

HIRING AND KEEPING **A YOUTH WORKER**

A Practical Guide for Hiring with Wisdom and
Keeping Youth Workers for the Long Haul

Youth Ministries
Church of God Ministries
Anderson, Indiana

CONTENTS

Introduction	1
The Ten Commandments of Hiring a Youth Worker	1
Suggested Timeline to Hire	2
Church Profile	5
Qualifications for Youth Ministry Professionals	6
The Interview	7
Financial Issues	10
What to Expect from Your Church's Youth Ministry	11
How Pastors Can Keep Their Youth Workers	14
Places to Post the Job Opening or to Find Potential Candidates	15
Sample Forms and Descriptions	17

INTRODUCTION

Hiring a youth worker is a great opportunity for God to do some new and exciting things through the ministry of your church—whether you are filling a vacant position or staffing a youth worker for the very first time. It's not the occasion to rush things, cut corners, or settle for the first person who comes along. The youth worker, the students, and the whole church will suffer the consequences.

There are some very gifted, passionate, experienced, and theologically grounded youth workers out there. We hope that this resource will be helpful for you and your church in your quest to find the person who is the best fit to lead the youth ministry at your church for a long time to come.

This resource is adapted from *Hiring and Keeping a Youth Worker: A Practical Guide for Churches Seeking to Hire with Wisdom and Keep Their Youth Workers for the Long Haul*. Used by permission of The Evangelical Presbyterian Church Student Ministries.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF HIRING A YOUTH WORKER

- 1. Be realistic with your expectations.** Remember that Jesus will not be applying for the position—so abandon your search for him.
- 2. Develop an accurate working description of the position.** There are some great examples in the back of this book.
- 3. Be more eager to hire the person than to hire the position.** The job will have some nonnegotiables, but remember that many churches have found great success in allowing the new youth worker's gifts and passions to determine a significant amount of the job description.
- 4. Work your networks.** Just as with other areas of life, who you know is important. The recommendations and word-of-mouth of the senior pastor, the search committee members, the students, the parents, and even the outgoing youth worker (if the departure was on good terms) are indispensable.

- 5. Consider those who are already faithfully serving somewhere.**
Sometimes there are reasons that out-of-work youth workers are out of work. Unless it's politically inappropriate or relationally awkward, don't be afraid to contact youth workers who are currently doing good ministry. It may be appropriate to let the youth worker's pastor know that you would like to approach this person.
- 6. Check references thoroughly.** This is an important part of the information-gathering process. It will take some time, but it's an important way to gain perspective. Listen well and take notes.
- 7. Spread the workload and delegate wisely.** Not everyone on the search committee needs to be involved in every aspect of the search process. Perhaps one or two persons will review the résumés, another will make initial phone calls, and another will perform the reference checks. Consider inviting some of your student leaders to serve on the search committee.
- 8. Have your information ready.** You should be able to send any potential candidates not only the job description but also details about your congregation and about the Church of God in general. (You can go to www.chog.org and click on "Our Beliefs" on the "About Us" menu; you can also order the informational brochure *Meet Us at the Cross* from Warner Press at 800-741-7721 or www.warnerpress.org.) This will help all parties to determine beforehand the potential for a good fit and to identify any conflicts with respect to theology.
- 9. Keep good notes and records throughout the process.**
- 10. Keep on praying, as the apostle Paul said (1 Thessalonians 5:17).**
Along with the congregation, seek God's wisdom and guidance as you seek to find the best person for the position.

SUGGESTED TIMELINE TO HIRE

The following is a suggested four-month timeline for searching for a youth worker. It is realistically designed to keep a committee on track yet not overworked. This timeline can be modified based on the particular needs and parameters of the church using it.

Month One: Committee Planning

(Assumes search committee is in place with chairperson selected)

- Pray.
- Discuss the purpose and goals of the search committee.

