Philosophy of Youth Ministry

“Meeting people where they are and inspiring them to become who Christ created them to be.”

Mission: To meet people where they are and inspire them to become who Christ created them to be.

Core Values: Gospel-Centered, Scriptural, Community, Reflective, Lively, Missional, Renewal

Vision: Cultivating people who are becoming who they are created to be in Jesus Christ.

Strategy: Touch Points: Youth Group, Sunday School, Bible Quizzing, Outings, Camp/Retreats, Ordinary Life

Discipleship in Youth Ministry

My philosophy of discipleship is, “Meeting people where they are and inspiring them to become who Christ created them to be.” This definition serves as my life mission statement. In my ministry experiences, I have discovered that much of the discipleship process occurs in every day rhythms of life. Meeting people where they live, and building relationships with one another has been the most influential during my time in ministry. As I observe Jesus’ interactions with people in the Gospels, He meets them where they live, and moves them toward who they are intended to be.

“Meeting people where they are…” means going to where people live and coming alongside them to pace with them in their life. “…and inspiring them to become who Christ created them to be,” means providing outlets for people (through the church) for them to undergo spiritual formation, in community, with other believers as they realize their true selves, in and through Jesus Christ.

Ministries/Programming in Youth Ministry

My philosophy for developing ministries for youth is to create programs that function to meet our purpose (mission). It is essential to know why we exist, which provides the infrastructure for how (core values) we become who we desire to be (vision), and the methods (strategy) we go about accomplishing our goals. Furthermore, the programs are designed to meet people where they are in their faith formation.

Our values represent who we want to be, and how we want to be in our youth ministries. Core values are descriptive words that reflect our values, attitudes, styles, and beliefs.
that “influence our purpose.” The goal is to incorporate the key elements into our ministries and our lives.

At Sherwood Community Friends Church, the framework for the Touch Points provides a clear strategy for the youth ministry to replicate. By using a similar template in the youth ministry, it creates harmony throughout the entire ministry of SCFC.

**Leadership in Youth Ministry**

My mission statement also acts as my outworking for leadership in youth ministry, “Meeting people where they are and inspiring them to become who Christ created them to be.” “Meeting people where they are” requires that I know and understand who I am working with, which helps determine the mode of leadership that I need to be for a particular person or group. “Inspiring them…” is the strategy I go about ministering to a person and moving them to who they are created to be. No matter what mode or strategy, a significant part in leading youth is listening before I lead so that I am able to fully hear and discern what is being communicated. Richard R. Dunn’s, *Shaping the Spiritual Lives of Student*, has influenced my ideas on leadership in youth ministry notably. Here are insights Dunn offers:

> Pacing is the language of love not only for effective parenting, but for effective youth ministry. Pacing requires adults to listen to the heart of an adolescent, seeing beyond words and behaviors. Pacing therefore, demands time, the time it takes to go beyond the surface in a conversation or to enter the social turf of a student…Pacing is costly. The payoff, however, far exceeds the cost.

**Volunteers in Youth Ministry**

Richard Dunn’s insights also help build on developing a volunteer team in youth ministry. I think it is important for the ministry of the church as a whole to integrate adults into the youth ministry, according to their gifts and leadership styles. The role of the youth pastor to provide training for the volunteers and that is one aspect of youth ministry that excites me greatly – to gather with volunteers to train, strategize, and pray together.
Model for Identifying Commitment Levels of Youth: Sherwood Community Friends Church

Identifying commitment levels helps...

1. Illustrate *potential* audiences & target potential audiences.
2. Provide us with identification not an identity of current youth.
3. Communicate the goal of SCFC’s youth ministries.

- **Community**
  - Youth within a realistic distance of SCFC - The church is the presence of Christ in their life.

- **Crowd**
  - Youth who have attended a youth group function & there information is on file - hearing about Christ.

- **Congregation**
  - Youth committed to regular meetings (i.e. Sunday School, Youth Group, Bible Study)

- **Committed**
  - Youth committed to spiritual habits - Growing in Christ.

- **Core**
  - Youth committed to doing ministry - serving Christ.
A model for how the youth ministry relates to the youth outside and within SCFC. In addition, the chart provides an idea for the phases of spiritual development.
A process for establishing relationships in youth ministry.

1. Pray
   1. 
   2. 
   3. 
   4. 
   5. 

2. Connect
   1. 
   2. 
   3. 
   4. 
   5. 

3. Go (attend one of their events or workplace)
   1. 
   2. 
   3. 
   4. 
   5. 

4. Invite
   1. 
   2. 
   3. 
   4. 
   5.