seen in the lives of your youth from your mentoring program?

Due to a mentoring program at the local level, two of the three mentoring churches (Allentown, Kingston) said that as a result of a mentoring program their youth were more willing and able to take on leadership roles. It is interesting to see that the two groups that clearly implemented mentoring programs where youth who invited to either shadow or learn directly from adults in leadership positions, were the two groups that had youth who were willing and able to take on leadership roles.

All three mentoring churches said that they saw a clear change in the youth who were mentored. The Allentown team said that their youth have “grown personally” and “discovered their own capabilities.” The Kingston team said that the youth’s “overall
attitude has changed dramatically,” and that they “act more responsible.” The Easton team noted specific changes in the lives of their youth. They said the youth have started “coming to church, joined Pathfinders, begun to pray and study the Bible on their own, and accepted Jesus into their hearts.”

Trainings on mentoring were done more than any other of the three foundations. Mentoring was focused on four times, as opposed to three times for both missions and meetings. It was disappointing to see that out of our eight youth groups that reported, only three are offering an intentional mentoring program. What is encouraging to see is that those who are offering this type of program are seeing clear results from their efforts. The one-on-one relationships between the youth and adults have produced many of the desired results.

**Missions**

1. *How often does your youth ministry program serve the community?*

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*Participated in the year-long mentoring with the youth director.*
Question #1 was seeking to discover how many of the youth groups are active in missions. The information provided gave great insight into the high percentage of youth groups that are currently participating in missions. Seven out of eight teams reported activity in missions. This is an astonishing 88%. I was pleasantly surprised to see that there was only one group (Boulevard) that reported having no involvement in missions. It is important to note that this particular team only attended one of the trainings that focused on missions.

In analyzing the seven groups active in mission, it can be seen that they fall into two categories. The first category to look at is the youth groups that are involved in mission service three to six times per year. Four youth groups fell into this category (Grace, Hampden, Hanover, Spanish II). The leadership team from Grace attended all three trainings on missions. The Hampden team attended two out of three mission trainings. The Hanover team attended only one of the trainings on missions. Spanish II did not attend any of the trainings on missions. This data seems to be split right down the middle. Half of the teams that were involved in a substantial amount of mission outreach participated in a significant amount of the mission trainings; however, the other half attended little to none of the mission trainings. Figures show that the trainings may have helped those who participated in the trainings. Those who did not attend these trainings may have been able to identify the need for missions within a youth ministry through the emphasis placed on this by the youth director during the year-long mentoring relationship.

The second category looked at was the youth groups that were involved in mission outreach at least once a month (12+ times per year). There were three youth
groups that fell into this category (Allentown, Easton, & Kingston). None of the three groups attended all three trainings on missions. In fact, only one group (Allentown) even attended two out of three trainings on missions. Both Easton and Kingston only attended one of the mission trainings. It is hard to identify why these three groups placed missions in such a high priority. What is interesting to note, is that one-fourth of these three youth group’s monthly meetings outside regular church times focused on missions. Twenty-five percent of a youth group’s programming is significant. It is also important to mention that three out of the eight groups (37%) are involved in mission outreach 12+ times per year.

2. **Please describe your service/missions to the community.**

   In trying to discover exactly how the local church youth ministries are involved in mission, the teams were asked to provide specific examples of how their youth group participates in mission. In the large variety of examples given, I found several dominant activities.

   First, five out of the eight youth groups collect and distribute food to those in need in their respective communities. Five of the eight groups (63%) do this at least once per year. Due to being involved in this type of mission outreach, these youth groups are interacting with the community on two fronts: (a) they are interfacing with those who donate the food, and (b) they are interfacing with those to whom they provide food. In this type of ministry, the youth are acting as a bridge between the greater community and those who are in need. This particular mission outreach provides a living example how youth ministry bridges youth to Jesus. In this model, the youth are now becoming the bridge for the community to know Jesus. What is even more exciting is that three of the
five youth groups said that they distribute food more than once per year.

In addition to food collection and distribution, there were four common activities in which at least two teams cited involvement. First, nursing home visitation was mentioned. Three of the eight teams said that their youth group visits nursing homes as part of their mission outreach. Second, two teams reported that their youth work intentionally with their non-Adventist peers as part of their mission work. Third, two teams said that their youth hold yearly evangelistic series. In these series, it is the youth who preach, run the sound, PowerPoint, and other logistical items. And fourth, two teams said that their youth help implement the Vacation Bible School during the summer each year.

3. What has been the most difficult obstacle?

This question was placed in the questionnaire to help determine what issues might be hindering youth groups from becoming involved in missions. There were several themes that arose.

First, three of the eight teams (Grace, Hampden, Hanover) reported that there was an issue with planning. For some of them it was simply a lack of planning on their part as a team. Others expressed having a desire to plan, but found it difficult to find time to plan mission outreach.

A second obstacle that was shown was difficulty “getting the kids enthusiastic” about serving in mission. Three (Allentown, Hampden, Hanover) of the seven groups that are active in missions, said they had some type of issue related to getting the youth interested in mission participation. Evidently, even if the leadership teams are able to
meet together and plan mission activities, they still are faced with the obstacle of getting all of the youth enthusiastically involved.

Two other obstacles that were surprisingly only mentioned once were obstacles that involved lack of funds and parental support. I have heard both these obstacles mentioned to me numerous times over my time in the Conference. It is surprising that these obstacles were not common themes.

4. *What results have you seen in the lives of your youth from their involvement in missions?*

   Question number four was seeking to discover whether or not the mission trainings were successful in having a visible effect upon the youth in the youth groups. There were three main themes that came to the forefront: (a) we saw an increase in community awareness by the youth, (b) we saw that mission involvement gave the youth a sense of belonging, and (c) we saw that mission involvement increased the youth’s willingness to serve in the future.

   Five (Easton, Grace, Hampden, Hanover, Spanish II) of the seven teams said that involving their youth in missions fostered an increased awareness of other people, specifically in the community. This is the most dominant theme that was shown and 71 percent of the groups involved in missions said they also saw this result. This is extremely significant if the church is to take the commission of Jesus seriously. Jesus has commissioned His church to go and reach the world in His name. Mission involvement by the local youth group seems to open the eyes of the youth to the vast mission field in the world around them.

   Four (Easton, Grace, Hampden, Hanover) of the seven teams (57%) reported that
they felt missions gave their youth a sense of belonging. The teams recorded statements like, “[Missions] gave them a sense of belonging,” “The youth always have a lot to talk about afterwards.” “The biggest thing is their conversation on how they feel afterwards.” “Most look forward to our mission trips.” Evidently, mission involvement bonds the youth groups in unique ways that fosters heartfelt, enthusiastic, and real conversations.

The third theme identified that the youth who served had an increased willingness to serve in the future. Four (Grace, Hampden, Hanover, Spanish II) of the seven teams (57%) made statements that found commonality along these lines. The question that arises is, “Does this contradict statements by three of the seven teams that said that getting the youth involved in missions was one of their greatest obstacles?” I believe the answer is no. Apparently the leadership teams have trouble getting the youth to participate, but once the youth do participate in missions, they have a change of heart and are willing to participate again in the future.

The training sessions on missions had a significant effect. Thus far in the study, mission involvement rates highest in youth group participation at 88%. It is exciting to see the results that have developed out of a focus on this particular foundation. Specifically, the youth’s new community awareness, their sense of belonging, and willingness to serve, are all extremely note worthy. What may be difficult to overcome, but will need to be addressed, is the adult leadership’s difficulty in finding time to plan for missions. It seems quite plain that if the leadership can find time to plan, it will pay significant dividends.
Meetings

1. *How have meetings positively and negatively effected your youth?*

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*Participated in the year-long mentoring with the youth director.