- Discuss the initial timeline for events to occur.
- Develop a job application form. (There are two examples near the back of this book.) Be sure to include an area where references can be listed.
- Formulate a job description (there are examples near the back of this book) in conjunction with the senior pastor or personnel committee, including salary, benefits, educational and ordination requirements, and day-to-day expectations. Determine the appropriate job title based on your congregation's structure and the ordination status of candidates.
- Prepare an application packet including the following:
 - A cover letter (there is a sample near the back of this book) with deadlines, contact information, and when applicants can expect to hear from the committee.
 - The job application form.
 - The job description you have developed.
 - Information on your local congregation and the Church of God in general (see Commandment #8 on page 2).
- Set an initial cutoff date for receiving applications and résumés (approximately six to eight weeks from posting).
- Send the application packet to appropriate organizations and individuals (see "Places to Post the Job Opening or to Find Potential Candidates" on page 15).
- Develop a chart (see the sample near the back of this book) to keep track of where the information has been sent, who has responded, and so forth. Use this chart to keep the committee members updated.

Month Two: Information Gathering

- Pray.
- Review the responses and résumés that have been received.
- Develop a short list of qualified candidates to pursue further—eight or fewer.
- Conduct reference checks for those candidates on your short list.
- Conduct an initial screening with the short-list candidates by phone.
- Based on your phone conversations, develop a final list of good prospects—four or fewer.
- Formulate pertinent questions for in-person interviews (see "The Interview" on page 7).
- Set times for face-to-face interviews with your final candidates.
- Compose and send a closure letter to any applicants who were not selected for an in-person interview (see the example near the back of this book).

Month Three: Candidate Interviewing

- Pray.
- Conduct in-person interviews with the final candidates.
- Debrief after interviews and select the candidate who is the best fit.

SUGGESTED TIMELINE TO HIRE

- Set up a weekend when the top candidate can make a visit to your church. Develop an itinerary that includes conversations with church staff, youth, youth parents, teaching times, sharing in worship, and so forth. Don't forget transportation and lodging while this person is in town. Include the candidate's spouse and children if applicable.

Month Four: Recommendations for Hiring

- Pray.
- Conduct the weekend visit for your final candidate.
- Based on the information you have, the interview process, and the visit, make a recommendation to the senior pastor, church board, congregation, or other appropriate decision-making body to hire or to keep looking.
- If a formal offer is made, allow the candidate two weeks to think, pray, and seek counsel.
- If a formal offer is not made, the chair of the search committee should conduct a closure meeting with the candidate. Contact the next candidate in line to set up and conduct a weekend visit as before.
- If an offer is made but the candidate declines the offer, contact the next candidate in line. Set up and conduct a weekend visit as before.
- If an offer is made and the candidate accepts the offer, develop a six-month caring process to help this person become acclimated to your church community. Include regular prayer on behalf of the new hire by the search committee.
- The chair of the search committee should conduct a closure meeting with any candidates who were interviewed in person but not chosen.

Beyond Month Four: Continued Prayer and Support

- Institute the six-month caring process that the committee has designed.
- Turn the search committee's records over to the church office.
- Remove the job opening from any lists, organizations, or Web sites where it is posted.
- Continue to support your new youth worker and the youth ministry with your time, talent, and treasure.

CHURCH PROFILE

The following is a checklist of information that you should make readily available to candidates as they consider taking a position with your church. This information is valuable for at least two reasons:

1. It causes the church to take account of itself and its own needs. A search committee should have a clear understanding of the congregation's vision and mission, its worship style, and its philosophy for ministry. The search process can help the church take a good look at itself and the vision God has given it. There may even be times during this process when a church realizes more important needs and changes its focus.
2. It will allow the candidate to gain a clearer picture of the church and the church's youth ministry, helping the candidate to consider whether he or she would be a good fit there. If the profile is distributed to all applicants, it will likely eliminate some potential candidates from consideration. At least it will raise questions as well as answer questions for candidates even before the interview process begins.

Here are the items you may want to include in your church profile:

- **History of the Congregation**—Include the background of your church, how it relates locally and nationally to the Church of God, and so forth.
- **Current "State of the Church"**—Include demographic information, worship attendance, student ministry size, number of family units with late elementary and teenage children, economic class, current strengths and weaknesses of the church, defining characteristics of the church, and so forth.
- **Vision/Mission Statement of the Church**—Include and describe the congregation's mission and vision statement, the purpose of the church, what it is attempting to accomplish, its approach to ministry, and so forth.
- **Style of Worship**—It will be beneficial for candidates to know what form worship takes within your congregation. You may want to state if you have a particular style of worship and then describe a typical worship service at your church.
- **Congregation's Understanding (Philosophy) of Youth Ministry**—Describe your congregation's understanding of youth ministry and any particular beliefs or ideas about what the church is expecting its youth ministry to accomplish.
- **Brief History of Youth Ministry at the Church**—Outline how youth ministry began in your congregation, how it got to where it is now, and where its strengths and weaknesses are currently. Include the good history and the bad history. Also give a brief overview of the current members in the student ministry.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR YOUTH MINISTRY PROFESSIONALS

