



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH



BWACHA MISSION DISTRICT



Mukobeko South Youth Department

SEMINAR 7

CREATIVE YOUTH MINISTRY

MAY 6, 2022

MUKOBEKO SOUTH SDA CHURCH

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CREATIVE YOUTH MINISTRY

Thinking Outside the Box

1. INTRODUCTION

Youth Ministry is always changing. It changes with the times; therefore, it is imperative for the Youth Leader to come up with relevant programming. This will naturally prompt the leader to think outside the box so that youth ministry is both attractive and interesting.

The Youth Leader is expected to have a comprehensive program that is aligned with the annual themes of the General Conference Youth Ministries. A well-balanced program should include physical, social, spiritual, intellectual, and emotional components. Since the local church is the rightful hub of youth ministry, the plans of the youth council should consider the initiatives of the Division, Union, and Conference.

The programs that take place weekly remains the key structure of the AY society. Much happens here that will attract the youth to attend the other meetings of the department. That why it is needful for the AY Leader to treat this work as the heart of evangelizing, discipline, and mobilizing the youth of their local church.

Yet the chore of planning has caused many youth leaders frustration, some to the point of quitting, because of failure to plan relevant, interesting programs for their youth group each week. Many leaders are at a loss to know how to plan creative programs, around the mission of the local church, that will attract their youth to attend and keep them involved week after week.

2. SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

This module of study will assist the local AY leader in the art of relevant, creative programming, incorporating a comprehensive structure that is aligned with the annual themes of the General Conference Youth Ministries. You will learn to create a well-balanced program that incorporates the physical, social, intellectual, and emotional components that assist the youth in building their faith in Jesus. Because our times are changing, Adventist youth ministry needs to constantly adapt its approach in programs to the youth without neglecting the key objectives of the Youth Department as outlined by M. E. Kern, the first world youth director, with the blessings of Ellen G. White (see Module 3 for more detail).

3. CREATIVE AYM PROGRAMMING

Since the local church is the rightful hub of youth ministry, the plans of the youth council should consider the yearly initiatives of the Division, Union, and Conference, each year. As a local church AY leader, you are to ensure that your programs meet the yearly themes of the GC youth department within that given year. Ellen White stresses the need for church leaders to find the best and most interesting ways to disciple the youth for Jesus Christ:

“When the youth give their hearts to God, our responsibility for them does not cease. They must be interested in the Lord’s work and led to see that He expects them to do something to advance His cause. It is not enough to show how much needs to be done, and to urge the youth to act a part. They must be taught how to labor for the Master. They must be trained, disciplined, drilled, in the best methods of winning souls to Christ. Teach them to try in a quiet, unpretending way to help their young companions. Let different branches of missionary effort be systematically laid out, in which they may take part, and let them be given instruction and help. Thus, they will learn to work for God” (Gospel Workers, p. 210).



Creative AY planning begins with knowing the basic programming structure around which creative programs are run as well as the needs of your youth group. This is vital to achieve well-balanced programs that includes the physical, social, spiritual, intellectual, and emotional components. Knowledge of a basic program structure will give you a steady foundation on which to carry out creative programming.

4. AYM BASIC PROGRAM STRUCTURE

- a. Within the parameters of your personality and that of your group, adapt your leadership style, program format, content, and approach to provide the following:
 1. Fellowship
 2. Lifting of spirits
 3. Sense of participation/involvement
 4. Sense of enjoyment
 5. Change/variety
 6. Relevant religion so that youth can:
 - Gain youth-oriented insights into religious beliefs and traditions.
 - See and accept the relevance of religious beliefs and traditions.
 - Understand the relationship between a Christian and the world.
 - Understand the role and real mission of the church.
 - Be brought face-to-face with a realistic representation of God's ideal for humankind
 7. Be challenged to establish/maintain a relationship with Christ through His Spirit that brings direction, joy, and genuine peace to the individual's life.

(Foundations of Senior Youth Ministry Handbook, GC November 2013 p.141)

- b. Know the GC AYM yearly theme.

In order to embrace a unified acceptance of the GC AYM theme for the year you need to first know the yearly themes as set out by the General Conference Youth Ministries department. These can be found on the GCAYM website (youth.adventist.org) or from the conference/field youth ministries office. The themes are chosen every five years.

- c. Know the Various types of AY Society meetings:
 1. The Regular weekly meeting.
 2. Experience meetings, when opportunity is given to various bands and to individuals to tell the experiences they have had in working for the Master.
 3. Evangelistic meetings; organized and conducted during the AY Week of Prayer or at other times for the purpose of winning the unconverted, reclaiming those who have strayed, and deepening the Christian experience of every member.
 4. Rallies and Conventions in which the home AY Society serves as host to visiting AY Societies.
 5. Congresses and Special Programs, such as:
 - Special programs for youth, with the whole church attending.
 - Special programs for the promotion of some activity of project.
 - Congresses or youth rallies where AY Societies from several territories meet together.
 6. Special programs promoting Temperance.
 7. Demonstrations of Conversion Training meetings, that will teach how to begin a conversation that will lead to Bible studies, hold meetings in homes, show slides, distribute literature, sell books, and conduct Revelation Seminars.
 8. Investiture ceremonies, usually conducted once a year, are a type of recognition service where those completing class requirements are awarded certificates and other items that signify reaching a goal. (Youth Ministry Handbook GC 2015, p. 35)



