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## Resource Guide for Youth Ministry

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## Resource Guide

# Youth Ministry

MARKUS H. MCDOWELL, EDITOR

The following is a brief annotated bibliography of some major resources recommended by experienced youth workers. The bibliography includes books, websites, training programs, and music resources. (See also the book reviews in this issue.) Thanks to Walter Surdacki, Scott Talley, Paul Talley, and Chris Hatchet for their input.

### BOOKS

*A New Kind of Christian: A Tale of Two Friends on a Spiritual Journey* by Brian D. McLaren.

This dialogue between two friends explores the future of ministry in the postmodern church. It will challenge and stretch the Western mind to look at Christianity and ministry from a whole new perspective. This book is one of the easiest to read and most comprehensive descriptions of postmodernism available. A burnt out pastor makes friends with his daughter's science teacher, who leads him to an enthusiastic embracing of postmodernism as applied to the Christian message. In this fictional conversation, McLaren describes the path toward postmodern Christianity as a journey of Holy Spirit-guided faith "through the winds and currents of change." The conservative pastor in his story comes to accept the Bible as a pre-modern text that presents its message in stories and does not have to conform to our modern expectations. This book is one of the most challenging yet thought provoking texts available.

*When Kumbaya Is Not Enough: A Practical Theology for Youth Ministry* by Dean Borgman.

This is one of those books that will cause you to stand back and examine yourself and your ministry. The youth ministry world needs such books to steer us back on course. While the field of youth ministry

is enjoying tremendous popularity, a book like this is tremendously helpful to help keep this movement in check by giving the crucial theological framework necessary for youth ministry. It is relevant and accurate in its understanding of youth culture, particularly of urban youth culture.

*Family-Based Youth Ministry: Reaching the Been-There, Done-That Generation* by Mark DeVries.

Traditional youth ministry must incorporate families into its programming. Mark DeVries breaks ground by challenging youth ministers to include the other generations of the church. So often youth ministries barricade themselves into their own corners of the church and cut themselves off from the other segments of the congregation that have so much to offer today's young people. DeVries gives great ideas to the youth worker who wants to bridge this gap, but does not know how to do it.

*Participating in God's Life* by C. Leonard Allen and Danny Gray Swick.

Have you ever wondered what happened to the Holy Spirit in the Church of Christ? Allen and Swick address the overwhelming interest in spirituality in today's world and the challenges the Church of Christ faces in light of that interest. While this text does not directly address youth ministry, it is nonetheless relevant to youth ministers. Today's youth minister truly works with a foot in two worlds, one in the world of young people sold out on all different forms of spirituality and an older world where spirituality is a mystical term that many are uncertain about. Navigating vision and direction through these channels can be a difficult and challenging task. Allen and Swick give the youth minister vital perspective necessary to understand from where

we have come and why the Church of Christ views spirituality as it does. They also give guidelines on how to proceed with this information.

*Four Views of Youth Ministry and the Church: Inclusive Congregational, Preparatory, Missional, Strategic* by Mark H. Senter III (general editor), Wesley Black, Chap Clark, and Malan Nel.

*Four Views* is a dialogue from four different perspectives on how youth ministry and the church ought to work together. It seeks to answer these four questions: Should youth ministry reflect the church culture or the youth culture? Should youth ministry focus on mission and outreach or should its first business be to nurture its own teenagers in the faith? Are a church's teenagers full-fledged members of their church, completely integrated into the full life of the congregation—or should adolescence be a time of preparation for future leadership in that church? At what point does a youth group become its own church? What if this is done deliberately and strategically? *Four Views* is definitely not a text for the beginning youth worker; it is best handled by the veteran youth worker who has had a chance to understand the different dynamics between youth ministry and the church.

*Youth Ministry Management Tools* by Ginny Olson, Diane Elliot, and Mike Work.

I wish I had this book the first two years of my work as a youth minister. It provides the youth minister with a fairly comprehensive view of the administrative process involved in the ministry. The book has everything from all the checklists you need for planning a major event, to many of the legal forms you need, to how to organize your time effectively. This is a must-read for a youth minister in his or her first two years of ministry. While it may not be the most exciting page-turner, it will help you organize your ministry and time to lessen your stress tremendously.

*Outside The Lines: Pour Your Heart into It: How Starbucks Built a Company One Cup at a Time* by Howard Schultz.

