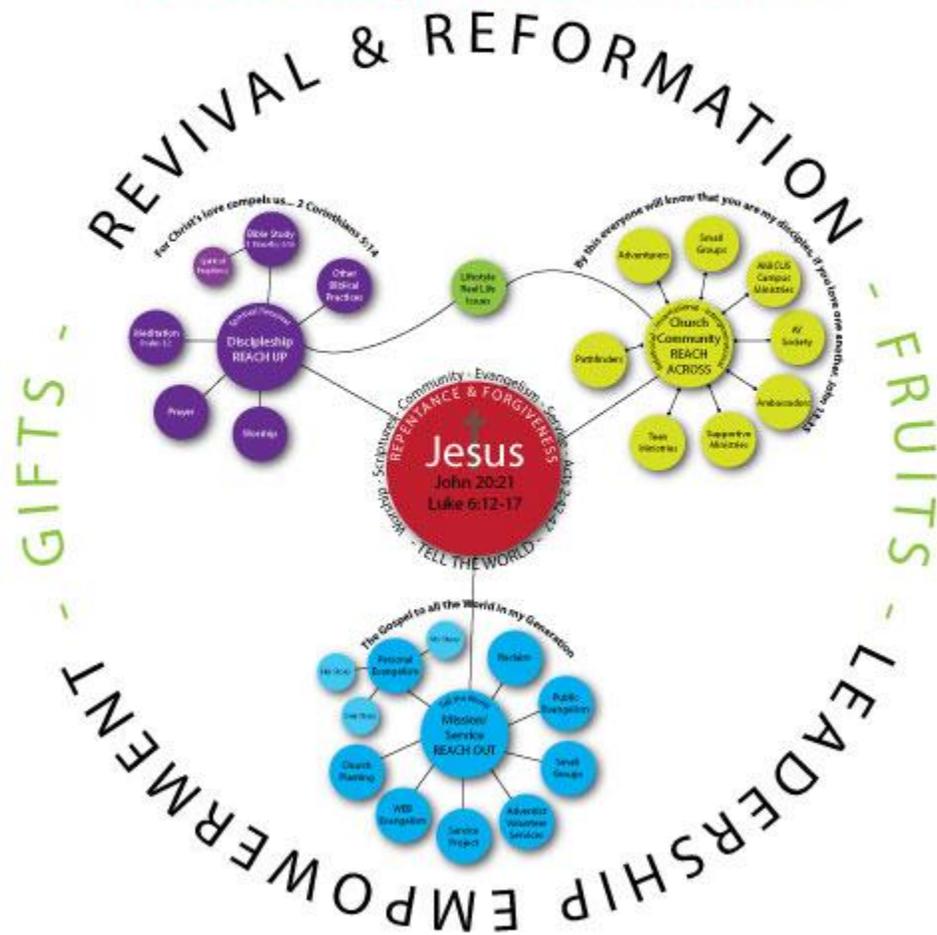




re-Visioning Youth Ministries



Jesus, The Center

The General Conference youth ministries department, in consultation with the youth directors of the thirteen divisions of the world field, has re-Visioned youth ministry and has repositioned Jesus at the center of its existence and mission.

As our motto declares, the love of Christ compels us. Jesus, the Creator of the universe, in whom the fullness of divinity dwells, came down to become like one of us, to restore us to His likeness. He made peace with us through His blood on the cross (Colossians 1: 15-20 NIV).

Jesus Himself says, “And I, if lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to me” (John 12:32 KJV).



Global Seventh-day Adventist Youth ministries will elevate Jesus in all aspects of its operation.

1. Repentance and Forgiveness

Mark 1: 1-4: First things first.

John the Baptist, the messenger sent ahead of Jesus to prepare the way for Him, preached a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins to open the door of people’s hearts to receive Jesus and the baptism of the Spirit that He would bring.

Repentance and forgiveness are God’s doorway to a new life in Jesus.

2. The Kingdom of God – the essence of Christ’s message

John 20:21: “As the Father sent me, so send I you.”

Jesus begins His ministry by proclaiming the good news of God: “The Kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news” (Mark 1:14, 15). Later He would say, “I must preach the Kingdom of God to other towns also, because that is why I was sent” (Luke 4:43).

The proclamation and demonstration of the Kingdom of God is at the heart of youth ministry, in obedience to Jesus.

The eternal life that begins with confidence in Jesus is a life in His present Kingdom, now on earth and available to all. The message of and about Him is specifically a gospel for our life now, not just for when He comes a second time. It is about living now as His apprentices in Kingdom living, not just as a consumer of His merits. Our future, however far we look, is a natural extension of the faith by which we live now and the life in which we now participate. Eternity is now in flight, and we with it.