This question sought to discover both positive and negative themes that the teams were seeing as a result of the different meetings their youth attended. Over the course of the trainings, meetings were focused upon three times. In the youth responses, the teams referenced Bible study, AY meetings, youth-led church services, youth nights at the church or a home, and a variety of social events. The teams reported a wide variety of results that they saw from these meetings. On the positive side of things, six (Allentown, Boulevard, Grace, Hampden, Hanover, Spanish II) of the eight teams (75%) reported that the meetings they planned gave their youth a venue in which they could share or express themselves. Several teams said this venue provided the stage where the youth would express themselves by raising questions, discussing issues, and sharing their views. Two groups (Allentown, Kingston) said that they felt that since this venue was made available to their youth, the youth now felt that they were “part of the church” and “had a say.”
Interestingly, what I found was that only two (Boulevard, Easton) of the eight teams (25%) mentioned that as a positive result of their meetings their youth grew spiritually. One team said that their youth now “know there is a God that loves them,” and the other team said that “there have been some small steps made in growing spiritually.”

The teams reported that they saw numerous negatives come as a result of their meetings. It has hard to see a common theme among their responses. The following statements were provided from six (Boulevard, Easton, Grace, Hampden, Hanover, Spanish II) of the eight groups. Our youth “hate coming to church.” Our youth “have gained a negative view of Adventism.” Our youth “think the meeting should be all about a fun time.” Our youth are “less inclined to show up” and “participate.” Our youth “misunderstand [the youth group’s] purpose.” It is “hard to get them to own it.” However, there were two teams (Allentown, Kingston) that did not report any negatives. It is difficult to believe that these two teams have never had any negatives come as a result of one of their meetings. What is interesting to note, is that these two groups represent two out of the three groups that have an intentional mentoring program. It is possible to conclude that the youth groups that have mentoring, one-on-one relationships between adults and youth, have more positive results from their meetings. It is also possible to conclude that mentoring relationships affect more than one aspect of a youth ministry.

2. *Is each meeting designed with a specific goal? If yes, please provide examples.*

This question sought to discover whether or not the leadership teams intended to be intentional with their meetings. Notice that the question does not ask if they were
completely successful in accomplishing their goals set for their meetings, but at least planned with intentional purpose.

Five (Allentown, Boulevard, Hampden, Kingston, Spanish II) of the eight teams (63%) reported that they designed each of their meetings with a specific goal. The examples given included the following statements:

- recharge our spiritual batteries
- help the youth to know Jesus
- getting the youth to walk closer to God
- realizing that all need God
- to get a conversation going
- spiritual conversations
- team building
- attract friends from outside of group
- provide fun events

All five teams that design their meetings with a specific goal in mind included some type of spiritual goal in the examples they provided. However, only one (Boulevard) of these five teams saw spiritual growth as a result of their meetings. The other team that reported that they saw their youth grow spiritually did not plan each meeting with a goal in mind. Two out of the eight teams (25%) saw spiritual growth in their youth, but only one out of eight (13%) sought it as a specific goal during the planning and implementation of their meeting.

3. What challenges have you faced?

This question sought to identify common challenges that the teams ran into as
they attempted to implement their meetings. Three main challenges emerged from the responses given. The first challenge that three of the eight teams (38%) reported focused on some issue with adult leadership. Two of these three teams said that they had a difficult time getting enough “adult support” and “staffing.” The third team reported that there were internal issues in and among the leaders that created disunity for mission and focus.

The second challenge that I saw among several teams was that they were having trouble getting the youth to take ownership of the meeting’s programming. Two (Grace, Hanover) of the eight teams (25%) found difficulty getting the youth to “fully engage.” As a result, the leaders found that they were doing all or most of the work.

The third challenge focused upon a lack of material to conduct interesting and effective meetings. Two of the eight teams mentioned something along these lines. For them, there seems to be a lack of resources that they are made aware of to implement the kind of meetings they desire.

4. What would you change about the meetings you currently attend?

Questions one and two of this section asked for the meeting’s goals and for the positive results that have been seen as a result of these meetings. Seemingly, very few of the goals that have been set by the teams have been reached. For example, five of the eight teams said they planned their meetings with a spiritual goal in mind, but only one of these teams saw that goal reached. Where is the disconnect? Question four sought to discover what the youth themselves would say if given the opportunity to change the meetings their leaders currently provide.
A wide range of answers were given by the teams. Six of the eight team’s answers (75%) focused upon some type of programming element that the youth would change or implement. Five of the eight teams (63%) reported that the youth would specifically change the programming by making it more active in some way, shape, or form. Two of the teams said that their youth would change either the time or venue of their meetings.

It is difficult to say what kind of an affect the trainings on meetings had upon the leadership teams and their programming. Five of the eight teams (63%) attended two out of the three trainings that focused upon meetings. All eight teams reported having meetings, whereas, when it came to mentoring, three of the eight groups had mentoring programs, and seven of the eight groups were involved in missions. However, this provides little evidence, since having a meeting is the usual program that is implemented by a team wanting to do something for their youth. It is discouraging to see that so few of the teams are seeing spiritual results. But, it is encouraging to see that the meetings that the groups have, foster open communication where the youth can hear and be heard.

**Conclusion**

Four years ago at the beginning of this program, the Pennsylvania Conference had only one local church youth ministry in the entire Conference. In an effort to have more youth ministry taking place at the local level, the youth department initiated trainings in mentoring, missions, and meetings. These trainings were combined with a year-long mentoring relationship between the youth director and local church members who had a desire to create a youth ministry at their church. At the end of it all, many questions can now be answered.
1. Did providing training to leaders at the local level empower them to create and sustain youth ministry?

The leadership trainings did empower local leaders to create and sustain youth ministry. Over the four-year period, twelve churches participated in weekend training sessions. Eleven of these twelve churches were mentored by the youth director for one year. Eleven out of the twelve churches that attended at least one weekend training session have sustained consistent youth ministry for over one year’s time. These eleven youth ministries now functioning at the local level are offering youth ministry to their youth at least three times per month outside the normal Sabbath morning service times. Where there was no youth ministry prior, these trainings empowered local church members to become youth leaders of a sustained youth ministry.

2. Did a higher number of attended weekends by the participants make a difference in their outcomes? Simply stated, did exposure to more training sessions lead to better results?

The data did not necessarily show better results from attendance at more of the trainings. The one consistent element that seven out of eight of our teams experienced was the year-long mentoring with the youth director. I believe this was a key component. It was during these monthly meetings that I was able to consistently reiterate the information given at the weekend trainings. Whether the leadership teams were able to attend the training or not, they were still able to be repeatedly exposed to the information on the three foundations.

3. Was this youth leadership training paradigm successful?

Yes, this paradigm was successful as it was based upon the information given in
the questionnaires and the fact that eleven out of twelve participating churches now have a sustained local church youth ministry. The trainings in the three foundations gave the local leadership teams a starting point to focus upon as they began their youth ministries. I would not say that mentoring, missions, and meetings are the end all exclusive foundations that must be focused upon; however, these three areas provided a broad foundation upon which the local teams could begin to build their ministries. Again, I strongly believe that the mentoring relationship between the local leaders and youth director was crucial.

4. *What would I do differently?*

The first thing that I would do differently is that I would seek to get more buy-in from the pastors of the churches. I would try to get the youth leaders to bring their pastors to the training sessions and mentoring meetings. I saw that the churches that did have strong pastoral support had more of a ‘can do’ attitude towards their youth ministry. I would seek to do a better job of casting the vision to the pastors so that they would see their role in the development of a youth ministry at their church.

A second thing that I would do differently is that I would seek to develop more leaders who would have the ability to mentor other leadership teams. I functioned as a one-man show who bounced around trying to mentor each of the groups. I would attempt to place youth leadership teams into groups where they could support each other.