Are you a minister looking to develop a vision for ministry larger than you ever imagined? This is the book for you. Howard Schultz is the chairman and CEO of Starbucks responsible for taking a small local coffee bean shop and turning it into a national commodity. He tells the story of his no-compromise approach to achieving his vision of sharing great coffee with the world after witnessing Italy's obsession with coffee and observing how the corner cappuccino bar had become a "Third Place" (a place outside of home and work for people to enjoy life). Schultz has brought the Third Place to America in the form of the local Starbucks. Many of his philosophies and management principles can easily be adapted to your ministry's approach to vision. Not to mention that, if you love coffee, you will learn some fascinating things about dark roasted coffee that will help you enjoy your coffee experience even more.

*Seven Checkpoints for Youth Leaders* by Andy Stanley and Stewart Hall.

This is a great tool for evaluating the foundational priorities of youth ministry.

*Starting Right: Thinking Theologically About Youth Ministry*, edited by Kendra Creasy Dean, Chap Clark, and Dave Rahn (A Youth Specialties Book).

This book looks at the theological foundations of youth ministry. It is a required textbook at Lubbock Christian University in its Master's program for youth ministry.

*What I Wish My Youth Leader Knew About Youth Ministry: A National Survey* by Mike Nappa (Standard Publishers).

In this book, Mike Nappa presents the results of a nationwide survey of teens about youth ministry, youth ministers, and youth programs.

*New Directions for Youth Ministry* by Wayne Rice, Chap Clark, and others.

The authors of this book take a candid look at the strengths and weaknesses of several new youth ministry strategies.

*The Youth Worker's Encyclopedia of Bible Teaching Ideas: Old Testament* (Loveland, Colo.: Group Publishing, 1994).

*The Youth Worker's Encyclopedia of Bible Teaching Ideas: New Testament* (Loveland, Colo.: Group Publishing, 1994).

These are a collection of devotions, prayers, games, skits, and activities arranged by biblical texts, with a topical index at the end of the book.

*God at the Mall* by Pete Ward.

This book presents a unique perspective on youth ministry by Peter Ward, a youth worker and teacher at King's College in London. Ward presents a theologically based vision of youth ministry that focuses on reaching unchurched teens from a sociological understanding.

## TRAINING

*Building a Healthy Youth Ministry: The Strategy of Jesus* ([www.sonlife.com](http://www.sonlife.com)).

This one-day seminar hosted by local churches nation wide is probably the best training available for youth ministry. The basic strategy seminar is focused on understanding a basic model of ministry that is founded solely on the life and strategy of Christ. Jesus' model is a theologically sound philosophical skeleton that many religion programs overlook. This training will help you enable your students to win the lost, build believers, and equip them for peer ministry through Jesus' timeless principles. Sonlife also offers advanced training nationwide that is focused on sharpening your vision and setting defined goals for your ministry.

*Princeton Forums on Youth Ministry/Princeton University's Institute for Youth Ministry*

This is an international center dedicated to strengthening the theological task of ministry with young people. It focuses on practical theological

reflection in the area of youth ministry. Participants enjoy presentations by distinguished lecturers (the Princeton Lectures on Youth Church and Culture), casual discussion with presenters, worship, seminars, and reflection with colleagues in mentor groups. The forums are held in April on the Princeton Theological Seminary campus and in January in different locations around the country. This conference is highly academic in nature, as well as extremely thought provoking.

## WEBSITES

[www.ministryandmedia.com](http://www.ministryandmedia.com)

This website takes an interactive look at ministry and media which includes ideas, discussions, and movie clips.

[www.youthministry.com](http://www.youthministry.com)

This is *the* website for youth ministry. It includes everything from games to job listings. This website takes all the resources of Group Publishers and creates an easy to use format. Included are lesson ideas, chat rooms, articles, curriculae, and all things connected with youth ministry.

[www.youthspecialties.org](http://www.youthspecialties.org)

This is the Youth Specialties website. Youth Specialties has been on the cutting edge of youth ministry for 35 years.

## MUSIC

Interline ([www.interline-online.com](http://www.interline-online.com)) is one of the best resources for Christian music. For a few hundred dollars a year, a subscriber gets a package six times a year containing 12 new Christian CDs, posters, Bible study guides based on the music, concert information and tickets, videos, and much more. Also included is information telling the youth minister what's "hot" in the field of Christian music and the media in general. Playing a new CD as teenagers arrive for class is a good way for them to be introduced to Christian music and to create discussion on related topics.