

TeamUp 2012

The TeamUp Conference is the product of a shared mission, a unified purpose and value between the North American Presbyterian and the International Youth and Children ministries to fulfill the young harvest call as cast in our Vision 2020 strategic plan and goals. TeamUp aims to prioritize the importance of reaching and developing children and youth to equip and release them for ministry. TeamUp brings the young harvest ministry team (lead pastor, children's pastor, youth pastor) together for the purpose of discovering how they can better evangelize the youth and children of their communities, fully integrate them into a healthy church, strengthen their families, and develop them as emerging leaders.

General Overseer Randall Howard presented a timely and powerful message, "Glorifying God through Prayer and Leadership Development, All for the Harvest" (Jeremiah 29:4-7), which set a prophetic tone for our time at TeamUp. For many years, the Church was at the center of Western culture; it has now been pressed to the edges. The culture has changed. Morality has changed. Many no longer believe the Bible to be the Word of God, no longer believe that Christ is Lord or that church is important. Methods for evangelism which were once effective, no longer work. We are susceptible to the same discouragement and disorientation the children of Israel experienced in Babylonian captivity. We feel as if we are a people in exile, strangers in a strange land.

Takeaway: To develop leaders, we must acknowledge that our nostalgia is the greatest danger to their future destiny. There is no going back. We are not called to overthrow the culture. We are not called to insurrection. We are called to pray and to develop leaders, all for the harvest.

- ❖ **Task:** Pray every day for more passion for the young harvest. Pray for and seek out innovative ideas for developing young leaders to reach this generation, in the present culture.

Takeaway: As we develop leaders, we should consider Daniel. Three times a day he threw open the windows and felt the fellowship and intimacy with the Father. He received heaven's anointing and revelational wisdom to solve the problems of a nation. Daniel was in exile, not to organize a protest rally, but his intimacy with God enabled him to bend the heart of a king and the king would turn the nation to God. Intimate fellowship in God's presence will change ungodly environments.

- ❖ **Task:** Join or start an Upper Room prayer cell. Model for young leaders the importance of and how to intentionally pursue intimacy with God. Find inventive ways and new places to pray with young leaders. Lead them in prayer walks. Go with them to pray in your city's government buildings. Challenge them to pray with passion and purpose.

Takeaway: The authority that comes from spending time with the Father, hearing His voice, will give us relevance in this culture. Jesus did not have the wealth or prestige of the land. His

relevance, His power came from spending much time in the presence of God. And His anointing was activated as He served. The world is looking for a church that will stoop to serve.

- ❖ **Task:** Pray for and gather a team of young leaders to serve your community. Find a specific need that your team can meet. Have your team do something every day towards meeting that need.

Leadership Development: Raising Up Young Heroes

Larry Acosta

Takeaway: God gave ministry gifts to prepare God's people for works of service so that the body of Christ is built up (Ephesians 4:11–16).

- ❖ **Task:** Make a list of people not currently working in ministry who have influence, character, relational skills, passion, and street smarts. Extra points if you come up with names you did not think of while attending TeamUp.

Takeaway: Leaders must engage the pain of their own journey and resolve to not follow the same broken pattern. We must identify what we wish someone had done for us as emerging leaders and do that for this generation. We must not have the attitude that young leaders have to sink or swim.

- ❖ **Task:** Pray over your list of names daily. Contact each potential leader to arrange intentional, relational time.

Takeaway: It is imperative that we equip young leaders with the training, micro-skills, experience, tools, and resources they need.

- ❖ **Task:** Compile a current list of books, DVDs, websites, conferences, and contact names that will train and equip your young leaders. Be intentional about arranging opportunities for them to gain ministry experience.

Takeaway: We can empower emerging leaders by utilizing this simple training method: I do it, you watch. I do it, you help. You do it, I help. You do it, I support and supervise.

- ❖ **Task:** Prepare a tangible way (spreadsheet, notebook, calendar) for monitoring where you are in this process with each of your young leaders. Move forward with it.

