

UCC Youth and Young Adult Ministry Assessment Mid-term Update

Prepared by

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The **ONLINE SURVEY** is up and running through 7/1/09!

Please help us get the word out:

<http://uccyysurvey.questionpro.com>

This multi-branch survey is designed to be taken by those who are 13-30 years old (or anyone who has a stake in youth and young adult ministries) and by those who work directly with them in a volunteer or paid capacity in every church setting: Local Church, Association, Conference, outdoor ministries, and/or campus ministries.

Share this link widely! Thank you.

We last reported to you in October, 2008, and we have been very pleased with what we have been able to accomplish since then. Here are some of the highlights:

Connecting with stakeholders:

- Thom resourced the Student Ecumenical Partnership (STEP) team which met October 17-18 with a public identification exercise. Out of that work and meeting this group of college/university students of the UCC and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) committed to co-host a student leadership event in the summer of 2010. Plans for this are moving forward and the UCC has offered resources to match those of the Disciples.
- Thom and Kelly met with UCC Outdoor Ministry Association (OMA) members and site directors last November 18-19. There had been a distancing in the relationship between this important leader network and the national setting during the youth and young adult staff transition which has now been restored. Thom was able to share a resource on asset-mapping that directors can take back to their local boards.
- At its January 9-10 meeting, Thom was able to resource the Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries (CYYAM) with a mission clarification exercise

that resulted in revisions to its succession plan, election process, and meeting pattern into the future.

Regional focus groups:

- Mid-Atlantic and Southern Regions met in Philadelphia on January 16-17
- Great Lakes Region met at Elmhurst College on February 6-7
- Western Region will meet in Berkeley on February 27-28
- New England Region will meet in Framingham, MA, on March 27-28

The goal of bringing together 100 participants (about 25 at each) from the Conferences within the Regions will be met when all four groups are completed. The day-long facilitated conversations with youth, young adults, and conference and local church staff who work with them have been well-received and productive. Thom offers a process of conversation and assessment which can be replicated in other settings of the church.

Additional connections and conversations:

- Thom participated in the young adult and adult Our Whole Lives/Sexuality and Our Faith facilitator training on January 30-31; Kelly participated in this training January 23–25. Conversations continue with Ann Hanson and others about how OWL can be integrated into Christian education and faith formation ministries in the UCC.
- Thom met with and interviewed UCC urban Indian youth and young adults at All Nations Indian UCC Church in Minneapolis, MN, and with Wade Zick, Ashley Minister of Faith Formation for Children and Youth for the Minnesota Conference.
- Over the course of the consultancy, Thom continues to meet with conference-setting leadership in youth and young adult ministries in every conference by phone or in person. Historically-underrepresented groups are being specially addressed with visits or by conference calls: Dakota Association (March 6-7); City of Refuge UCC, San Francisco CA (March 1); Pacific Islander/Asian American youth and young adults (Hawai'i Conference annual meeting, June 10-13); lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and questioning youth and young adults, Latino/Hispanic young adults, and other groups as they can be arranged.
- 15 members of the 2030 Clergy network met via conference call on February 13 enriched by an online meeting. We heard useful feedback that will be shared with leadership of the 2030 Clergy network.

- On March 3, Thom will conduct a two-hour online webinar, “Where are the 20-somethings?” for UCC New Church Leadership. To date, over 30 are registered.

Advisory Committee for Youth and Young Adult Ministries:

The Advisory Committee for Youth and Young Adult Ministries has met by phone throughout the process and will meet in person on April 24-25 to process the findings from the online survey, the regional focus groups, and the many other meetings, interviews and input. The Committee will begin to formulate recommendations for the future of youth and young adult ministries for consideration by leadership throughout the UCC. It will have a report with these recommendations ready for General Synod.

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