

Transforming Discipleship

— Synod of the Heartland — Summer 2008 —

Growing and Caring for Volunteers

'Tis the season for many of our church's volunteers to be evaluating their previous year's experience of service and asking themselves several questions: Am I really good at what I do? Do I enjoy it enough to come back another year? Do I feel that God's Spirit worked through me to touch lives? So the question is, "How do we as coordinators and leaders equip, encourage, and empower those servants to continue to see God's hand in what they are accomplishing for His kingdom?"

I did some research for exercises and articles to help leadership teams acquire tools for training meetings and equipping times. I will list one of the favorite exercises I found and also leave some information on other places to gain more access to further activities as you prepare for your summer evaluating or fall training meetings.

Becoming A Community: True Care Begins When Ministry Teams Become Ministry Communities

Community begins when the people involved in a ministry move beyond wondering, "What's in it for me?" and "What do we need?" to "What do you need?" The difference is in the words, the laughter, the concern, and the trust. When one member messes up, it's okay, because each member feels like he or she has to identify with the others besides the task that they're doing together. People in community feel safe enough to open their lives and share what God is doing, and what God is teaching them. This sense of belonging to each transfers over to the children, youth and adult you are working with helping them connect and apply God's Word to their lives without fear of shame or mockery.

Activity/Exercise: Let The Walls Come Down

- 1) Divide into teams of four
- 2) Take one dice and a set of cards, each card numbered 1 through 6 with the following questions:
 - Card #1: What is your favorite summertime memory from childhood?
 - Card #2: What is your favorite thing to do on a rainy day?
 - Card #3: What I am feeling anxious in a new situation, I usually...
 - Card #4: If you could vacation anywhere in the world for a month, where would it be and why?
 - Card #5: Describe the best teacher you ever had....
 - Card #6: I feel most comfortable with leaders who....
- 3) Take turns rolling the die and answering the numbered question that corresponds to the number on the die. Keep rolling and answering until you've heard an answer from someone to all six questions.

4) Discuss:

1. Which of these questions were most difficult to answer? Why?
2. How does the level of trust correspond to the level of community?
3. How does a strong sense of community enable people to care for one another better?
4. What can we do to build trust, care, and community in our group?

5) More teamwork type questions:

1. How does being on a team affect the way you view your teammates?
2. How does having a common goal affect our motivation?
3. How can we work together to infuse our ministry with common goals and teamwork?
4. How might these lessons help the people in our ministry (children, youth, adults)?

More websites on equipping volunteers and teamwork:

www.BuildingChildrensMinistry.com: "Interview and Evaluate Volunteers", "Lead a Volunteer Orientation Meeting", "Develop a Volunteer Training Program". "Develop Leaders For Children's Ministry". (These are downloads for about \$10 each that are set up to lead meetings)

www.BuildingChurchLeaders.com: "Leadership Environment", "Recruiting and Staffing, and "Volunteer Development" (training themes and powerpoints)

Finally, I have purchased an excellent resource from www.buildingchurchleaders.com that is several assessments/discussion sheets on these various topics: "Spotting New Leaders", "Before You Remove A Leader", "When No One Volunteers", "Three Key Positions On A Winning Team", "Turning Committees Into Communities". and more!

Need more ideas and resources for volunteer recruitment and team-building? Feel free to pass along what your needs are I can do some searching for you.

Blessings on your summer,



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Featured Resources for Summer

Discipleship Resources for:

CHILDREN:

Superheros Curriculum from North Point Resources. Superheros is a 10-week curriculum created for elementary-ages that teach the superpowers of confidence, forgiveness, courage, self-control and compassion using the biblical stories about Jesus, Elijah, Daniel and more. Superheros consists of small group activities for K-5th grade, Bible story scripts and worship segments; super-hero video series, trading cards, t-shirts, tattoos, larger-than-life superhero posters.

FAMILY MINISTRY:

5 Things Every Kid Needs DVD from North Point Resources. This training video highlights some critical priorities for families and leaders to consider in children's ministry, how to keep a simple strategy, and how parents can participate in teaching kids character and faith. It also explores the Upstreet Curriculum of North Point and their strategy.