Below is a brief description of the type of person you might consider when looking to hire a youth worker. There are other qualifications you will want to add to this list based on your own congregation's characteristics and vision for youth ministry.

Have high expectations for your search, but be realistic. None of us can walk on water. We all fall short of being who God wants us to be. In the final analysis, God's evaluation is the most important.

1. Has a mature and growing relationship with God through Jesus Christ characterized by a godly lifestyle, evidenced by the fruit of the Spirit, and distinguished by an increasing daily dependence on God.
2. Has the ability to articulate his or her own faith, the truths of the Scriptures, and the foundational principles of Christianity.
3. Has a commitment to his or her calling to serve the church in ministry.
4. Has a Wesleyan-Arminian (vs. Reformed) understanding and conviction of God and his work in the world.
5. Has a love for students and an understanding of their culture, including their physical, mental, and emotional development and their social environment, and a willingness to keep learning.
6. Has a passion for reaching and discipling teens for Jesus Christ not only in the church but in the community as well.
7. Has an eagerness to nurture students through incarnational ministry.
8. Demonstrates leadership skills, including the ability to train student and adult leaders for team ministry and to connect older generations with the current youth generation.
9. Has a desire and willingness to minister to, communicate with, and involve the parents of teenagers as a part of a family-based approach to ministry.
10. Is committed to serving as an integral part of the ministry team of the congregation, sharing in other responsibilities (such as pastoral care, preaching, and other areas) as designated by the senior pastor or the church's leadership.

11. Has the administrative skills necessary to oversee, direct, delegate, and evaluate the work of the youth ministry.
12. Has effectively worked with students for a minimum amount of time (whether paid or volunteer).

THE INTERVIEW

Résumés are great and phone calls are even better, but there's nothing like an in-person interview to evaluate a candidate's qualifications. By making good observations, asking the right questions, and rightly processing what you see and hear, you will increase your chances of selecting the best person for your position.

At the heart of a good interview are good questions. Good questions can increase your understanding of the candidate and help you move past surface issues to see the real person inside. Again, take good notes during the interview!

Here are some pitfalls that can decrease the effectiveness of an interview:

- Questions not crafted to gain the most information
- Questions not relevant to selection criteria
- Giving away desired answers to questions
- Not encouraging or allowing the candidate to ask questions
- Failing to establish rapport
- Talking too much
- Not allowing enough "wait time" between questions and answers
- Lack of follow-up or clarification questions
- Not taking good notes

Always remember that there are two interviews taking place simultaneously: *You are interviewing the candidate, but the candidate is also interviewing you.* You should provide a truthful picture of your church, the position, and your expectations.

The following questions will help you think through key areas of inquiry for candidates. Choose questions from each category as they suit your situation, and feel free to add others: You may even want to send some questions to the candidate for them to answer in written form before a face-to-face interview.

Personal Relationship with God

1. Please share your personal testimony, how and when you came to Christ.
2. What spiritual disciplines are a regular part of your life?

THE INTERVIEW

3. What passages of Scripture are most meaningful to you?
4. Has God ever used you to lead a person to Christ? If so, describe the experience.

Youth Ministry Philosophy

1. Describe your philosophy of youth ministry. What strategy would you use to implement your philosophy in this church?
2. How would you cultivate relationships with parents? How would you help teenagers cultivate healthy family relationships?
3. How do you see your role in discipling teens?
4. How do you understand family-based youth ministry, and how will it fit into your overall strategy?
5. What plans will you implement to involve students in the life of the whole church?
6. What are some ways you would recruit and involve volunteers in youth ministry?
7. What do you see as an appropriate balance between discipleship and evangelism? What are some ways you might do each?
8. What are some important elements of a good student ministry meeting?
9. What role does missions play in youth ministry?
10. Describe a successful youth ministry project that you visualized, planned, and implemented.
11. What does it mean to have a love and passion for teens?