A third thing that I would do differently is that after one year of local youth ministry, I would have the leadership teams themselves begin to teach some of the foundational principles at the leadership weekends. Often times a person does not really become an expert on something until he or she has had the chance to try to teach it to
someone else. I would use the existing training sessions to give the new leaders opportunity to share what they had learned.

The fourth thing to be done differently is that the progression through the foundations would be clearly presented. The trainings began in 2005 by launching into both missions and mentoring. From there the training sessions continued be about the three foundations. At the very beginning, I never told the youth leaders that we would be focusing on three main foundations. There was never a clear presentation at the start that gave an overview of what the three foundations were and why they are so important. Instead, I built on each training and continued to focus upon the foundations. What I would change in the future, is that I would begin the very first weekend training session by presenting the three foundations as three key areas that would be focused on over the next four years. Rationale would be provided as to why these three areas are so vital.

**Recommendations**

I would like to make recommendations to three groups: first the Conference, second the local church, and lastly to the local church youth leaders.

*Conferences* are faced with the enormous task of trying to be fiscally responsible with the resources they have been given. Many of our conferences experience moments where tithe is down or budgets need to be cut. In many cases it is the youth ministry of the conference that ends up being the ministry that is down sized or cut. The statistics clearly reveal that the Adventist church in North America is losing our youth at a staggering rate. Unless this trend is stopped or reversed, the future of the church in North American is in question. I am encouraged by the results experienced from this project. We have clearly seen that when leadership training is provided to willing members of
local churches, youth ministry happens. Where youth ministry is, the percentages take a turn for the better in all areas. Conferences cannot continue to down size their youth ministry departments and expect their churches to grow or even maintain current membership. Conferences need to have youth directors who not only have a job, but have the opportunity and flexibility to work on local church youth leadership training. Many youth directors spend all of their time working on Pathfinders, Adventurers, and camp, and are left with little or no time for local church youth leader development. This is not to say that those areas are not important, but it is to say that youth leader training at the local level is just as important.

The second group, the local church, faces the challenge and responsibility of providing youth ministry for the youth. Today’s culture and society have created a need for youth ministry. Parents rarely take the time to have the kind of influence they once had centuries ago. They no longer spend the day working with their children in the fields or mill. In addition, today’s culture has placed its grip upon our youth. It is this anti-Christian culture that creates confusion and a sense of being lost in a world with so many paths. Youth ministry in the local church seeks to bridge young people to Jesus. Without adults laboring for the souls of our youth how many will be lost? Satan and his forces are working to secure the future of our young people. If he is working with such diligence, why aren’t we? Many small churches feel that they lack the resources to sustain a youth ministry. I believe this to be untrue. The small church’s greatest strength is its ability to develop and maintain deep relationships. This is what our youth need and are looking for. Every church, yes, even the small church, should have an intentional youth ministry to bridge their young people to Jesus. I recommend that each church pour resources into
their youth leaders and assist them in receiving consistent training.

The final group I want to address is the small church youth leader. Being a youth leader in a small church is not easy. It requires many hours of sacrifice and perseverance. Often times it begs the question, “Is it all worth it?” The answer is yes. The young people of the church may forget the worship talk that was given, never know how much of personal money was expended on them, or know the hours of preparations it all took, but what they will remember is that someone or the church cared. That love for them will be used by the Holy Spirit. In the years to come, the Holy Spirit will remind the youth of adults who loved and cared for them. Youth in and near our churches need individuals who will go to where they are, talk to them, invite them into a relationship, and then teach them about Jesus. I recommend, small church youth leaders, to keep looking to Jesus, hunger for additional training, and keep ministering to the youth God has given you.
APPENDIX A

TRAINING SESSION MATERIAL OCTOBER 2005:
MENTORING & MISSIONS
Inside Out or Out-Side In

Dr Barry Gane

CHRISTS GREAT COMMISSION - OUR MISSION

The Challenge

The Christian church faces the greatest challenge of all time. Jesus said go into all the world and make disciples. There are now approximately 5,000 million people that share life on this planet.

In one year there will be ninety million more people on this planet than there are today.

What makes it worse is that there are over 2,000 million people who have not even a nominal connection with Christianity today; of these 1,000 million have not even heard the story of Jesus, that is about eight times as many as in Paul's day.

Most of the 'Christian' countries of the world have entered into the 'post-Christian' era.

To compound the problems the population of the world is increasing at the rate of 175 new people every minute 105,000 per hour, 252,000 per day and 1.75 million per week, 2% or 85 to 90 million each year, and this despite the fact that 17 million children starve each year.

Is It Possible?

If one Christian would win one person and then disciple that person for the next six months so that person could win and train another, at the end of six months there would be only two people.

At the end of the first year = 6 people
At the end of 1.5 years = 18 people
At the end of 2 years = 54 people
At the end of 2.5 years = 162 people
At the end of 3 years = 486 people
At the end of 3.5 years = 1,458 people
At the end of 4 years = 4,374 people
At the end of 4.5 years = 12,024 people
At the end of 5 years = 36,072 people
At the end of 5.5 years = 108,216 people
At the end of 6 years = 324,648 people

Youth Rise to a Challenge

Young people are not going to be attracted to a church that tries to entertain them, but they will be attracted to a church that calls them in a ministry to others...

Young people want a church that will provide them with concrete ways to become agents of God's revolution.

E G White

In order that the work may go forward in all its branches, God calls for untold energy and courage. He has chosen youth to aid in the advancement of His cause. To play with men's minds and excite with the outpouring of His grace, they may bring glory to Him and salvation to their fellow men... With such an army of workers in our youth, God forbid it might fail. With such an army, the strength of coming years will number, and coming Seer might be carried to the whole world.
Where are Our Priorities?

Only about 10% of the message members are still active in the church by the tenth grade. Less than 10% of the church’s resources are spent on those who have left or never came!

Preparation for Outreach

1. The church must have an Outreach Mindset—difficult but not impossible to go if you can.
2. Whole program of the church needs to be intentional in its design.
3. Foster ownership and develop leaders who share the vision.
4. Implement an Outreach Plan.

Getting Intentional

1. Friendship

People are people to Christ. Programs are nothing more than tools in people’s hands. But for the only people who have friendships with non-Christian friends are non-Christians. That’s what’s powerful about young witnesses—they have non-Christian friends.

2. Verbal Witness

As friendship and trust between a believer and unbeliever develop, the Holy Spirit motivates the Christian to share verbally. Knowing the right time to share is the key to avoiding religious jargon. A genuine testimony which keeps Christ central can be very powerful. Through repetition it becomes natural and easier to do.

3. Outreach - Providing a Service for Seekers

The next step involves the young person bringing other friends to a church event or activity, such as a program should present the Christian message in a positive light and will include elements of celebration, growth, and acceptance. The environment should be non-threatening, attractive and appealing to the unchristian youth.

4. Spiritual Challenge

Students should ask their non-Christian friends pointed questions that intentionally challenge them with the claims of Jesus. Conversion happens when the non-Christian accepts Jesus as his personal Savior and Lord. This will be a洗礼 by friendship, attendance at meetings, studying the Scriptures and providing opportunities for the non-Christian to respond to the convincing work of the Holy Spirit.
6. Body-Life Program
The newly converted young person needs to learn to pray, worship, fellowship and study with a core group of God's people on a regular week-by-week basis. Acts 2:42. They must be integrated into the body of Christ.

