

THE HEARTBEAT OF YOUTH CHOIR:

RELEVANCE, RETREAT, RELATIONSHIPS

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Dr. Jonathan Rodgers // Assistant Professor of Choral Music
Lee University School of Music // Cleveland, TN
jrodgers@leeuniversity.edu // Facebook // Instagram

INTRODUCTION:

- I. Discussion
- II. Function of the Heart
- III. "Based on what you have seen, heard, and know, how will you respond?" *Visions of Vocation: Common Grace for the Common Good* (Steven Garber)
- IV. 3 signs of a healthy heartbeat in Youth Choir ministry: **Relevance – Retreat – Relationships**

RELEVANCE:

- I. Discussion
- II. Definition: *The quality of being closely* _____ *or* _____ *to* _____.
- III. Difference between _____ and _____
- IV. Guiding Thoughts
- V. **Youth Choir as** _____
- VI. Action points:
 - a. Youth Choir can help us _____ and _____ teenagers by
 - i. Meeting specific identity-forming needs (emotional, social, spiritual, musical/artistic) of those teenagers:
 1. Learn how to become a _____
 2. Feel _____, valued
 3. Friendship
 4. Relationships
 5. Learn empathy, humility, honesty, trust, respect
 6. Learn to look outside of themselves and _____ others
 7. Implement and test their _____ and put it to use
 - ii. Providing an organized structure/system with adult support for developing spiritual maturity/building faith in a safe, supportive, trusting community.
 1. Adults must help _____ the faith by handing down the catechesis, language, and practices of Christianity in tangible and understandable ways.
 2. Adults must help teenagers in _____ their own faith.
 3. Students can practice _____ (prayer, bible study, testimony/witness)
 4. Students can rehearse the _____ in song
 5. Students can practice _____ through sharing opportunities in and out of rehearsal
 6. Students can _____ others through sharing music or hands-on service ministry
 - iii. Helping students transition out of¹
 1. Adolescence into young adulthood (Millennials)
 2. Inactive, passive faith to active faith engagement
 - iv. Providing a _____ to make faith consequential.²
 1. A creed (an articulated God-story and belief)
 2. A _____ (a sense of belonging with peers and adults)

1. Christian Smith with Patricia Snell, *Souls in Transition: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of Emerging Adults*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

2. Ibid.

3. A calling (a sense of purpose and significance)
4. A _____ (the belief that God is moving the world somewhere).

VII. Application: ***A mission-minded, purposeful, service-based youth choir can actively help provide a systematic way for adults and students to interact, a place for developing these tools, and a method to respond to the current challenges of today's teenagers.***

VIII. From *Sticky Faith*³

- a. Kids who left the faith report having questions about faith in early adolescence that were _____ by significant adults (parents, pastor, teacher).
- b. A factor causing kids to shelve their faith is _____ of kids and adults in church. Kids who attend church-wide services are more likely to keep their faith.
- c. The more kids serve and build relationships with _____ the more likely they are to hang on to their faith.

RETREAT:

1. Discussion
2. Definition
3. Guiding Thoughts
4. Testimonials
5. **Retreat: Youth Choir as _____**
6. Action point(s)/ideas:
 - a. Foster a welcoming, open _____ that involves _____ (select carefully)
 - i. Provide affirmation, love, support
 - ii. Have adult team leaders lead brief devotions, small groups for choir trips, etc. (5 minutes)
 - iii. You and your team may be the only positive adult presence in a student's life
 - b. _____ provide freedom and security
 - i. Establish simple, clear guidelines about behavior, speech, attire, cell phones, etc.
 - c. Create a structured _____
 - i. Keep things moving, focused, enjoyable, and productive
 - ii. Provide positive reinforcement in rehearsal
 - iii. Build in humor in the rehearsal
 - iv. Chat chance...build in BRIEF moments for them to chat (2 minutes) and give them topics/scripture to discuss. Connect to lyrics of song. Assign groups of 3-4.
 - v. Foster independent singing (not *solo* singing). Have upperclassmen demonstrate in rehearsal by singing sections/phrases of a piece.
 - d. Recognize _____ or student achievement at school
 - e. Try to _____ each student before or after rehearsal
 - i. Call them by name, shake their hands, give a hug, etc.
 - f. Build an environment of _____ among the sexes/choir sections.
 - i. "Sing off" / memory checks in small groups with small rewards
 - g. Student leadership team (upperclassmen or seniors)
 - i. Help with camaraderie, esprit de corps, team unity, possibly lead sectionals
 - h. Involve _____ in some way and let them see the two of you interact together
 - i. Snacks, devotions, folders, nametags, seating chart, etc.

3. Kara Powell and Chap Clark, *Sticky Faith: Everyday Ideas to Build Lasting Faith in Your Kids*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011.

- i. Be _____ in expectations, recognition of successes, discipline, rehearsal flow/format
- j. Other ideas?

RELATIONSHIPS:

- I. Discussion
- II. Guiding Thoughts
 - a. YC is a place of connections: (modes of engagement)
 - i. Musical, Mental, Physical, Emotional/Relational, Spiritual, and Social Connections
- III. **Relationships: Youth choir as _____**
- IV. Key Ideas (from *Hurt 2.0*)
 - a. Conclusion #1: Adolescents desire meaningful relationships with _____.
 - b. Conclusion #2: Adolescents desire meaningful relationships with _____.
 - c. Conclusion #3: Adolescents desire _____ and want to know that they are a part of something bigger than themselves—a place to make a meaningful contribution.
- V. Actions Points:
 - a. Take a retreat. Check out www.cueweb.net for ideas on ways to do this.
 - b. Plan non-rehearsal social events...kick-off party, Fall/Christmas/Winter/Spring fun outings, social events
 - c. Have a worship service together, led by student and/or adult leaders (take communion)
 - d. _____ outside the walls of the church at least 2 times a semester
 - e. _____ outside the walls of the church at least 2 times a semester
 - f. Go on a choir mission trip (sing and serve)
 - g. Big/Little system
 - h. Small groups
 - i. Other ideas?

WRAP-UP:

RELEVANCE: YC as _____

RETREAT: YC as _____

RELATIONSHIPS: YC as _____

From *Hurt 2.0* (Clark)

1. Those who work with youth should be trained in the changing youth culture.
2. Those who serve adolescents must work together.
3. Those who serve adolescents must understand youth and provide boundaries.
4. Parents need to be equipped and encouraged to parent the changing adolescent.
5. Communities must make sure that each student has a few adult advocates who know and care for him or her.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS?

Testimonials:

“We know how to be teenagers. We want [the church] to show us how to be adults.”

-Kristin, age 17.

- ...it gives me an escape, a way to express myself, a connection with my peers, audience, God, and myself. It helps me through every aspect of my life and I would be lost without it. (Girl, 15)
- ...my dad died I was 13, and he was a musician. So whenever I sing it feels like I am making up for the time I missed with him. (Boy, 16)
- ...it has drastically changed my life for the better and has brought me closer to the Lord and it gives me such joy and passion. It is what I want to do with my life because it's impact on me is so amazing, I can't describe it! To God be the glory! (Girl, 16)