Family Times Pack on the topic of JOY and Patience by The Rethink Group. These family packs provide activities to be used once a week during each of the four meal times—MealTime, DriveTime, BedTime, and MorningTime. All of this is designed to give parents simple ways to help their kids grow in faith and character.

Compassion: Seeing a Need and Doing Something About It "Short Story" Videos for Church and Home from Willow Creek; These are videos that are multi-generational and make them great for family services, Children/Youth ministry curriculum supplements, Take-home tools for church families, Family devotions/discussion starters and children's sermon illustrations. It contains three different videos each 5-7 minutes in length.

ADULTS:

Year Two of Disciples Spiritual Formation Resources from Faith Alive Resources. This faith formation program includes a series of discussion guides for small groups and individual readings on the topics of Prayer, Reading the Bible, Worship, Living in Community, and Overcoming Sin. Only the Prayer one is available but the others are coming out soon. Visit www.GrowDisciples.org for more information.

YOUTH and YOUNG ADULTS:

The Seven Deadly Sins: A Survival Guide by Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung and Faith Alive Resources. This leaders and participant guide is a new course for young adults that aims to recapture the wisdom of the ancient tradition of the early centuries and help contemporary Christians walk more closely with Christ. Each session includes: a warm-up activity to start students thinking about the topic of the session, a definition of the vice or sinful habit, an exploration of what the vice looks like in contemporary life and in students' lives in particular and spiritual disciplines designed to counter the vices in our lives.

TRAINING RESOURCES:

Opening Doors To Discipleship On-line Teaching Training Resource for the Reformed Church in America. This program is 12 sessions long, is free to congregations in the RCA, interactive and engaging, simple enough for beginning teachers; refreshingly new for experienced ones, and designed to be

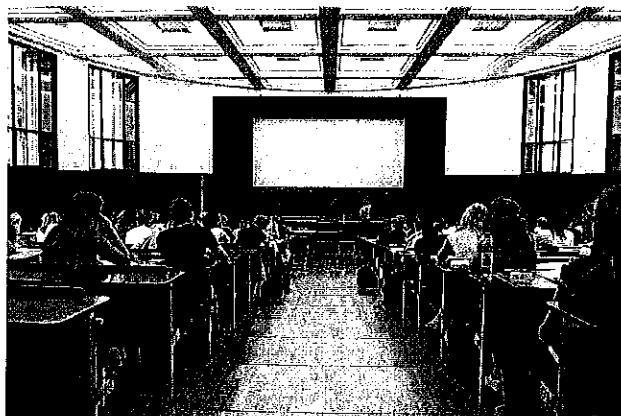
Upcoming Discipleship Conferences and Seminars

"Grow Conference: Digging Deeper and Reaching Wider" (Children's Ministry Coordinators and Leaders)- August 1-2, 2008 in Orland Park, IL. See www.FaithAliveResources.org/grow for more information.

"Small Group & Evangelism Conference" in Lombard, IL- July 18-20. Free Transportation from Michigan, Indiana, and Iowa on air-conditioned tour buses. Call 1-888-644-0814 to reserve your seat. Registration information can be found at www.crhm.org/conference. Also, check out the special buy one get one free registration offer!

Children's Ministry Live—"Faith That Grows" seminars are being held this Fall at a variety of Midwest cities. More information can be found at www.group.com/cmml or 1-800-888-5991.

In addition, feel free to contact the Discipleship office at 402-850-4275 for more information on the variety of workshops Pam Kimpson can offer free of charge to your church this Fall.



done in any order and at your own pace. Some examples of the sessions are, "Why am I a teacher/leader?", "How children and youth learn", "Understanding adult learning", etc. For more check out the Discipleship space on the RCA website. Contact the Synod Discipleship office for the code to access the program!

CD featuring the breakout called **"The 4/5 Grade Experiment-What We've Learned About Reaching Our 4/5 Grade Kids"** at the "Conspire" Willow Creek Children's Ministry Conference by David Rauch.

CD featuring the main session called **"Building Families One Step at a Time"** by Kurt Bruner and Dr. John Trent of Strong Families Institute.

CD featuring the main session called **"Erase Your Fears"** which is about finding your right approach through the variety of ministry options and understanding today's culture of kids