6. Discipleship (Often best in small groups)
The new Christian's friend (the one who has led him through this whole process) needs to be a Christian model and spend time with the new Christian:
* discussing their spiritual lives
* reading the Scriptures and praying
* having fun times together
* seeking Christ-centered solutions to their problems

7. Spiritual Parenthood
This concept comes from 1 Cor. 4:14-21 and means producing discipleship by infusing... having them in the ways of the Lord. At this point the Christian has become the "spiritual parent" to the new Christian. The process comes full cycle as the new Christian gains the maturity to reach out in friendship to another unbeliever. If done properly "full cycle evangelism" can produce a beautiful harvest... (adapted from Focus on the Family's Dr. James Dobson's "Parenting after God's Heart")

8. Ownership
The new member needs to be given an active role in the church. Not to use is to abuse and finally to loose.

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An Action Plan for a Youth Group

1. Begin With a Group Interested in Witnessing
2. Conduct a Spiritual Gifts Survey
3. Survey to Discover the Most Common Needs in Your Community
4. Survey Youth to Discover their Preferences in Witnessing and Community Work
5. Assess the Results of the Spiritual Gifts Inventory, the Community Survey, and the Youth Preferences
6. Develop a Game Plan
7. Witnessing Activity Leader
8. Witnessing Activity Resources
9. Set Your Objectives; Plan and Try Something
10. Evaluate

---

SPEECH MEMORIALS

Scripture and challenge
Prepare spiritually
Locate the best of both the scriptural word and the subject
Prepare
Ensure you have all the needed equipment
Order or produce handouts
Inform participants of roles, speakers, slogans, crowd matters
Give Program outline to participants
Evaluate each program
Follow Up Programs
Youth Evangelism Ideas

Barry Gove

Youth Want to Be Involved

Perhaps young people are not attracted as much to a church that caters to entertainment as they are attracted to a church that challenges them to do things for others. If your church presented practical ways for young people to minister to the needs of others and to effect social change in the world, they would find you all over again attractive. Young people seek to be involved in a church that offers to their local situation by enabling them to be part of God's revelation and to be part of the movement to bring healing and justice to the broken world.

Tony Campolo
Ideas for Mission

**DUTIES FOR UNFORTRUANTES**
- Delight for orphans, HD, blind children, poor children...

**OPERATION HANDHELD**
- Designate places where the elderly are often overlooked and give them all the love available.

**OPERATION PRESIDE**
- Support all meeting of the group of love. Develop the skills
  and give direction. The Messiah will arrive in peace with men

**HEALTH CARE**
- Regular health for all groups of love and give direction. The Messiah will arrive in peace with men.

**POSSIBILITIES**
- Give gifts to those who are in the need of help. Develop the skills
  and give direction. The Messiah will arrive in peace with men.

**NEARER TO THE REVIVAL**
- Pray for the group of love to be developed and give direction. The Messiah will arrive in peace with men.

**EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT**
- Pray for the group of love to be developed and give direction. The Messiah will arrive in peace with men.

**THERAPY MINISTRY**
- Pray for the group of love to be developed and give direction. The Messiah will arrive in peace with men.

**PROVIDENCE**
- Pray for the group of love to be developed and give direction. The Messiah will arrive in peace with men.
Street Preaching

- To fail to plan is to plan to fail

Street Preaching

- Inspire and challenge youth with the great commission
- Prepare spiritually
- Locate site and get permission for the times you want
- Practice before you go out on the street

Street Preaching

- Ensure you have all the needed equipment
- Decorate your location
- Inform participants of roles - speakers, singers, crowd makers

Street Preaching

- Give a program outline to key youth
- do the talks about 2 - 3 minutes
- have three catchy pieces of music between talks
- Plan for follow-up
- Evaluate and program
APPENDIX B

TRAINING SESSION MATERIAL OCTOBER 2006:
MENTORING & MISSIONS
Welcome Youth Leaders!

MISSIONS
Youth Leaders Training Day
2006
Pastor Kris Eckenroth

"Mission" Session 1

- What do your kids like to do?
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.

- 80% of all the possible answers are given in the first three minutes.

"Mission" Session 1

Question:

- What aspect do my youth need the most?
- What type of activities should we plan for our youth group?

Focus on that!

- Do something well and then add to it.
- Focus on what will impact them.

"Mission" Session 1

- Three questions that need to be asked as you begin:
  - What is your youth ministry trying to accomplish?
  - How can you incorporate activity into your strategy?
  - What types of activities have had the greatest impact upon your?
  - Luke 19:12 - The disciples seemed to be impacted most when they were able to be active in ministry.

"Mission" Session 1

- Engaging your youth in missions allows them to live out the Gospel.
  - Do you learn better by hearing or doing?
  - Typically we learn better by DOING.
“Mission” Session I
- Personal involvement by our young people in missions will allow them to experience the Gospel in a way they never will without serving.

“Missions” Session I
- Youth literally serve Jesus!
  35 For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you welcomed me; 36 I was naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came to me. 37 Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and came to you?’ 40 And the king will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’ Matthew 25:35-40

“Missions” Session I
- “I believe that the church that calls young people to engage in ministry to the community by helping the poor, working for racial equality, caring for the elderly, and improving life for the disadvantaged, will find that it will attract numerous young people who are looking for the fulfillment that comes from investing their lives in the service of others.” Tony Compello, Ideas for Social Action p.9-10

“Missions” Session I
- Through these activities they will come to see that Jesus is not only interested in saving those from sin and getting them into Heaven but also in helping our brothers and sisters while they are here on earth. In many ways, this is the work of the church. Young people involved in social action will come to understand that God is utterly concerned with what happens to people here on earth. In this way, social action is a means of sharing the love of Jesus with others. Young people will be able to see God in a new way when they begin to realize that God is present in all things. There are many ways to serve God, but the most important way is to love one’s neighbor as oneself. The church should strive to help others in need and to be a source of hope and help to those who are struggling. It is only through these activities that we can truly understand the love of God and spread it to others. The church should also seek to change society and eliminate the causes of poverty and oppression. Young people who are involved in social action will be able to see God in a new way and understand the love of God in a deeper way. The church should also seek to change society and eliminate the causes of poverty and oppression. Young people who are involved in social action will be able to see God in a new way and understand the love of God in a deeper way.

“Missions” Session I
- We should always seek to find ways to make our ministries shelters for the outcasts and havens for the oppressed in this way, every youth ministry gathering is an opportunity to help youth practice their love for others. Chip Clark, Starting Right p.163

Tony Compello, Ideas for Social Action p.10
Biblical Principles of Teenage Spirituality
David Ferguson

Intro: Gordon McDonald, *Youth Worker Journal*, Spring, 1986:

"Genuine commitment doesn't happen during the teenage years."

1. The God-sized void:

   The first two principles are foundational...

   Young people today are looking for something to belong to and believe in, a family and a cause.

   Joshua 24:15-16
   But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the river, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.

   Matthew 6:24
   No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

2. Aching Legs & Upset Stomachs:

   Story of my growing pains

   Caryl Lynn’s pregnancy

   The process of spiritual growth doesn’t always look like progress. In fact, be most suspicious of the seed that sprouts up too quickly and easily.

   Galatians 4:19
   My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you...

   John 3:3
   In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.”
3. **God Moments:**

a. **The unexpected:**

   *God doesn’t always act when He is “scheduled” to.*

   *Mission trip stories – bus breakdown; losing luggage*

   1 Thessalonians 5:2
   
   ...for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief n the night.

   Matthew 24:42
   
   Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.

b. **The impossible:**

   *Story – the death of Jessica’s grandmother*

   John Winham – *The Goodness of God*: “*God whispers in our pleasure, but He shouts in our pain.*”

   2 Corinthians 12:9
   
   But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”

   Matthew 19:26
   
   Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

4. **Baby Steps:**

   *The guitar – Craig McNair Wilson, Micro-Movements*

   Colossians 2:6
   
   As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him...
Philippians 3:12-14
Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been
made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus
took hold of me. Brother, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold
of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward
what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God
has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

2 Peter 1:5-8
For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith
goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control;
and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to
godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you
possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from
being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus
Christ.

