

Child, Youth & Family Ministry Committee

Suggested Readings:

Prepared by: deacon Charlie Germain

Youth & Family Ministry

Soul Searching Christian Smith & Melinda Lundquist Denton

Soul Searching talks about the religious and spiritual lives of American teenagers. It is based on research done by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill from 2001 – 2005.

Although the statistical analysis sometimes becomes tedious, it's a book well worth reading. Basically, the conclusion shows that teenagers, for the most part, accept the religion of their families, but have minimal understanding of how that religion informs their lives.

Frogs Without Legs Can't Hear David Anderson & Paulo Hill

We know how to do child, youth and family ministry in the 21st century. Read about it here. "Frogs Without Legs..." is an excellent resource for parents who are concerned about their children's faith development. It's also a book that all pastors and church council members should read.

The Godbearing Life

The Art of Soul Tending for Youth Ministry

Kenda Creasy Dean & Ron Foster

A must read! Kenda Creasy Dean is professor of Youth, Church & Culture at Princeton Theological Seminary in New Jersey. Nate Frambach, a professor at Wartburg Seminary who I met at the Youth Workers Gathering last March, rates her as one of the most outstanding voices in the country encouraging youth & family ministry. In her book she describes how the whole church community needs to support and encourage faith development in families. It's more about a way of doing ministry in the 21st century than ministry to youth.

Passing On The Faith

A Radical New Model for Youth & Family Ministry

Merton P. Strommen & Richard A. Hardel

Two giants in the field of Youth & Family Ministry, Strommen and Hardel present what some consider THE TEXT BOOK on how the church needs to do ministry in the 21st century.

Starting Right – Thinking Theologically About Youth Ministry

by: Kenda Creasy Dean, Wesley Black & Karen Jones

This is a great textbook for those involved in child, youth and family ministries. The authors open with the premise that, "Unless those of us in youth ministry learn to approach our calling as a theological enterprise, asking ourselves why we pastor youth in the ways that we do, we risk turning youth ministry into a giant Saturday Night Live skit... Put simply, theological reflection keeps the practice of youth ministry focused on God and not on us. It makes possible radical congruency between what we say and what we believe and how we conduct our lives. Without theological reflection in our ministry with young people, we will be living like atheists in no time."

The Church in the 21st Century

A Good Time to be the Church

Bishop H. George Anderson

You can read this in 2 hours. Bishop Anderson challenges us to start thinking differently about the church. He talks about the changing culture and why he's upbeat about the church's opportunities in it.

The End of the World As We Know It

Chuck Smith, Jr.

Chuck Smith is senior pastor at Capo Beach Calvary (www.calvarychapel.com) in Capistrano Beach, California. He works with the emerging generations of the postmodern age. In the 60's he says he was part of what he calls the "fundamentalist subculture". Recognizing how outdated, parochial and rigid that was, he has since abandoned that style. He says his awakening came when pioneering Christian rocker, Larry Norman, retrieved a war car of Martin Luther, "Why does the devil have to have all the good music?"

Liquid Church

Pete Ward

Pete Ward is from the Anglican Communion. "Liquid Church" is how he sees authentic church forming in the post-modern culture of the 21st century. You have to read his book with an open mind. Pete Ward is very critical of the organized churches of the latter part of the 20th century, which he calls "Solid Church", and takes them to task for their club mentality which has excluded people of the post modern culture.

Across The Generations

Augsburg Fortress

A collection of essays on incorporating all ages in ministry. Gen X, the Boomers, Millennials, who are they, what are their characteristics and how can we bring them together. This is a great resource for helping to understand these different cultures.

The Practicing Congregation

Diana Butler Bass

Imagining a new, old church. How mainline churches are experiencing a new vitality through innovative engagement with traditional Christian practices.

The Present Future

Reggie McNeal

On developing disciples instead of "church members" and focusing on spiritual formation rather than church programs.

Youth Culture

A Tribe Apart

- A Journey Into the Heart of American Adolescence

Patricia Hersch

Patricia Hersch spent several years following around a group of teenagers in a town in Virginia. In time she gained their trust and they felt free to open up to her. She talks about how isolated these teenagers feel from the world of the adults around them and how they cope in that world.

Seen & Heard

- Teenagers Talk About Themselves

Mary Kalergis

Mary Kalergis is a photo journalist. One day she heard her teenagers talking about how no one ever took the time to listen to them. "Seen & Heard" is an album of teenagers who she interviewed and who shared their pain and dreams with her.

Coming of Age Davis Anderson, Paul Hill, Roland Martinson

Exploring the identity and spirituality of younger men.

Other Good Stuff

Putting Family First William Doherty & Barbara Carlson

Families are under stress. Everyone is hyper scheduled. No one has time to sit and talk; parents with their children, nor spouses. Doherty challenges parents to take control of their schedules so they have the time to develop the family relationships that have always made families strong.

Messy Spirituality Michael Yaconelli

What can I say? Mike Yaconelli is Mike Yaconelli. This is the last book he wrote before he was tragically killed in an auto accident. In his book he shares the insights he's learned in his years of working in youth and family ministry.

Merchants of Cool Frontline

"Merchants of Cool" is a video created by Frontline and was aired on PBS (channel 13 public television) a couple of years ago. This is an excellent expose on how teenagers are targeted by merchandisers to sell their goods. "Youth Culture" was invented by the advertising industry to sell stuff to teenagers who represent a \$400 billion dollar industry. To understand youth culture, you must see this!