

Today's Convo: The Keys to Dynamic Youth Ministry

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NEXT Church



Thank you for the invitation to be here!

About Matt Vaughan!

- * Lead Lawrence FPC & Youth Ministry Institute Midwest
- * Served 4 churches in youth ministry over 22 years, groups of 8, 15, 45, 100
- * Fun fact – went through TFA and taught in Urban KC
- * Teach youth ministry at Saint Paul School of Theology in Kansas City
- * Began Youth Ministry Institute Midwest 3 years ago (yminstitute.com)
- * YMIM is supported by the Synod of Mid-America PCUSA, several PCUSA churches (including Village Presbyterian), and other great partners



Happy

Pi

Day

Goals for this Session —

- * Planting the MAGIC BEANS for a dynamic ministry;
- * How to ASK YOUR STUDENTS to become more engaged and excited;
- * How to RESPOND to current trends with students;
- * CLOSING THOUGHTS and contact information.

Goal #1: first things first — here are the magic beans.

- * Always think like a startup.
- * Be brave! It's okay to fail.
- * Don't forget your mission.



About Youth Ministry Institute

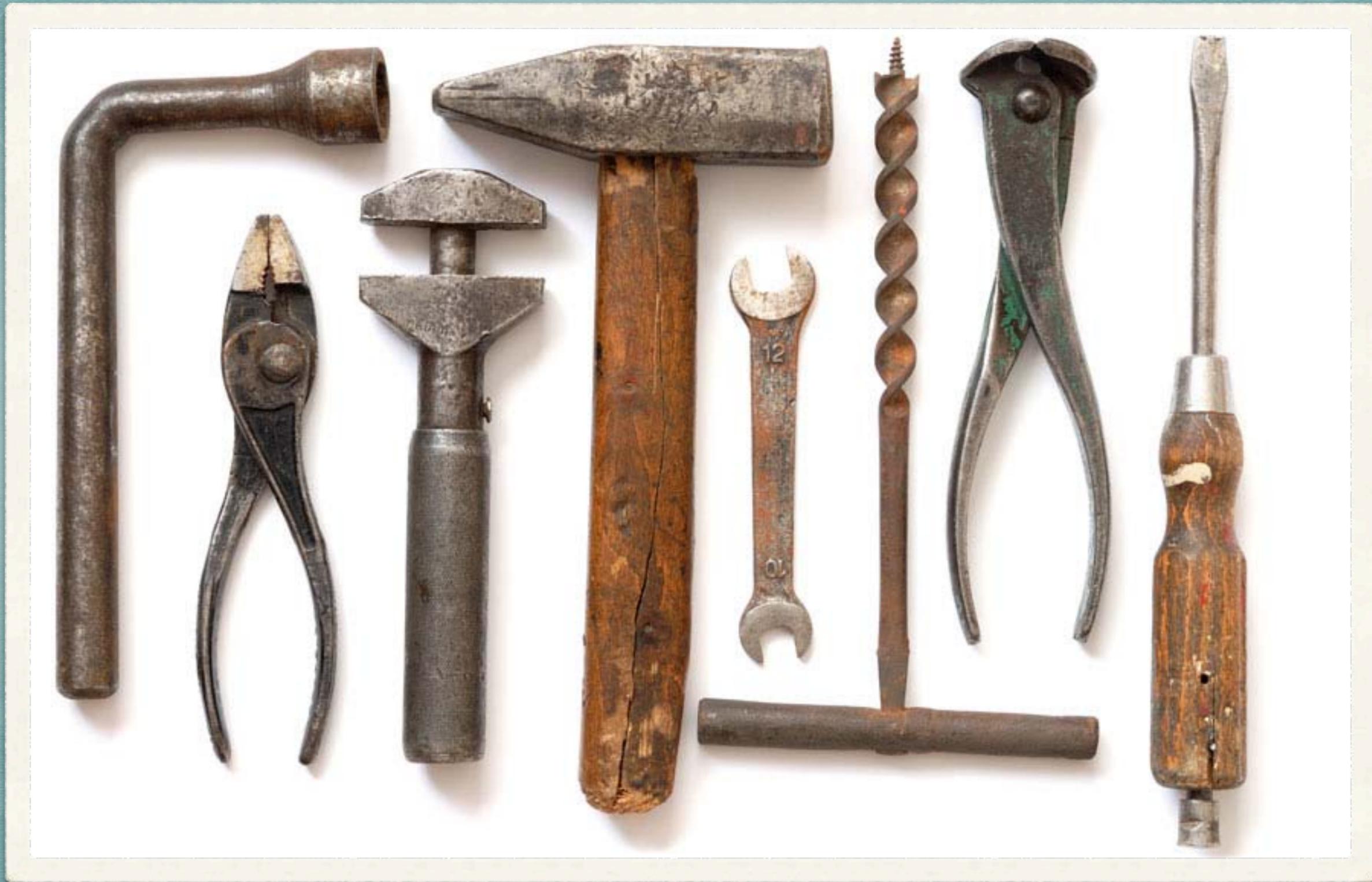
- * Youth ministry is hard! You gotta be a pastor, a teacher, a counselor, a financial manager, a coach, a marketer, and an organizer. **NO WONDER ONLY 30% OF YOUTH LEADERS STAY MORE THAN TWO YEARS.**
- * Youth Ministry Institute offers a two-year “Cohort Learning” program that results in 80% of our commissioned youth leaders staying in their job for five years or more, typically doubling youth ministry attendance.
- * We do this through monthly cohort learning sessions, personalized coaching, theological education, and conference events – over 300 hours.
- * We also offer on-site consulting, internships, phone support, & conferences.