Eugene Peterson, A Long Obedience in the Same Direction: "Genuine
commitment is not a moment but a footprint."

5. Grapeness Happens:

_Boat Parable… to get to the other side – throw everything overboard_

_Story of Jesus in the back of the boat_

Oswald Chambers: “Abandonment to God is of more personal value than
personal holiness. Personal holiness focuses on our own whiteness. We are
greatly concerned about the way we walk and talk and look, fearful lest we
offend Him. Perfect love casts out all of that when once we are abandoned to
God.”

John 15:5
“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I
in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”

6. True Love:

_Caryl Lynn: The first “I love You” and last nights_

_Mark 4:28_
All by itself the soil produces grain – first the stalk, then the head,
then the full kernel in the head.
To Do List:

1. Defend the young and guard against judgementalism. Know that they are merely acting out of a desire to fill the God-sized void.

2. Seek the angle. Be aware that God will act unexpectedly and often through pain. Anticipate the opportunity (analogy: throwing a football vs baseball).

3. Always debrief. Even grief or failure can be a powerful tool when capitalized upon.

4. Look for micro-movements. Seek to find the smallest possible step of deeper commitment in your young people and shoot for that.

5. Model joyfilled Christian living. Many will never see a clearer picture of Christ than you.

Zookeeper Needed – Principles of Mentoring

I. Zookeeper Needed:

1. Story of Emily at the zoo

2. My top request of God on behalf of my children is that he would supply them each with a meaningful adult mentor.

   1. Naming the Animals: List all of the young people between the ages 13 – 18 who are in your “ministry” life. Now circle any that you have a unique relationship with. Finally *any that you feel a distinct calling to minister to.

2. Christ the Mentor
   
   1. Christ had different circles of influence
      
      1. The masses
      
      2. The disciples
      
      3. The special three
      
      2. Some will think this is unfair

3. Establishing a Mentoring Program
   
   1. 10 Qualities of a Mentor.
      
      1. Willingness to admit imperfections – they are real
      
      2. Discovers and reaches common ground of the youth
      
      3. Empathy
      
      4. Patience for the deepening of commitment
      
      5. Risks asking significant questions once on firm ground
      
      6. Allows failure and takes advantage of the accompanying growth
7. Loves unconditionally
8. Humility
9. Flexibility
10. Healthy boundaries
   2. Getting started – 5/10/60
   5 – Take five minutes to make a call
   10 – Take ten minutes to send a note
   60 – Take sixty minutes to have an “event”
   3. Find an accountability partner
   4. Recruit other mentors
Innovative Youth Ministries
Unlocking Your Creativity

The Art of Brainstorming
Rules:
1. No blocking
2. No wimping
3. Plussing
4. Piggy-backing

Active Learning
- When you give people the opportunity to actively participate they understand better and retain longer.
- Discussion, simulated experiences and direct experiences are only active learning for those who participate.
- If you really want to learn information, teach it.

Non-Neutral Environments
When you teach or speak in a non-neutral environment people’s attention increases.
Inductive Programming

Six criteria for asking questions - KATCAT
K - Key: develop key questions
A - Adept: be willing to roll with the punches
T - Time: allow time between asking and receiving answers
C - Clear: ask questions which those responding understand
A - Advance: move from easy to difficult questions
T - Trail: follow up responses of participants

CARE - for better presentations
C - Content: what are you going to share?
A - Activity: how do you plan to allow your audience to actively participate?
R - Relationships: how are you going to grow relationships in the process of your presentations?
E - Experience: how does the listener make this a part of their daily living?

Chaining

The Fine Art of Discussion Leading
1. The 5 minute rule
2. Prepare basic questions ahead
3. Then be prepared to ad-lib
4. Don’t ask “closed questions”
5. Don’t play “guess my mind”
6. Respect other’s opinions even when they differ from yours
7. Be willing to play devil’s advocate
8. Don’t be afraid if the discussion branches off
9. Allow silence
Unlocking Your Creativity

The Art of Brainstorming:

Rules:

1. No ________________

2. No ________________

3. ________________

4. ________________

"The best ideas are often the second cousin, twice removed from the crazy, impossible, ridiculous ideas. But you must go there first or the great ones may never come."
Thumb Wars:

Teams assumed the object of this exercise was to ______________ their partner.

Teams could clearly have done better if they had chosen to ______________ with their colleagues.

"Very few people are successful unless __________________________ want them to be." — Charlie Brower

Some examples of environments in which we should cooperate rather than compete are:

____________________
____________________
____________________
____________________
____________________
Each level downward builds on the one(s) above. This creates increasing effectiveness.

Percentages represent the learner's ability to both understand and retain information.

Notice where the transition from passive to active learning occurs and the corresponding jump in relative effectiveness.

adapted from: *Teaching the Bible Creatively*, by Bill McNabb and Steven Mabry
Active Learning

When you give people the opportunity to ______________________
they understand better and retain longer.

_____________________________________________________

Try this with two different groups of at least 10 people:

Group 1 – gather everyone together and tell them that if they can remember the word “FAST” when they return one month from that day, you will give them ___________ (something of your choosing like $1). Make sure no one writes the word down.

Group 2 – gather everyone together and ask them to come up with a four letter word, starting with the letter “F”, that means rapid or swift. Confirm that they have come up with one. Once again don’t let anyone write it down. Tell them that if they have the right word and can remember it when they return one month from that day, you will give them ___________ (something of your choosing like $1).

Keep track of results from the two groups and discover whether yours match the results of the study mentioned in the lesson.

_____________________________________________________

Discussion, simulated experiences and direct experiences are only active learning for those who______________________________

If you really want to learn information, _____________________ it.
Five Active Learning Examples:

For each activity listed below, come up with 2 - 4 different subjects, values or ideas you could use them to teach.

1. **Ping-Pong Ball Blow** - With a group of at least five, gather them on their knees around a round or square table so that their faces are approximately tabletop high. Place a ping-pong ball in the center and instruct that they may not touch the ball, but may move it only by blowing.

2. **Blind Taste Test** - Divide a group into pairs where one is blindfolded and the other feeds their partner cubes of either diced apple or onion (take care to see that they are the same size cubes). Allow half of the partnerships to breathe normally as they eat the cubes while the other half does so with their noses pinched closed. See how easy it is to tell the difference between the apple and the onion.

3. **Musical Chairs** - There are many variations to choose from. Pick the one that suits your points best.

4. **Spin Around the Bat Relay** - Form relay teams (at least 2 teams of 5 or more participants). Each team member must take turns running from behind a line to a bat placed a number of yards away. Once they reach the bat they must keep one end on the ground and the other against their forehead while spinning 10 full revolutions and then return behind the line. The next player must wait until they cross it. Play continues until all have crossed the line for themselves (more than once if necessary).

5. **A day of waterskiing or ski tubing** - Use the days events as a worship object lesson.
Five Target Teachings:

For each of the target teachings listed below supply a learning activity that can be used to introduce, explain or contrast the point.

1. Trust

2. Forgiveness

3. The Destructiveness of Gossip

4. The Power of Affirmation

5. Vision – Proverbs 29:18... “Where there is no vision, the people perish...”
When you teach or speak in a non-neutral environment, people's _______ increases.

The change to a non-neutral environment does not have to be thematic with the presentation to be effective.
Creating Non-Neutral Environments:

For each of the 4 small group study presentations below list some ways you could change the environment from neutral to non-neutral.

1. The Body Temple: Making wise choices regarding drugs, alcohol, exercise, diet, etc. – See I Corinthians 3:16

2. Grace & Forgiveness vs. Condemnation and Guilt – See Romans 8:1&2

3. Meeting the Needs of Others – See Matthew 25:31-46

Inductive Programming:

Comparing triangles...