3. The Holy Spirit, the power of God in life and mission

John 20:22: “And with that, he breathed on them and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’”

The Person, Presence, and Power of the Holy Spirit in our lives as an empowering gift from God is the only context in which our ministry can be carried out.

As reflected in the model, our whole ministry is wrapped up and encircled by the Person, Presence, and Power of the Holy Spirit, producing fruits and imparting gifts for Leadership Empowerment through Revival and Reformation.

4. The faithful proclamation of the Kingdom of God through the power of the Holy Spirit will be attended by the same blessings as on the day of Pentecost.

Acts 2:42-47: A new united and self-sacrificing Kingdom community, where a passion for the Word, Worship, Fellowship, Service, and Evangelism emerged (outlining inner circle).

5. A day in the life of Jesus – A model for the three main focus areas of youth ministry (Luke: 6: 12-19).

a. Luke 6:12: “Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the whole night praying to God.”

Discipleship – REACH UP – Spiritual Renewal

Discipleship has a clear and straightforward meaning.

While followers of Jesus cannot literally be with Him in the same way as His first disciples could, the priorities and intentions, the heart and inner attitudes of disciples are forever the same.



That desire to be like Jesus is naturally followed by a decision to devote oneself to become like Him. The disciple is one who, motivated by their desire to be like the Master, gradually rearranges and reorganizes their life to pursue that very purpose. By these decisions and actions, they enrol in Christ’s training and become His disciples. There is no other way for disciples and disciples who want to make disciples. Becoming a disciple leads into the abundance of life that Jesus said He came to bring (John 10:10).

b. Luke 6:13: “When the morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them.”

Church Community – REACH ACROSS – Relational, Incarnational & Intergenerational

We should enter into the feelings of the youth, sympathizing with them in their joys and sorrows, their conflicts and victories.

Jesus did not remain in heaven, away from the sorrowing and sinful; He came down to this world, that He might become acquainted with the weakness, the suffering, and the temptations of the fallen race. He, reached us where we were, that He might lift us up. In our work for the youth, we must meet them where they are, if we would help them...

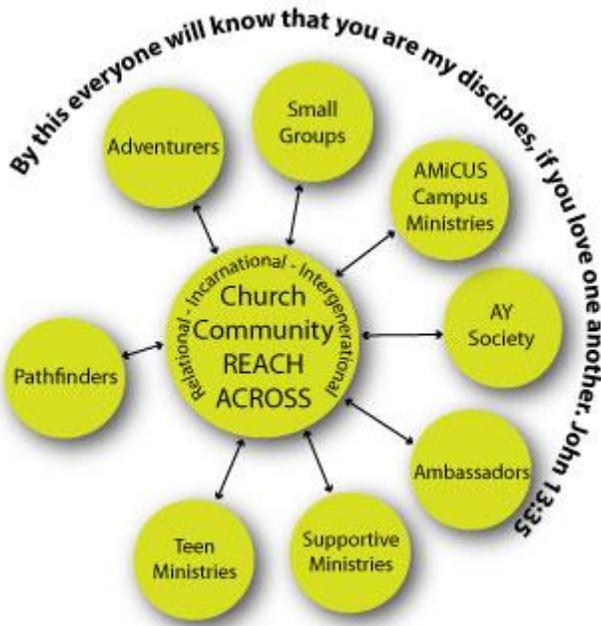
Let us remember the claim of God upon us to make the path to heaven bright and attractive.

(E. G. White, Gospel Workers, 212ff).

A central feature in the new model is small groups or communities of faith.

We are dreaming of a movement of young people committed to knowing and experiencing God in a small community of faith, to be equipped to serve and to multiply as numbers grow through their witness.

c. Luke 6: 17-19: “He went down with them and stood at a level place. A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea...who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases.”



Mission/Service – REACH OUT

Young people will be equipped on three levels:

Personal – My story, His story, Our story.

Small Groups (church planting, communities of faith, etc.)

Public evangelism in the form of reaping campaigns.

Christ’s method will be at the core of youth ministries’
Mission, Service, and pursuit of Justice.

“Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching people. The Saviour mingled with (people) as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then, he bade them, ‘follow me’” (Ministry of Healing, p. 143).



Reflections

It is our conviction that empowered by the Holy Spirit according to the Divine promise, trusted and supported by leadership at all levels, the youth of the world will stand and take its place at the centre stage of the church. They will honor God in reflecting and proclaiming His Kingdom and preparing the world for His soon coming. For some time now, there has been a sense of renewal among our young people, and the time is right to entrust to them the mission of the challenge of building a church for this generation and beyond.