

Rethinking Youth Ministry

RETHINK

October 29-30, 2010

The mainline church has witnessed a ghettoization of youth within the church, segregating them off to a particular room, where they engage in ministry in isolation from the rest of the congregation. They are assigned a “youth minister” or “youth director,” often the staff person with the least experience, freeing up the “real” ministers to serve the adults. They seldom serve on church boards or governing. Their leadership in worship is limited to one special Sunday a year; their activities seen more as programming than ministry, and their place often described as “the church of the future” rather than the body of Christ in the here-and-now.

In recent years, it has become obvious that this paradigm has failed to develop youth as life-long participants in the Christian faith. Youth come to see church as only those segregated activities reserved for teenagers, most of which bear little resemblance to the rest of church life. Mainline congregations are seeing the evidence of the real lack of impact of their youth ministries as the population of young adults in churches continues to shrink – even those young adults who were once regular participants in youth programs.

In short, the program-driven model of youth ministry has failed to help youth find a place within the mission of the Church. *Rethinking Youth Ministry* will provide participants a platform for critiquing this older paradigm and rethinking many of the deepest assumptions of youth ministry in the mainline church. We will challenge the consumerist goal of judging a youth ministry’s success by the number of its participants. We will push back against the notion that a youth ministry is the sum total of the events on the calendar. We will rethink the place of volunteers and parents, calling for a greater role of adults as spiritual mentors. We will aid in developing a greater understanding of modern methods of teaching and the impact of brain research, and we will re-imagine a new role for mission and worship within youth ministry. *Rethinking Youth Ministry* could serve as a theological roadmap for all those “working in the trenches” of youth ministry, who are seeking to offer students a deeper, more consequential, and active life-long relationship with God through the ministry of Jesus Christ.



Brian Kirk is an ordained pastor in the Christian Church Disciples of Christ. His education includes a bachelor’s degree in Psychology from the University of Missouri- Columbia, certifications in elementary education and gifted education, and a Masters of Divinity from Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis. Prior to being ordained, Brian

spent eleven years teaching in public schools, predominantly working with and writing curriculum for upper-

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Jacob Thorne is an ordained pastor in the Christian Church Disciples of Christ. As an undergraduate, Jacob attended the University of Missouri. Like Brian, Jacob earned his Masters of Divinity from Eden Theological Seminary. In working with youth, Jacob has experienced: both large and small church settings, long-established youth ministries, new youth ministries, and youth ministries in transition. Jacob currently serves at Broadway Christian Church in Colum-

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Dates: October 29-30, 2010

Cost: \$150.00 (includes lodging and meals) \$125.00 Commuter (meals only)

Times: 2:00 p.m. Friday to 2:00 p.m. Saturday

Location: Rickman Center, Jefferson City, MO

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Brian Kirk *continued...*

elementary and middle school students in a gifted and talented program. He has served in congregational youth ministry for twenty years. In addition, Brian, a pastor at Union Avenue Christian Church in St. Louis, has worked in outdoors ministry with youth and currently serves as overall coordinator for youth summer camp programs for the Southeast Gateway Area of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Brian has served repeatedly on the writing team for the New Earth Christian Resources for the Outdoors, published by CBP and the Committee on Outdoor Ministries of the National Council of Churches. He also currently serves on the adjunct faculty at Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis.

Jacob Thorne *continued...*

bia, Missouri where he works primarily with youth in grades 6th-12th. As a clergy member, camp director, and member of the Bethany Fellowship (an organization sponsored by the Lilly Foundation for young ministers in their first years of congregational ministry) Jacob recognized the need for dialogue in youth ministry. Hence, the blog "Rethinking Youth Ministry" which he co-authors with Brian.

Visit Brian and Jacobs website at:
www.rethinkingyouthministry.com

Rethinking Youth Ministry - Please complete one form per person

Name _____ Home Phone _____

Address _____ Work Phone _____

City, State, Zip _____ Email _____

Special Dietary/Accessibility Needs: _____

Payment options: Check MasterCard Visa

Card# _____ Exp Date _____

Signature _____

Refund Policy: Refund of the entire fee will be made when cancellation is received two weeks prior to the start of the event. Refund of 50% will be made on cancellation made after the two week grace period, however NO REFUNDS will be made for cancellations received two days prior to the event

Mail this form and registration fee to Missouri School of Religion, P.O. Box 104685, Jefferson City, MO 65110 - Fax: 573-636-2889, email: krystalmsr@earthlink.net.