A. The ____________ approach

B. The ____________ approach
CARE – for better presentations

C - ________________: What are you going to share?

If you don’t adequately prepare content you not only miss an opportunity to inform, you also communicate that the listener doesn’t ________________.

A - ________________: How do you plan to allow your audience to actively participate?

R - ________________: How are you going to grow relationships in the process of your presentations?

“______________ is a huge relationship builder.”

E - ________________: How does the listener make this a part of their daily living?

You give these presentations, give this information because you want to ________________ people.

If you influence someone, that means something ________________.
The Fine Art of Discussion Leading

1. The _____________________ rule.
2. Prepare _____________________ ahead.
3. Then be prepared to ___________.
4. Don't ask ________________ questions.
5. Don't play ________________________.
6. Respect other’s ________________ even when they differ from yours.
7. Be willing to play ________________.
8. Don't be afraid if the discussion ________________ off.
9. Allow ____________________.

Helpful acronym: Six criteria for asking questions – **KATCAT**

- **K** - _______: develop _______ questions
- **A** - _______: be willing to roll with the punches
- **T** - _______: allow _______ between asking and receiving answers
- **C** - _______: ask questions which those responding understand
- **A** - _______: move from easy to difficult questions
- **T** - _______: follow up responses of participants

Email us with questions and comments at info@truewind.net
Help! I'm a Small Church Youth Leader!

PA Conference Youth Department
Pastor Kris

Youth Ministry in a Small Church: Understanding Context

Intergenerational Culture
- Adults spontaneously join in youth event/program
- Less pronounced “youth culture”
- More adults will feel free to make comments/suggestions on how to run the youth programs.
- Students may not be able to participate due to other responsibilities in the church.

Youth Ministry in a Small Church

- The most prevalent kind of youth ministry in America.
- Definition: Typically less than 200 participants.
- 300,000 out of 340,000, 85-90%
- In the PA Conference... 100%
- Youth Ministry is... adults loving youth, building relationships with them, and pointing them to Jesus.

Youth Ministry in a Small Church: Understanding Context

- Take care of your kids first.
- Spend time learning how people are connected.
- Reach new kids in your community through church kids.
- Make sure outreach is part of your job description.
- Keep the Church informed.

Youth Ministry in a Small Church: Understanding Context

INVESTMENT vs. IMMEDIATE RESULT

- Larger churches have an “investment mentality”
- Smaller churches have an “immediate result mentality”
Ways to introduce “investment mentality”

1. Present and articulate youth ministry as "mission".
2. Use metaphors that the leaders can relate to. Examples: farming, exercise, construction
3. Grow trust with your church board so you’ll have the necessary credibility to make investments.

Ways to grow credibility w/ the family.....

1. Show/distribute results from time, money, and other resources that have been spent.
2. Year-end report sharing results from Church’s "investment" for the year.
3. Use funds wisely and keep accurate records.
4. Develop a plan for the next year and what you’ll need to make it happen that can be presented to the parish council several months before the new year.
5. Show how you have planned fundraising events for the youth to work to help with the ministry.

Tips for staying sane...

1. Learn to say "NO".
2. Learn to celebrate the small accomplishments.
3. Meet with other youth leaders in similar positions as yourself.
4. Don’t compare your program to others.
5. Make your spiritual formation a priority.

Three Ministry Models

What is a ministry model?
Presented approach to operating a youth program.

"A model is often more stifled than strategically initiated, and rarely do we see the dark side of the evolutionary process." Chap Clark

"Models are developed out of a response to a unique setting and need..." Chap Clark

Three Ministry Models

- Congregational Approach: youth are involved in the existing ministries of the church.

Works best when...
- whole church agrees to do this
- whole church takes responsibility for youth
- youth are involved in every and any area of interest

"Youth ministry is not about finding an extra place for yet another ministry, but about finding a place for youth within every ministry." -Robert Hud
Three Ministry Models

- Discipleship Approach: a process that trained and enabled Christians take on the spiritual disciplines of the Christian faith.

Works best when:
- youth are put into small (core) groups
- small groups combine and meet in a big group

Three Ministry Models: Discipleship

Small "Core" Groups:
- recruit small groups of youth who have things in common
- members have similar school calendars
- keep groups 6-8
- keep the groups the same gender
- insist on a covenant of confidentiality

Three Ministry Models: Mentoring

- Mentoring Approach: all about one-on-one relationships

*The strength of the small church is its ability to create, nurture, and build relationships in an intimate setting. While many small churches may struggle to produce a formal youth ministry program, many of them can mentor quite well.*

Three Ministry Models: Mentoring

- 1. Structure and Plan: what will students gain from participation? How will we evaluate this experience? What materials? etc...
- 2. Build Relationships
- 3. Set Goals
- 4. Develop Character
- 5. Develop Spiritual Leadership

Top 10 Youth Ministry Commitments

- #1. I will move slowly.
  - Fast changes can appear arrogant or reveal a maverick's personality to your church.
  - Speed often leads to pain.

Proverbs 14:15-16
Top 10 Youth Ministry Commitments

1. I will steer clear of the numbers game.
- Choose statements that reflect health. “It’s exciting to see how the youth are responding to the Bible studies.”
- Tell stories and share the good work God is doing.
- Use words the youth understand.
- Train the other youth workers to be more concerned about health than numbers.
Matthew 10:12

2. I will focus on priorities.
- Make a commitment to manage your limited time.
- “Doing more isn’t necessarily good youth ministry. Doing the right things, based on your priorities, is good youth ministry.” ~ Dwayne
Matthew 22:36-40

3. I will not criticize the past.
- Commit to strengthen your character by making others look good.
Philippians 3:13

4. I will avoid the comparison trap.
- Comparing your context with another’s isn’t a fair comparison.
Galatians 6:4

5. I will pace myself.
- Discover places, moments, and people who provide refreshment from the busyness of youth ministry.
- “It’s a marathon, not a sprint.”
Hebrews 10:36

6. I will not work alone.
- You must have a team.
- Follow Jesus’ example of sending out the disciples two by two.
Matthew 10:6-7
### Top 10 Youth Ministry Commitments

**# 8. I will be a learner.**
- Read, listen, attend.
- [www.youthspecialties.com](http://www.youthspecialties.com)
- [www.group.com](http://www.group.com)
- October 25 Fall Youth Leader Training

*The Youth Builder* Jim Burns & Mike DeVries
*Your First Two Years in Youth Ministry* Doug Fields
*Help, I'm a small church youth worker* Rick Grassel
*Youth Ministry in Small-Churches* Nick Chinosky

**# 9. I will pursue contentment.**
- Ministry isn’t easy.
- When you leave youth ministry too soon after arriving, you hurt the church as youth leaders rotate through the lives of the youth.
- “The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.”
- Stop looking over the fence and start watering your grass.

*Philippians 4:11*

**# 10. I will devote as much or more time to heart development as to youth ministry.**
- John 15: Without Jesus, you can bear no fruit.
- Keep the main thing the main thing.
- To make it in youth ministry and to be effective... you need a heart tender to God and open to His leadings.

**# 11. I will devote as much or more time to heart development as to youth ministry.**
- Being connected to Jesus on a daily basis is more important than...
- “Abide in Me and I in you, but apart from Me you can do nothing.”
- Don’t allow increasing ministry to decrease your intimacy and don’t let your influence exceed your intimacy.

**# 12. I will devote as much or more time to heart development as to youth ministry.**
- Grateful Commandments
- Faithfulness to the first command (loving God), results in obedience to the second (loving others).
- Loving God leads to loving others, but “loving” others doesn’t necessarily lead to loving God.
- Without a love for God, youth workers will be ineffective.

