

2019 Youth and Children's Ministry 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 residency 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

Be Familiar with these books before the residency.

- [Jennifer Bird Permission Granted](#) (Westminster John Knox, 2015)
- Lawrence Boadt, [Reading the Old Testament](#) (Paulist, 2012)
- Mark Allan Powell, [Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary and Theological Survey](#) (Baker Academic, 2018)

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. Our Online classes and discussion on Church Next will focus on the Book of Common Prayer.

Assigned Books

- James Farwell, [The Liturgy Explained](#) (Morehouse Publishing, 2013)
- [The Book of Common Prayer with Additional Resources](#) (Morehouse Publishing, 1789)

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.

Children's Spiritual Development and Programming

Primary Instructor, Jamie Martin-Currie

How do we help children value and express their spirituality if the average church attendance is once or twice a month? An understanding of children's spirituality could challenge you to ask why you do what you do. We will be thinking critically about your choices in children's ministry so that they involve the whole family and the entire congregation.

Assigned Books to be read before the residency

- Mark DeVries and Annette Safstrom, [Sustainable Children's Ministry: From Last Minute Scrambling to Long Term Solutions](#) (IVP Books, 2018)
- Simon Sinek, [Find Your Why: A Practical Guide for Discovering Purpose for You and Your Team](#) (Portfolio, 2017)
- Rebecca Nye, [Children's Spirituality: What it is and Why it Matters](#) (Church House Publishing, 2009)

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 the residency

- Mark DeVries, [Sustainable Youth Ministry: Why Most Youth Ministry Doesn't Last and What Your Church Can Do About It](#) (IVP Books, 2008)
- Simon Sinek, [Find Your Why: A Practical Guide for Discovering Purpose for You and Your Team](#) (Portfolio, 2017)

Pastoral Care and Relational Ministry

Primary Instructor, All Faculty

What do mean by ministry that is relational and not just programmatic? How do we bring God and our faith into our relationships with youth and our experiences with them.

- Kenda Creasy Dean, [The Godbearing Life: The Art of Soul Tending for Youth Ministry](#) (Upper Room Books, 2005)
- John Patton, [Pastoral Care: An Essential Guide](#) (Abingdon Press, 2005)

Theology

Primary Instructor, The Rev. Jenifer Gamber

What does theology have to do with youth and family ministries? We will explore connections by surveying the broad outlines of Christian theology, creating a strong foundation for guiding faith formation among children, youth, and adult volunteers. Each participant will explore their own theological commitments to better understand their own theology and how to stimulate theological reflection with others. We are all theologians.

Assigned Reading:

- Ian Markham, [Understanding Christian Doctrine, 2nd edition](#) (Wiley, 2017)

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:

- Leith Anderson, [The Volunteer Church](#) (Zondervan, 2015)