- d. Know Key Five Basic Needs of Youth
 1. Acceptance and recognition
 2. Affection
 3. Success and achievement
 4. New experiences
 5. Security & Sense of Belonging (Foundations of Senior Youth Ministry November 2013, p. 81-84)
- e. Know the Six Fundamental Youth Objectives for the AYM The six key fundamental youth objectives as outlined by M. E. Kern, the first appointed youth director in 1907, and endorsed by E. G. White is still the fundamental objectives of the AYM that needs to be implemented into the yearly programs.
 1. To raise the level of the devotional life of the youth.
 2. To lift the standard of attainment of the youth.
 3. To educate and train youth for service.
 4. To provide opportunities for outreach and service.
 5. To teach the principles of stewardship.
 6. To lead youth to discover their individual worth and develop and discover their spiritual gifts. (GCYD, 2002, p. 13)

5. CREATING YOUTH PROGRAMMING BY THE "SERVANT LEADER" MODEL

The many AYM manuals currently available present numerous models for developing creative youth programs. The following Servant Leader Model serves to meet the above key elements that form a successful AYM basic structure. The unique feature of this model is that it incorporates the need of involving the youth themselves in running the programs, thus creating a buy-in of acceptance from the youth in the implementation of each program and training them for further church leadership.

Below, you will be learning a simple, six-step approach to planning your youth meetings for a whole year. But if you want your youth to learn to be leaders themselves, as we have said over and over throughout this seminar, you need to involve them from the beginning. They would love to help you plan, and their energy and enthusiasm will keep you from being overburdened and burned out. Each box in the six steps below represents a type of program to be conducted by the youth that week. Three to four youth are requested ahead of time to plan and conduct the program, with the assistance of the youth leader to guide them in resources and ensuring the presentation will fulfill the objective to be taught.

The success of conducting the programs using the youth will engage them, and motivate them to come up with creative ways to conduct the program. Remember that a youth ministry program should be done for the youth, by the youth. Our youth have many exciting ways to run programs and this alone will create a buy-in from them because they are involved in owning the program.

The youth leader at the beginning of the year will gain much success by using the Servant Leadership Style model to train their youth to effectively reach a stage where they are competent enough to stand alone and conduct the program with the leader as a supervisor. The youth leader and their youth need to consult together to find the best style of conducting any given program that will incorporate variety, interest, and a strong biblical foundation.

Each week a different box/theme should be conducted using different persons so that throughout the year, all the youth of your group would have had the experience of conducting a program.



6. A SIX-STEP AY PROGRAMMING AID

(use together with your youth)

Here are six easy steps to plan an exciting, creative AY yearly program involving your youth.

1. Have an outline sheet of the AY Quarterly Yearly Calendar, with the four or five Sabbaths in the month.
2. Meet with your AY Society Council and selected youth, to plan the yearly calendar.
3. Fill in the major Division/Union/Conference events for the year. For example:
 - AY Week of Prayer
 - AY Celebration Day
 - Youth Congress/Camp
 - Youth Federation Programs
 - Bible Bowl Dates
 - Health and Temperance Events
 - AY Evangelistic Effort
 - Conference Camp meeting
 - Training Seminars/Other

Note: Remember to include the AYM Yearly Theme into each program

4. Then proceed to fill in your Local Church Calendar Events. (Remember to invite those dept. heads of your local church to make a presentation to the youth.)
5. Fill the dates, venue, and type of Social/Recreation events in the AY Quarterly calendar.
6. Types of AY Weekly Programs
 - SP Spiritual Nurture Program
 - E Evangelism / Outreach
 - T Training
 - D Discussion
 - V Visits
 - B Bible-Study / Doctrines
 - R Recreation
 - C/S Community Service Program
 - M Mission Outreach Service

Servant-Leader Model

- I Do It – They Watch
- I Do It – They Help
- They Do – I Help
- They Do – I Watch

The ultimate goal is “that we may present everyone perfect (mature, complete, whole) in Christ” (Col.1:8) and “to prepare God’s people for works of service (ministry), so that the body of Christ may be built up” (Eph. 4:12). Once you have filled in all the types of meetings you intend to use in a given quarter, you can brainstorm creative ways to fulfill these objectives, in ways that will interest and please your particular youth.

1. Be sure to plan your quarterly AY Program around the Six Fundamental AY Objectives of the AY department.



2. You may choose three to four Fundamental Objectives of the AYM each quarter to fulfill. Remember to include the AYM Yearly Theme into each program.
3. Seek to plan in detail at least a quarter at a time, filling in all Sabbaths for that quarter. Let your young people help you brainstorm creative and exciting ways to fill in these programs.
4. Then post your three-month program on the church notice board.
5. Be aware, of course, that life can intervene. It may be that some things will change from the original plan, but if this happens, it is a lot less upsetting than if you had no plan at all. If you know where you want to go, you can roll with the waves that occur on your way there.
6. Remember to seek approval from the church board, especially for new efforts or things which will cost money, at the beginning of each quarter.
7. Try at least one thing per quarter that you've never tried before, and be sure to evaluate together afterward! Make a note of which things worked well, and which did not. Determine if you could do something differently and try again, or if this particular method isn't a good fit for your group. Either is okay.

7. CONCLUSION

The senior youth leader has much work to do, and myriad opportunities to plan creative programs for and with the youth. Remember, as you plan for the whole year, consider taking into account the holiday seasons which present ideal opportunities to carry out mission and service activities that will be life-changing to your youth. If you have differing local holidays or festivals, so much the better.

In your planning, try to include training weekends, retreats, meal-meetings where you can continue to help those who want to assist you in ministry. After all, you will learn you cannot do it alone. Seek counsel from those that have a passion for the youth. Building a vibrant youth ministry team is the most important part of creative programming. Learn to engage your youth in all aspects programming, and you will find new energy and enthusiasm, too.

8. ACTIVITIES

Individual:

A. What are the Six Key Steps to Creative Program Planning? (Written/Recorded)

Group:

B. Plan a vibrant three-month "Youth Program" with four meetings per month, incorporating a few of the Key AY objectives and once a month recreational activity. (15 mins.)