**# 13.**

Doug, I quit youth ministry yesterday, I got tired of hearing about how I needed to make sure those youth behave during the worship services like I am the church bouncer. I got tired of parents who don’t live Christian lifestyles and expect me to mold their kids in the few hours a week we have them and then when the kids screw up, the fault is the youth ministry not being deep enough. I got tired of those kids who play the game of being spiritual, but then live like they have never heard of Jesus. I got tired of adults who do not have a clue about youth ministry but have an outline of how I should do my job.
I got tired of people not respecting the youth ministry calendar by scheduling the facilities and taking them away from students. I got tired of people who believe that the way we did church in 1945 worked and that it should still work today. I got tired of people who have complaints but instead of going to those with whom they have a beef, they make phone calls to grips to dozens of other people in the congregation. I got tired of people who do not spend personal time with the Lord (by their own admission) but yet think they should run the church. I got tired of people who think my wife is also an employee of the church and should be available at all times. I got tired of people who keep asking when I am going to pastor my own church and become a “real” minister. I got tired of people who think youth workers can’t be trusted and need constant supervision. I got tired of working late and people thinking that is what I should do. I got tired of people asking, “What do you do all day when the kids are in school?” I got tired of all these things that I fail and felt so inadequate to do this job. Bottom line: I just got tired of being tired all the time.

However, I was smart enough not to tell anyone that I quit. I went home, spent some time with my family (and did not bother them with my quibbling), spent some time in prayer, and got a good night’s sleep. I am back on the job today. I have read Ephesians 6:13 and am steadfast that I will remain standing (and not quit). Those same people who I was tired of yesterday are still in my life, but somehow God has given me grace to love them today. I am grateful for having the best job in the world, the opportunity to be used of God as a vessel for His grace to influence young lives. I am so glad that when I quit on God yesterday, that He refused to quit on me. Today, I’m making a commitment to last because what God has called me to is too important to quit.

Your friend and (still) fellow youth worker,

Brian

Upcoming events:
- Free Running Youth Leadership Summit
- Youth @ Campmeeting
- Young Adults @ Campmeeting
- PYC (L.E. Program)
- Fall Youth Leader Training
- Youth Adult Retreat

142
"Where We Going?" Session IV

1. Mission Statement
   - mission
   - vehicles
   - goal

"Where We Going?" Session IV

- Things that have worked are............

"Where We Going?" Session IV

- YM is, "doing a lot of little things faithfully."
- "YM is messy."

"Where We Going?" Session IV

- Need:
  - Felt: issues or areas that can be described by youth as being important or significant (sex, dating, friendship, choices)
"Where We Going?" Session IV

- Needs:
  
  Real: Issues or area that an adolescent community may or may not recognize as important or significant but an adult supportive community can recognize (studying and knowing the Bible)

- Mission Statement
- Needs (both felt and real)
- Resources
  - money, facility, numbers, maturity of staff, etc.

"Where We Going?" Session IV

Mission Statement

| Needs + Resources = PROGRAMMING |
"The Power of Vision
James L. Black Sr.
*Adapted from The Power of Vision by George Barna.

Proverbs 29:18
"Where there is no vision the people perish..."

Introduction:
God's Vision for Your Ministry

Although pastor and laity are more aware of the importance for ministry, we are also in more desperate need than ever for a clear understanding of God's purpose for each individual church.

1. Masters of Vision

Through history, God has shared His vision for ministry with those people who have earnestly sought His will for their lives.

2. What Is Vision?

Vision for ministry is a clear mental image of a preferable future imparted by God to His chosen servants and is based on an accurate understanding of God, self and circumstances.

3. Don't Confuse Vision with Mission

Mission relates to ministry objectives, while vision deals with a ministry's direction and uniqueness.
4. Myths that Mar Vision

We must remove misconceptions about the process that God invites us to use in seeking His vision for our ministries.

5. Whose Vision are You Following?

Man's vision is flawed, but those leaders who turn to God will find that His perfect vision is one that blesses, inspires and survives testing.

6. Capture God's Vision

To succeed in this quest, you must be willing to study, pray and fast to know yourself, your ministry, your environment and your God.

7. The Character of God's Vision

You will find that God's vision is inspiring, specific, predictable, empowering, stretching and people oriented.

8. Your Ministry will Benefit

God's vision will remove many pressures from your shoulders. Other benefits include an increased interest and commitment in ministry by members of the congregation.

9. Vision Killers

Tradition, fear, stereotypes, complacency, fatigue and short-term thinking hobble a ministry and prevent vision from emerging or from being widely accepted.
10. Articulating the Vision

Communication is the key not only to grasping a vision from God but also to sharing it with the congregation.

11. The Trickle-Down Effect

The vision can be shared with staff, lay leaders and the congregation through the trickle-down process that permeated every facet of church life.

12. Count the Cost

Seeking God's vision can be a lonely and exhausting process—but the benefits are worth it.

13. Capturing a Personal Vision

Through history, God has shared His vision for ministry with those people who have earnestly sought His will for their lives.

Matthew 6:33

Seek you first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added unto you.
Church and Youth

By
James L. Black, Sr.

Church and Youth
➢ The Youth are Ready!
➢ Are you prepared for them?
➢ Traditional Perceptions

The Promise
➢ Proverbs 22:6
Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.

The Promise
➢ Joel 2:28
* And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions.

The Promise
➢ Isaiah 61:1-2
* The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn.

The Church
➢ Jesus said...
• I didn’t come to call the righteous
The Church

- City of Refuge
- Healing
- Recovery
- Training

Jesus Examples

- Suffer the little children to come...
- Five Loaves & 2 small fish
- Rich Young Ruler

Remember,
Youth are
Members Too!
"I'm 15 and I Run the Church"
Elder James Black
North American Division

Matt 17:14 -
• Can YOU Handle It?
• Do YOU Have What It Takes?
• Will YOU Get Caught Off Guard?
• Will Someone Have To Finish YOUR Job?

Youth Models
• Joseph – Destined to lead
• Naaman's Wife's Maid
• David - Goliath
• Esther - Saved nation
• Daniel/Companions
• Boy with Lunch

Leadership – A Process
Preparation is the key to leadership, and before you can lead, you have to ask yourself a couple of critical questions:
A. Do you have the skills necessary to be a successful leader?
B. Do you know what you are expected to do?
C. Do you really know the people you are suppose to be leading, and what they want?
D. Is their mission different from the people who put you in charge?

Leadership in Everyday Life
Leadership is about accepting responsibility, and not just when it suits you. Some of the toughest leadership challenges are right in your own backyard:
> Home, Community, School, Job, Religious life

You Are a Leader If:
A. You believe that, working in concert with others, you can make a difference
B. You create something of value that did not exist before
C. You exhibit positive energy
D. You actualize – you go beyond the vision to create a new reality
E. You welcome change
**Successful Leaders Network**

- A network replaces the weakness of the individual with the strength of the group
- Mirror on the wall
- Know thine enemy through thine network
- My network can help you expand your network
- A network can enrich your life anywhere in the world

**Successful Leaders Network**

- A network can provide you with new experiences and knowledge
- Networking can help you help others
- Don't rely on the majority. Rely on your network
- A network can make you look good
- A network expands your financial reach

**Jesus Took Time To Plan**

- What is a plan? A plan is a written list of arranged actions necessary to achieve your desired goals.

**The success of your future is hidden in your daily routine**

- Take charge of being in charge
North American Division
Youth Ministries
Leadership Training
Discussion Forum

Contemporary Issues:
"The Wonderful and Exciting World of Trying to Understand Youth Stuff!"
James L. Black, Sr.
Facilitator

The purpose of this discussion is to generate an awareness of the many issues and challenges that are facing today's youth. Our goal is to obtain a better understanding of how we as shepherds can make a significant difference as we lead them to Jesus.