Takeaway: People cannot read your mind but they will go to battle for you if they clearly see the vision.

- ❖ **Task:** Write down your ministry vision and share it with the young leaders you are developing.

Takeaway: We must show tangible, frequent appreciation for loyal, faithful leaders.

- ❖ **Task:** Express appreciation to your loyal, faithful leaders next week and regularly thereafter. Put reminders on your schedule until this becomes commonplace. Send a note, give a gift card, send a text message, have a meal out or in your home. Pray about what would express your appreciation most effectively to each person.

Evangelizing Communities through the Children and Youth Harvest Clarence Laney

Takeaway: We must find the children and youth in our communities. We must determine what demographic of children and youth we wish to reach. We should assess what their actual needs are.

- ❖ **Task:** Gather a team of young leaders and brainstorm to determine where the children and youth you want to reach are. Walk through your neighborhoods and observe with compassionate eyes. Make an exhaustive list of every possible service you could offer.

Takeaway: It is possible to have a desire to minister to children and youth without having a realistic understanding of the church's assets for and barriers to performing that ministry.

- ❖ **Task:** Take an honest congregational assessment to ascertain what assets currently exist to attract children and youth, what barriers exist, and what the church's definition of the Gospel is.

Takeaway: We do not have to reinvent the wheel. There are private and governmental service organizations where we can serve and with whom we can partner to fulfill our mission of reaching children and youth with the love of Christ.

- ❖ **Task:** Search out and contact community partners with whom you can serve. There are homeless shelters, youth detention centers, schools, and recreational programs in almost every community. Become involved. Engage your team of young leaders to serve in these organizations.

Takeaway: To effectively reach children and youth, each congregation must make an investment of time, talents, and resources. It may be little or it may be much but children's and youth ministries do not exist in a vacuum.

- ❖ **Task:** Meet with the appropriate church leadership to enable you to take a complete and honest inventory of the people and resources your church is willing to invest into children and youth.

Growing Healthy Churches
Commitment, Calling, Vision, Mission, and Strategy
Brian Sutton

Takeaway: You cannot give away what you do not have. You must know that you have a calling from God. Every biblical leader heard God's voice. Call precedes vision.

- ❖ **Task:** Share your experiences of hearing God's voice with your young leaders. Help them define and evaluate their calling.

Takeaway: God sees the present and He sees the future. He has a work for each person now and has plans for each person's future.

- ❖ **Task:** Share the "Vision Statement" for your ministry with young leaders. Utilize a good spiritual gifts assessment to help them zero in on God's vision for their ministry.

Takeaway: Mission is different than vision. A mission statement should include the steps that will be taken to achieve the vision that God has given.

- ❖ **Task:** Assemble a team to pray about formulating a mission statement for your youth and children's ministries.

Takeaway: There are systematic ways to determine the state of your church's health.

- ❖ **Task:** Gather your team and emerging leaders and do a SWOT analysis (there is one in your TeamUp handbook) on each ministry you lead. Based on the results, set one-year, three-year, and five-year goals that align with your mission. Develop a systematic plan to achieve those goals. "Write the vision and make it plain so that he may run that reads it" (Habakkuk 2:2).

Strengthening Families
Tim Harper

Takeaway: In Deuteronomy 6:4–9, Moses issues a challenge to Hebrew parents to lead their own children spiritually. Moses articulates the principle that together, the faith community and the family unit influence the next generation of leaders more powerfully than we do alone. Anyone called by God can be a pastor of a particular church but no one can replace the spouse or parents in a family. We must as a church intentionally minister to families. Before there was a nation of Israel, there was a family. The faith community exists to support and invest in the family, not the other way around.

- ❖ **Task:** Arrange for a day of parenting and marriage workshops utilizing video instruction or trusted members of the church who have succeeded in those areas.

Takeaway: Ministries must be integrated to bring families together.

- ❖ **Task:** Plan a Sunday where workers in different ministries trade places with each other. Something like this: The youth pastor works in the nursery and the children's workers teach the senior citizens' Sunday school class. That evening, host a pot luck dinner and everyone discusses how it felt to fill the other ministry's shoes.
- ❖ **Task:** Plan a family communion service where the fathers and mothers serve their children.

