

# 2017 Youth Ministry Academy Syllabus

## Bible

### Primary Instructor, Victoria L. Garvey

We'll be looking for the large arcs of themes and motifs in this vast library of books we call the Bible in our time together. We'll also be spending some time on the various ways to open the texts in the presence of youth and others in the most inviting ways, helping folks to understand the ways in which the Bible reads us even as we engage in reading it. And we'll spend a bit of time unpacking preaching with youth and for them.

I've put three books on the list for us, two of which are more 'go to' primers on each testament [Boadt & Powell]. Feel free to read them as we move through the year as the need or your curiosity occurs and invites; they're the kinds of resources you'll want on your shelves. They'll guide you through such pedantic subjects as authorship and dating and place in the canon, but also help you to understand a bit more about the ways in which the text is always engaging itself and changing as it engages and they'll each help you to get a sense of cultures and peoples and languages far removed from us in time and space – I'm tempted to start humming a certain theme about a 'galaxy far, far away' – but which nonetheless continue to speak to us in our contexts. The third book [Bird] has a very different take on how we might approach the biblical text and how it approaches us. If possible, try to read this one in advance of our meeting in October.

In preparation for our meeting in October take a look at three texts, two narratives and a psalm. Read them and re-read them in your favorite translation of the bible and see what you make of them. Do your best to identify things you've heard and read before and shut the door on those preconceived notions; as best you can, go to the texts as if you've never heard them or about them and see what happens. Ask yourself: What have they to do with me and with the youth for whom I have responsibility?

Genesis 2.4 – 3.24

Psalm 139

John 4.1-42

## Episcopal Church

In this course, we will cover the basics of the Episcopal Church - a brief history lesson, how we are people of the Prayer Book, our rituals and symbols, and how we can engage the Episcopal Church beyond our church doors. Our goal is to highlight how big and diverse our church is and the richness that brings to our tradition.

### Assigned Books

Please read the assigned portions or books in preparation for October

- *The Book of Common Prayer with Additional Resources* (Morehouse Publishing)  
Read pages 1005-1040
- *The Episcopal Handbook* (Morehouse Publishing)  
This book is a "field guide" to the Episcopal Church done in a very informative and fun way.  
Please examine the book for questions you may have or things you didn't know.  
Read Pages 88-113

- *The Liturgy Explained (New Edition)* James Farwell (Morehouse Publishing, 2013)  
Read in preparation for October

#### *ChurchNext Courses*

You may begin taking courses on ChurchNext on August 4 and will be sent an invitation to sign up. Please do not sign up for ChurchNext now as you will need to take these in our own school that we are creating.

## **Youth Program Event Planning 101**

#### **Primary Instructor, Meredith Scott**

With today's youth being pulled in so many different ways, school, sports, social, technology, events in your youth program need to be top notch and well run. Learn how to plan out and advertise awesome events; service, team building adventures, mission trips, and pilgrimages, that will keep your youth coming back for more.

## **Faith Development & Programming**

#### **Primary Instructor, Jamie Martin-Currie**

Just as our bodies and minds grow and develop, we all grow and develop in our faith and spirituality. There are many models for how this happens, as there are models for our cognitive growth and develop. We will particularly look at a faith development model by John Westerhoff. While not required for the course, one could read his foundational writing on this topic in, *Will our Children Have Faith?* Morehouse Publishing, revised ed. 2000.

## **Marketing and Branding Your Ministry**

#### **Primary Instructor, Randall Curtis**

In the age of instant information, first impressions are more important than ever. We will look at how you advertise, promote, and brand the ministry you are doing effectively without having to spend lots of time or money.

## **Ministry Plan and Development**

#### **Primary Instructor, Randall Curtis**

Every congregation, mission, school, or other ministry context is unique. Practitioners of youth & family ministry need to be able to create and adapt best practices in their own context. As a capstone project, each student will create a comprehensive ministry plan for their context, demonstrating their learning and professional growth. These plans will be individualized and unique to each student.

In the ministry development courses we will look at coordinating a youth ministry support team of volunteers, putting together a ministry plan, marketing and branding our ministry, and communicating our ministries. Many readings will come from various blog posts that will be sent to the students for discussion before and after the October intensive. The group will build a ministry plan for their ministry context through discussions with the faculty and other students.

### **Assigned Books to be read before October 1st**

- **Mark DeVries, *Sustainable Youth Ministry: Why Most Youth Ministry Doesn't Last and What Your Church Can Do About It* (IVP Books, 2008)**

## **Relational Ministry**

### **Primary Instructor, Randall Curtis**

For years most youth ministry models were centered on what curriculum or program was to be used by the leaders. Way before other denominations moved to a relationally based ministry, leaders in The Episcopal Church put together a statement on what we mean by Relational Ministry and gave it a theological foundation. We will explore this easy four step foundation for relational youth ministry.

### **Assigned Reading:**

- Dean, Kenda Creasy and Foster, Ron. *The Godbearing Life: The Art of Soul Tending for Youth Ministry*

## **Theology**

### **Primary Instructor, Paula Barker**

What does theology have to do with Youth Ministry? We will explore the broad strokes of Christian theology, creating a strong foundation for exploring how it can be applied in practical theology. Each participant will explore their own theological commitments developing an understanding of their own theology of youth and family ministry and how we are each theologians.

### **Assigned Reading:**

- **William C. Placher and Derek R. Nelson, *A History of Christian Theology: An Introduction*, 2nd edition (Westminster John Knox, 2013)**

Assigned reading begins August 1st.

## **Volunteer Development**

### **Primary Instructor, Meredith Scott**

It takes a village! While being a youth minister is one of the most rewarding jobs, it can be quite challenging. Learn how to build a volunteer team that supports your ministry and involves the entire church. There are so many untapped resources within a congregation. Enjoy giving any member the chance to help out, allowing the entire church to share their gifts with your youth ministry.

### **Assigned Reading:**

- Anderson, Leith & Jill Fox. *The Volunteer Church: Mobilizing Your Congregation for Growth and Effectiveness*. (Zondervan 1994)