

## Youth Ministry Strategic Implementation Plan

Christ-centered youth ministries are key to helping local churches make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The Conference Council on Youth Ministry and the Local Church Youth Ministry coordinators are working to strengthen youth ministry in local churches by providing training to youth workers and pastors, hosting events that support the youth ministry of the local church and administering the Youth Service Fund grant program.

### Vision for 2020:

- 1,000 youth leaders will have participated in training events sponsored by the Great Plains Conference.
- 3,000 youth and youth ministry leaders will participate in the annual events that are sponsored by the Great Plains Conference, including The OneEvent and Bishop's Confirmation Rallies.
- \$50,000 in grants will have been given by the Youth Service Fund (all of which comes through gifts and offerings, not from the conference budget).
- Each district in the Great Plains Conference will have a strong District Council on Youth Ministries, which will help to resource and equip local churches to have excellent youth ministries.

### Training:

-A large scale, overnight training event, "**Spring Training**," will be launched in 2015. Spring Training is designed for churches to bring their whole team of youth workers (anyone who works with youth in the church). This will become an annual event with some similarities to other training events (scale, quality of training, well-known speakers who are experts in the field) but will be much more cost-effective and accessible to churches in the Great Plains Conference than what is already being offered by others (most are expensive and only offered in a few major cities around the country).

-A "**speaker's bureau**" of youth ministry trainers on various topics is being assembled to allow existing groups (District Councils on Youth Ministry, youth ministry networking groups, clusters of churches in the same geographical area, churches with similar characteristics or struggles, camps, etc.) to have a speaker/trainer on a youth ministry topic that is relevant to them to come to their community or to an event or meeting that is already happening. The speaker's bureau will be launched in 2015 with a minimal number of speakers and by 2016 will include a wider array of speakers and topics that can be covered.

-**Grants** are being offered to help local church youth workers attend multiple-day training events such as the Perkins School of Youth Ministry, National Youth Workers Convention, or similar events. By 2016 we anticipate providing grants to at least 30 youth workers per year.

-A **Youth Ministry Internship Program** is being developed to help train young adults considering careers in vocational ministry. Youth ministry, camping ministry, small-membership church ministry, and mercy and justice ministry are currently working with the young adult leadership coordinator to pilot a program in which we would combine efforts to promote our internship programs and draft and train those young adults selected to be interns. By 2016, we plan to hire at least five youth ministry interns per year.

-We must provide **training and resources for district councils on youth ministry** in order for these to become effective ministries. In 2015 we will offer our second training event for district youth coordinators, and we will expand that training in 2016 to include additional members from each district.

### **Conference-wide Youth Events**

-**The OneEvent** is the one time each year where we will invite churches to bring all of their youth to a large event. The event will feature exceptionally talented speakers and bands, educational seminars and exhibits that will allow young people the opportunity to learn more about the United Methodist Church beyond their local congregations. Over 1,200 people (plus volunteers and staff) participated in the 2015 OneEvent. We expect 1,500 or more participants in 2016.

-The Conference Council on Youth Ministries will support the **Bishop's Confirmation Rallies** by promoting the events, recommending speakers and worship leaders, and leading workshops.

### **Other Opportunities**

-The **Youth Service Fund** will continue to offer grants to local churches and other organizations within the annual conference. These funds, which are raised by youth for youth, are targeted to new ministries or the expansion of existing ministries to reach new people.

-We will work with **Great Plains Camps** to strengthen the relationship between the Conference Council on Youth Ministries and the camp board as well as support the camping events for youth, including but not limited to those events that previously fell under the Conference Council on Youth Ministries (CCYM) umbrella in our predecessor conferences (Institute at Camp Chippewa and the middle school and high school camps at Horizon).

-We will partner with the Vital Congregations Team to help churches who are not offering **confirmation classes** offer this important ministry.

-Assisting the Small Membership Church Coordinator in helping small churches **create new youth ministries**.

**Financial Implications for 2016:**

- A relatively small increase in budget (approximately \$12,000-\$18,000) is likely to be needed in 2016. Each goal that is mentioned in this plan is reflected in the 2015 budget but moderate increases are likely to be in needed in 2016 to accommodate growth and rising costs.