Discipleship and Leadership

1. What are your spiritual gifts? How have you used your gifts in youth ministry?
2. What are your strengths and weaknesses as a youth leader?
3. Describe your leadership style.
4. What does it mean to lead a discipling ministry?
5. What is the role of small groups in a youth ministry?
6. Talk about the need for one-on-one time with students.
7. What do you look for in a student leader? What sort of commitment would you require?
8. What do you look for in an adult leader? What sort of commitment would you require?
9. How would you empower your student and adult leaders?
10. How would you train and disciple your leaders?
11. Have you ever been called to walk beside teens in crisis? Describe a situation.
12. What is your teaching style? Do you like to teach?

13. Would you say that you command and keep the attention of teenagers? How?

Staff and Ministry Relationships

1. How do you approach reconciliation? What is your normal response to conflict?
2. What is your understanding of team ministry?
3. Have you been involved in ministries that operate as a team? Describe the experience.
4. What do you think makes team ministry work?
5. How do you understand the senior pastor's role as it relates to you as a youth worker?
6. Describe an ideal relationship between youth ministry and the church as a whole.
7. Describe one of your more rewarding relationships with a teenager.

Family and Personal Relationships

1. How does your spouse support your commitment to youth ministry?
2. How much time do you devote to your family each week?
3. What type of activities do you consider to be family time?
4. If single, please describe your dating philosophy and practice.

Sense of Calling to Youth Ministry

1. Why did you decide to go into youth ministry?
2. How do you understand your calling to youth ministry?
3. How do you view youth ministry?
4. Where do you see yourself five years from now?
5. What do you see as the greatest challenge of this position?

Theology

1. What is your view of the Scriptures?
2. Are you familiar with the teachings and emphases of the Church of God? How do you feel about them? What will be their role in your ministry?
3. Do you feel you are Wesleyan-Arminian in your beliefs? If not, how would you describe yourself?
4. How deep can teens go in their theology?

Situations

1. If a teen came to you and asked you how and why to become a Christian, what would you say?
2. A senior high student comes to you and says, "I think I probably got my girlfriend pregnant." How would you respond?

FINANCIAL ISSUES

3. A junior high student asks, “Why is church music so boring?” How would you respond?
4. A high school freshman asks, “God is good, right? And God can do anything he wants, right? Then why is there so much bad stuff going on—people starving and getting killed? Did God make Satan, or what?” How would you respond?
5. A youth leader comes to you and says, “I think I am a homosexual.” What do you do?

Miscellaneous

1. How do you avoid burnout?
2. Are you creative? How do you enhance your own creativity?
3. Describe your process for preparing messages.
4. What are some ways you would protect yourself (and your students) from real or accused sexual misconduct?
5. How will you handle discipline in the group?
6. What kind of things do you enjoy doing in your spare time?
7. What are the three best books you have read this year?
8. What type of music do you like to listen to?
9. Do you enjoy having teens in your home?
10. To what extent will you be involved in district youth events (e.g., summer camp), state events (state conventions), and national Church of God youth events (e.g., IYC)?
11. What do you think about this congregation—its structure and personality, worship style, the student ministry, and so forth?

FINANCIAL ISSUES

There are too many real-life horror stories out there involving youth workers who were brought on board at a church without understanding the financial context into which they were stepping—and the consequences were painful for all. Sometimes these situations arise because youth workers fail to ask the right questions, and sometimes it’s because churches aren’t up-front enough in providing the appropriate financial details. Please be forthcoming in the totality of your new youth worker’s compensation and benefits package, as well as all financial protocols. Be sure to cover the following (in writing):

- Base annual salary, and if and how raises are awarded
- Housing/utilities/car allowance (if applicable)
- Health benefits
- Retirement benefits
- Social security allowance
- Books and subscriptions
- Continuing education allowance
- Vacation and sick days
- Mileage reimbursement
- Business expenses and reimbursement policies
- Moving/relocation expenses

Here are some useful resources:

- The Web site www.newminister.com is designed to help any new church staff member gain a solid understanding of basic church tax and legal issues. Don't assume that your new youth worker automatically understands tax withholdings, clergy-penitent privileges, reporting child abuse, and so forth. This Web site will provide fresh understanding of these basic but weighty issues of doing ministry in the church.
- The Web site www.youthministry.com publishes a biennial survey of youth pastor's salaries. This will prove to be quite helpful in determining a salary package for your youth worker.
- The annual *Compensation Handbook for Church Staff* uses national survey information to provide reliable church employee compensation breakdowns based on part-time or full-time status, church size, church budget, and geographical setting. This information can help you compare your plan to other churches with similar positions and demographics. The *Handbook* can be purchased in hard copy, in digital format, or online from Christianity Today International (go to www.churchlawtoday.com, or call 1-800-222-1840).
- Click on www.chogy.org for a wide variety of youth ministry resources on the home page. There are some Web sites to help in analyzing salary issues.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOUR CHURCH'S YOUTH MINISTRY

When considering what to expect from their church's youth ministry, many churches often waiver between two extremes:

Expecting Too Little

Some churches expect their youth ministry to be little more than a social club. The

student ministry is a nice place to hang out, but don't expect much Bible or theology to be taught. And certainly don't expect serious commitment to Christ. This is not only a shallow expectation, but it also has negative consequences for the youth leader and the students. The combination of the technological advances of our culture and the lack of funds in a youth ministry budget set such a youth ministry up for failure. We simply cannot compete with the bells and whistles that our teens experience every day. A youth worker in this environment will eventually burn out and the students will leave this ministry with a few memories but little depth to their faith.

Many churches are so concerned with short-term success in their ministries that they no longer expect a program that provides long-term effectiveness. The church needs to once again focus on developing mature Christian adults rather than the short-sighted expectation of a great party. Could we be hurting teens more than helping them with shallow expectations of a youth ministry?

Expecting Too Much

The opposite extreme of the social club philosophy of youth ministry is the surrogate parent philosophy. These are churches that place the total responsibility of a student's spiritual growth in the hands of the youth leader. This expectation is not only a bad philosophy that leads to a less effective ministry, but it is unbiblical. Passages such as Genesis 18:19; Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Psalm 78:2-4; Ephesians 6:4; 2 Timothy 1:5; and others teach that it is the privilege and responsibility of parents to teach their children the things of God.

If the church expects the youth ministry to be the foundation of a student's spiritual upbringing, it will be continually frustrated by the performance of its leaders and the behavior of the students. The church needs to recognize that God's order for spiritual training begins at home and is rooted in the life of the family.

Appropriate Expectations

So what should you expect from your church's youth ministry? Keep in mind that all of ministry is a process. It often takes years to see these things come to fruition. Here are some helpful and healthy expectations to keep in mind as you consider your own church's youth ministry:

- 1. Expect a youth ministry to assist in developing mature Christian adults.** Though the real power of faith formation is in families and the extended family of God, the youth ministry can complement, supplement, and enhance a student's discipleship process. Most parents will appreciate all the help they can get as long as the "help" doesn't undercut the family. Still, the target must be the same in youth ministry as it is in families: to equip young people to grow into mature Christian adults. This occurs most readily in youth ministries where mature Christian adult youth workers imitate and model Christ through incarnational ministry.

2. Expect a youth ministry to be an evangelistic light to the community.

As we equip students to become fully devoted, mature Christian adults, part of the natural growth process will be helping students reach their own generation for Christ. Youth ministries need to reach out to the community of teens. In conjunction with the church, they also need to reach the parents of teens. Through parenting workshops, family fun nights, parent-teen classes and ministries, and a variety of other support functions and resource provisions, the church and its youth ministry can have a powerful effect in reaching not only teens but on whole families.

3. Expect a youth ministry to be an active part of the life of the church. Teens need the larger Christian community to affirm and encourage growth toward Christian maturity. They also need a place within that community that isn't all "take" but includes "give"—opportunities to worship alongside the community, avenues to serve and minister to the community, and the possibility of building cross-generational relationships within the community. This is even more important for a youth ministry that has many students coming without a Christian influence in the home.

