

Christian Vocation Resource

Ministries with Young People

What You Can Do: Ministries With Young People

Congregations and presbyteries can do many things to support young people exploring their vocational call. While not comprehensive, this list begins to offer practical and innovative suggestions for current leadership.

- **Create Opportunities For Discernment**
 - **Shadowing Days** – identify persons who are willing to be “shadowed” by a young person. Provide a variety of backgrounds from which to choose and a variety of settings. Encourage conversation about the connection with baptismal identity.
 - **Retreats** – sponsor Sabbath times for those exploring their call. Make “exploration” events focus more on formation than information. Consider a retreat for seminary students, helping the congregation to address their needs.

- **Offer Prayer Partners**
 - **Match persons who would covenant to be in prayer with a young person** as they begin or continue the journey of exploring God’s direction in her/his life. Prayer partners could be matched at the congregational or presbytery level.

- **Maintain Frequent Communication**
 - **Check-in with them often** to track their progress, joys and concerns.
 - **Ask for updates** that would include key insights, points of struggle, theological breakthroughs.

- **Compile a Book of Call Stories**
 - Ask a **variety of persons** who have responded to God’s call on their lives to provide a brief, but compelling written account of their experience. Include youth and young adults, seasoned pastors, active and retired laypersons, and elders. This could be shared with those who are in the discernment process.

- **Encourage, encourage, encourage!**
 - There is nothing like the affirmation that one receives when being encouraged to follow God’s leading.
 - Listening is a valuable gift and a key tool in discernment.
 - Identify teachable moments to help them grow.
 - Being sensitive to and aware of the needs and challenges of young people helps them grow in professionalism and leadership.

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