Foundation
Proverbs 3: 5-6
"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your path."

- The Challenge of Today's Mindset
- The Attitude Challenge (With or without permission)
- Youth Culture and Influence
- The Most Creative and Intelligent

"When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years." - Josh Billings

Critical Issues
- Youth and Spirituality
- Youth and Parental Relations (The greatest)
- Youth and Church Relations
- Some Boys Will Not Be Boys
- Some Girls Will Not Be Girls
- Social Drug & Alcohol Users
- Sexuality Defined
- Pornography
- Abortion
- Suicide
- Poverty & Employment
- How Many Have You Buried?

- They Do Know Everything
- Greetings From Huntsville
- Mom's Cooking
- What's Up Dad!!
- Chores for Dummies
- Academic Challenges - Trading for the Trade
- Giving Direction vs. Advice
**Supporting Unique Gifts**
- Personality
- Technology
- Art
- Music
- Speech
- Music

**What Do Youth Think About Church Discipline?**
- Reclamation
- The Underdog
- Disfellowshipping the Underdog
- "...without spot or wrinkle"
- Crushing the Spirit

**Difficult Terms for SDAs**
- Unconditional Love
- Grace
- Deliverance
- Overcome
- Compassion
- Forgiveness
- Celebration & Praise

**Do We Really Believe it?**
- Joseph
- David
- A Servant Girl
- Daniel & Companions
- Free Lunch
- "Let them come to me..."
- "Young Men Will See Visions..."

**Turning It Around**
- Effective Shepherding (Turning it around) They don't want you to be cool
- Ministering to Youth Effectively
- Shepherding vs. Herding
- Sharing Your Journey
- Preaching That Inspires Youth

**Closing: The Reason I Cannot Help Myself!!!**
- Preparing Youth To Pray
- Inspiring Youth To Achieve
- Mentoring Youth To Lead
- Challenging Youth To Excellence
- Creating The Plan
The Way of the Shepherd

Seven Principles for Leading and Managing Effective People

Presenter
James L. Block, Sr.

1. Know the Condition of Your Flock
- Follow the status of your people as well as the status of your work.
- Get to know your flock, one sheep at a time.
- Engage your people on a regular basis.
- Keep your eyes and ears open, questions, and follow through.

2. Discover the Shape of Your Sheep
- Your choice of sheep can make flock management easier or harder.
- Start with healthy sheep, or you’ll inherit someone else’s problems.
- Know the SHAPE of your sheep to make sure they’re in the right fold.

3. Help Your Sheep Identify with You
- Build trust with your followers by modeling authenticity, integrity, and compassion.
- Set high standards of performance.
- Relentlessly communicate your values and sense of mission.
- Define the cause for your people and tell them where they fit in.
- Remember that great leadership is not just professional; it’s personal.

4. Make Your Pasture a Safe Place
- Keep your people well informed.
- Infuse every position with importance.
- Pull chronic instigators from the flock.
- Regularly rotate the sheep to fresh pastures.
- Reassure the sheep by staying visible.
- Don’t give problems time to fester.

5. The Staff of Direction
- Know where you’re going, get out in front, and keep your flock on the move.
- When directing, use persuasion rather than coercion.
- Give your people freedom of movement, but make sure they know where the fence line is. Don’t confuse boundaries with bristles!
- When your people get in trouble, go and get them out.
- Remind your people that failure isn’t fatal.
6. The Rod of Correction

- Protect: Stand in the gap and fight for your sheep.
- Correct: Approach discipline as a teaching opportunity.
- Inspect: Regularly inquire about your people's progress.

7. The Heart of the Shepherd

- Great leadership is a lifestyle, not a technique.
- Every day you have to decide who's going to pay for your leadership — you or your people.
- Most of all, have a heart for your sheep.
Youth Ministry Leadership

"Now and Beyond"

Position

John E. Beck, Jr., Pastor
Pastoral Ministry, Youth and Children

Steven E. Martin, Sr.

Who's Fit for the Task?

- Should be a young person
- Should be in charge
- Should be fair

- Spiritual Preparation
  - Acts 1:6-8 You shall receive power...
  - 2 Tim 2:24 Servant shall always properly instructed
  - Isaiah 66:4 The soul of the Lord is kind...
  - Matt 17:21 For it is written...

- They could do it.

Before You Get Started - ???

- What is your plan?
- Is it written down?
- Is it clear?
- Can it be communicated?
- Is it workable?
- How can you implement it?
- When will you begin?

The "Now and Beyond" Reality

Two hundred years ago, two men lived in the state of New York. One of them, Mr. Lakin, did not believe in Christ and did not give Christian training to his children. He refused to take his children to church even when they asked to attend. He had 4,000 descendants, 900 of whom were sent to prison for an average term of 11 years. Some 100 were public prostitutes and 500 were admitted to sanatoriums. His family members had cost the state over $500,000 thus far and they have made no known positive contributions to society.

The "Now and Beyond" Reality

Jonathan Edwards lived in the same state at the same time. He loved the Lord and saw that his children were in church every week. He served the Lord to the best of his ability. Of his 750 descendants, 430 were ministers, 30 became university presidents, 75 wrote positive books, 74 were elected to the United States Congress, and 1 served as Vice President of the United States.

His family has not cost the state a cent, but has contributed immeasurably to the common good.

"Now and Beyond" Reality

For all the children/God has it planned

1. A good country
2. A good home
3. A good education
4. A good heart
5. A good conscience
6. A good will toward others
7. A good name
8. A good character
9. A good reputation
10. A good mind
11. A good heart
12. A good purpose
13. A good life
14. A good work
15. A good plan
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Review your Goals and Objectives

New Approach

Prepare for Change - 3 Steps

A "Now and Beyond" Leader must

Mastery Conflict Resolution

The Core Tool for Conflict Resolution

The greatest plan may not start with you!

The Youth are ready for the "Now and Beyond"
APPENDIX F

QUESTIONNAIRE
QUESTIONNAIRE

Mentoring:
1. Does your youth ministry have an intentional mentoring program? Mentoring meaning... youth leaders have intentionally worked with small groups of young people or individuals on a consistent basis. (If your answer is NO, please explain what challenges you have faced that have prevented this type of ministry. You can then skip questions 2-4.)

2. What kinds of things are done to intentionally mentor your youth?

3. What has been the most difficult obstacle?

4. What results have you seen in the lives of your youth from your mentoring program?

Missions:
1. How often does your youth ministry program serve the community?

2. Please describe your service/missions to the community?

3. What has been the most difficult obstacle?

4. What results have you seen in the lives of your youth from their involvement in missions?

Meetings:
1. How have meetings (including Church service, vespers, AY, social/fellowship, Bible study, etc.) positively & negatively effected your youth? Please be specific as to what types of meeting you are referencing.

2. Is each meeting designed with a specific goal? If yes, please provide examples.

3. What challenges have you faced?

4. If the youth were asked, what would they change about the meetings they currently attend?
BIBLIOGRAPHY


VITA
VITA

Name:  Kris Ryan Eckenroth

Date and Place of Birth:  June 26, 1977, Reading, Pennsylvania

Wife:  Kristie A. (Kantor) Eckenroth

Children:  Seth Ryan Eckenroth

Undergraduate and Graduate Schools Attended:

2006-2016  Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, MI
1999-2001  Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, MI
1995-1999  Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, TN

Degrees Awarded:

  Doctor of Ministry - 2009
  Master of Divinity - 2001
  Bachelor of Theology - 1999

Professional Experience:

2005-present – Youth and Young Adult Ministries Director, Pennsylvania Conference.
2002-2005 – Pastor Enrollment Services, Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, TN.
2001-2002 – Associate Pastor of the York and Hanover Seventh-day Adventist Churches in York and Hanover, Pennsylvania.