Goal #2: how to ask your students to be engaged & excited

- * Building community in your own ministry setting is a good place to start!
- * Relationships are more important than programming.



Wouldn't it be great to have the tools we need?



I have something to give you – game on!

Scenario: one of our funding partners is providing each of your churches \$10,000. They have the following rules:

1. You can't give it away.
2. Must build/buy something we can see.
3. Must be reusable for many years.



You have an opportunity to give
your youth something better.

You can give them their **VERY OWN** youth ministry.

“Teaming Up” by Holderness/Hay

“One way to think of ownership is to consider how you treat something you own... You take care of it. You protect it. You fix it when it’s broken. You use it, not abuse it... But with something you didn’t own, you would hang back and let the owner take responsibility for it.

“Both young people and adults need to explore the concept of ownership. How much ownership do your youth have? The more ownership the young people have, the more committed they will be. The more they give, the more they will receive from the church.”

– Page 26, “Teaming Up,” Holderness and Hay, WJK Press, 1997... yes, 1997...

You have all the tools you need –
RIGHT NOW!

You can give them their very own youth ministry.
What has worked for you?

Goal #2: how do
students and the
Church **RESPOND** to
to the needs of youth?

What are the current trends?

What do our students need?



Where are they? There are variables.

- * In an informal activity several years at Montreat Conference Center in North Carolina, students were asked this question:
 - * What has helped you grow the most in your faith journey?
 - * In what order did they answer this question?

What helped you grow the most in your faith journey? Here are 12 options:

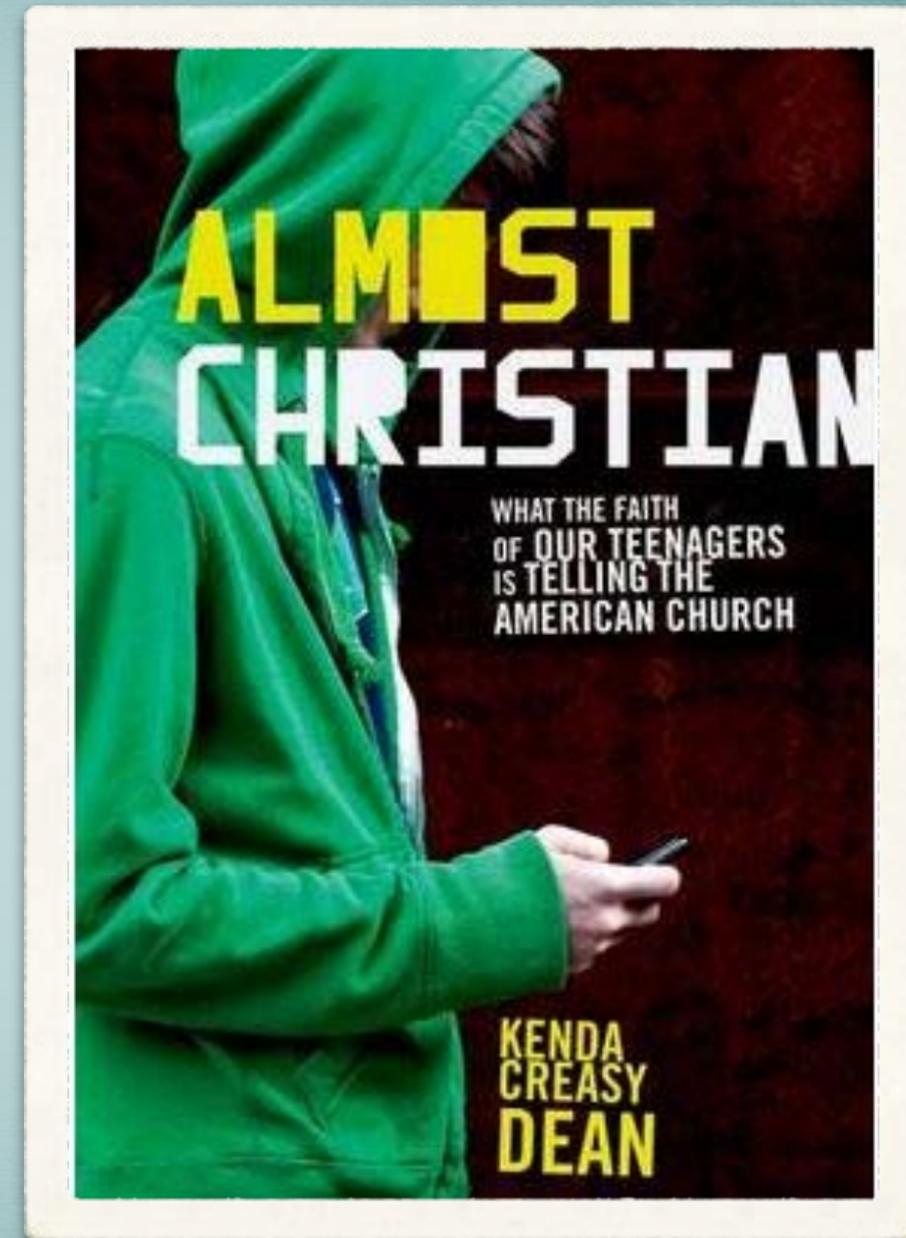
- A Christian friend.
- Christian music.
- Going on a mission trip.
- Going to worship at my church.
- My youth group.
- Praying.
- Preacher and/or sermon.
- Relationship with a Christian adult mentor.
- Relationship with parents.
- Retreats, camps, & conferences.
- Studying the Bible on my own.
- Studying the Bible with my small group.
- *(place these in order of priority)*

What helped you grow the most in your faith journey?

1. Relationship with parents.
2. A Christian friend.
3. Retreats, camps, & conferences.
4. Going on a mission trip.
5. Relationship with a Christian adult mentor.
6. My youth group.
7. Studying the Bible with my small group.
8. Preacher and/or sermon.
9. Christian music.
10. Studying the Bible on my own.
11. Going to worship at my church.
12. Praying.

Almost Christian

Kenda Creasy Dean's analysis of the ongoing National Study of Youth and Religion, which began in 2005.



Kenda's Analysis – Research Variables

1. Parental religious involvement was high while teen was in high school.
2. Teen had high commitment to faith while in high school.
3. Teen had religious experience before entering young adulthood.
4. Teen had multiple adults of faith to turn to for support and help.
5. Teen prayed frequently and read the Bible on her/his own.
6. Teen had few serious doubts about religious beliefs.

NSYR Research Variables:

Two variables were most powerful:

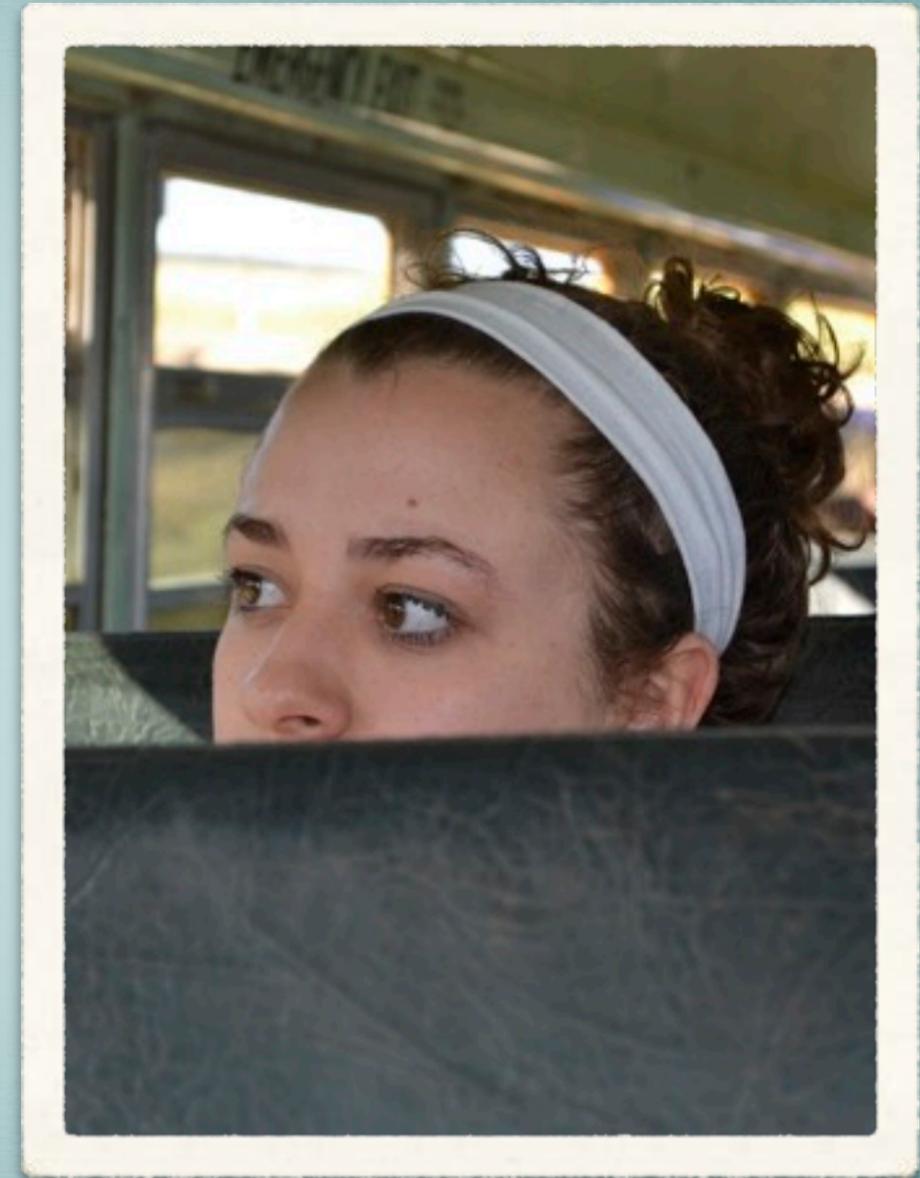
- * Teen had religious experience before entering young adulthood – usually a transformational faith experience like a camp, conference, or mission trip.
- * Making a personal commitment to live life for God
- * Witnessing a miracle
- * Experiencing an answer to prayer
- * Having an especially moving experience in worship

NSYR Research Variables:

Two variables were most powerful:

- * Parental religious involvement was high while teen was in high school.
- * Encourage parents to share what they know
 - * What practices are helping you grow in your own faith?
- * Encourage parents to share what they love
 - * Is Jesus on the list of people these parents want to talk about?

Closing Thoughts





The Worst Mission Trip Ever?



Meet them where they are.

Ask them to preach for Skittles, like Ryan!



Meet them where they are.
Ask them what they would like to do with their ministry.

Things to consider.

- * Be on board with family ministry. Research affirms that parents matter most. The most effective youth ministry is also family ministry.
- * Be realistic. The era of big youth groups ended with the rise of the cell phone. Youth will choose when and where to seek experiential faith.
- * Be authentic. Youth need to know that they're not the only ones that struggle. Have you professed that you struggle? That you sin?
- * Be self-aware. You don't need to be everything to everyone.
- * Be intentional. Offer grace. Model forgiveness. Seek hope in your faith community. Bring your youth to the feet of Jesus.

Stay connected!

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