Takeaway: Proverbs says to train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it. I am to know my children so intimately, that I am able to guide and coach them according to their unique individuality—present the faith to them in the ways that they best embrace it. The church can help strengthen families by introducing parents to the tools that will communicate the faith more effectively.

- ❖ **Task:** For your own family, learn your child's personality traits and learning style. There are many assessment tools available. Avail yourself of materials on identifying your child's love language (www.5lovelanguages.com). Have them take a spiritual gifts tests (<http://childrensministry.com/articles/spiritual-gifts-inventories-for-preteens>), and determine their conflict resolution style. Equip other parents by sharing these tools in small groups.

Takeaway: While providing spiritual formation to children and youth, the children and youth ministries in a family oriented church also invest in equipping parents to be effective spiritual leaders in their homes.

- ❖ **Task:** Put together a resource library of materials that teach effective spiritual leadership and parenting. Encourage parents and emerging leaders to learn from seasoned experts, such as Josh McDowell, Kevin Leman, James Dobson, Jim Weidman, and Dennis Rainey, among others.

Takeaway: We strengthen families by teaching them that the home is the primary relationship. The church is here to assist, but not to replace. Our goal, our mission, is not to be a drop-off place for children and teens. Our goal is to be family oriented and partner with parents to help them lead their families.

Takeaway: We must pray for our pastors' families, recognizing the responsibilities pastors carry can exact a heavy toll on their families. We must recognize that pastors are first called to their own families.

The Courage to Become Carswell Leonard

Takeaway: There is a tremendous price to pay to do ministry. There is a tension between identity and relevance. The church exists to do ministry. Ministry is what we do. Ministry is who

we are. Our greatest threat is not heresy. It is not division. It is not a lack of resources. The greatest threat is the possibility that the church may become irrelevant to the world. “Who being in the very nature of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness” (Philippians 2: 6, 7 NIV). Jesus was so secure in his identity that he was able to engage in the ultimate act of relevance – becoming human. There must be a willingness to become like what we are trying to save. It is this process of becoming that overcomes the dangers of irrelevancy and identity crisis.

- ❖ **Task:** Continue to pray the prayer goals outlined at TeamUp. In ministry meetings and in private devotions pray the following Prayer Points until greater anointing and effectiveness fills our work:

Prayer Point 1

We pray for unity and agreement in mission and purpose for not only this conference, but in ultimately fulfilling the young harvest call, as cast in Vision 2020.

We pray that we will make outreach to and development of children and youth a priority in each local church and that, as leaders, we will identify, equip, and release children and youth for ministry.

Prayer Point 2

We recognize that we are in a strategic alliance with parents and families. We do not want to lose their sacred trust. We pray for conviction and determination to work as a team in each local church. We pray that we are able to equip parents to do what God has called them to do and what they are uniquely suited to do – disciple their own children. As we pray, we will remember that the most important influence in shaping young people’s religious life is the religious life modeled and taught to them by their parents. We pray that we are able to equip the extended family of the church to nurture faith formation in our students.

Prayer Point 3

We pray that the Holy Spirit will give us specific strategies that we will see implemented at home and that the Holy Spirit will speak to every ministry team.

Prayer Point 4

We pray for the church and family to be grounded in the Gospel. We pray that we will develop Spirit-inspired strategies for evangelism. We pray that we live out the values of the Gospel as living messages of grace, love, and transformation.

Prayer Point 5

We pray that we will understand and commit to discipleship. We pray that we will develop Spirit-inspired strategies for discipleship. We pray that we will grow in maturity and in our commitment to biblical unity, and that we will be empowered disciples, living missionally.

Prayer Point 6

We pray Matthew 6:33: But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Prayer Point 7

We pray Romans 12:1: Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

Prayer Point 8

We pray Romans 12: 1, 2: Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Prayer Point 9

We pray Philippians 3:12: Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.