4. Expect a youth ministry to help equip and empower parents (and their children) to fulfill their biblical roles. Most of us become parents through very natural means. It is a process initiated by God in the beginning. Yet for much of the adolescent years, parenting seems anything but natural. Parents attempt to do their best, but they often feel inadequate and underprepared for the tumultuous teen years. Likewise, being a teenager—even to a teenager—seems a formidable task, especially when it comes to getting along with one's parents. Youth ministry can help. It can equip parents to develop a godly parenting style, help parents interact with their teens with grace and love, guide teens toward Christlike maturity and responsibility, and facilitate times of interaction and responsiveness between parents and their children. A wisely run youth ministry will help families use the ups and downs of everyday life to build love and godly character into parents and their children.

5. Expect your youth worker to stay with you over a number of years. A mutual commitment to a minimum length of term between a church and a youth worker may improve the quality of the youth ministry. A church should certainly call a person with some level of competency and character, but there should be a commitment to encourage growth, to overcome deficiencies, and to work together toward the long-term success of the ministry. The church must support its youth worker spiritually, vocationally, and financially, and the youth worker must avoid the temptation to "move up" or move on when the situation is not ideal. Remember, effective ministry takes time.

HOW PASTORS CAN KEEP THEIR YOUTH WORKERS

Here is some practical advice for pastors to contribute to the level of contentment—and therefore the longevity—of their youth workers:

1. Make it clear that it's okay for your youth worker to regularly be out of the office—since his or her “office” should include the car, McDonald's, the mall, the football stadium, the basketball courts, the band room, and other local teen hangouts.
2. Make sure the church members know that when the youth worker is on a missions trip or at camp, convention, or a youth retreat, he or she is at work—not on vacation.
3. Be the first to rush to your youth worker's comfort or defense after he or she has failed or made a mistake.
4. Be the initiator in upping your youth worker's budget and compensation package.
5. Encourage your church members who have the means to do so to provide your youth worker and his or her family with a weekend getaway at a cabin, condo, or beach house.
6. Take your youth worker out to lunch—not with an agenda, but just to say “thanks” and to build trust and friendship.
7. Don't use attendance numbers as the primary measure of your youth worker's success.
8. Provide time off each year for your youth worker to take a personal retreat or to attend a conference.
9. Show how much you value the youth of your church by assimilating them into the total life of the church as greeters, worship leaders, and choir and committee members.
10. Actively seek out and encourage church members to volunteer in your youth ministry.

PLACES TO POST THE JOB OPENING OR TO FIND POTENTIAL CANDIDATES

The process of finding the right youth worker for your church is made easier when there are ample candidates applying for the position. Below are a number of options to help you get the word out. Simply contact the organizations listed and inform them of your opening. In some cases, you may be able to post your information via an online form or send it in via e-mail. When you are finished with the search process, be sure to contact these organizations again to have your opening removed. Some of these organizations will also have listings of individuals who are already seeking youth ministry positions.

Church of God

Credentialing Services
Church of God Ministries
1201 East Fifth Street
Anderson, IN 46012

800-848-2464 or JHazen@chog.org

Each week, credentialing services updates a database of churches seeking ministry candidates and candidates seeking ministry positions.

Local and State Offices

Contact the leadership in your state or local church district to inquire about potential candidates and open ministry positions. Your pastor can provide you with this contact information; you can also check the latest *Yearbook of the Church of God* or contact Church of God Ministries at 800-848-2464.

Director of Youth and Family Ministries
Church of God Ministries
1201 East Fifth Street
Anderson, IN 46012

800-848-2464 or youth@chog.org

The current director of youth and family ministries may have word-of-mouth knowledge regarding good candidates for your position, or open positions for those seeking to work in youth ministry.

Colleges

(Typically, contact the religious studies or ministry department for information on candidates)

PLACES TO POST THE JOB OPENING OR TO FIND POTENTIAL CANDIDATES

Anderson University
1100 East Fifth Street
Anderson, IN 46012
765-649-9071 or www.anderson.edu

Anderson University School of Theology
1100 East Fifth Street
Anderson, IN 46012
765-641-4526 or www.anderson.edu/sot

Gardner College
4707 56th Street
Camrose, Alberta, Canada T4V2C4
780-672-0171 or www.gardnercollege.org

Mid-America Christian University
3500 SW 119th Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73170
405-691-3800 or www.macu.edu

Warner Pacific College
2219 SE 68th Avenue
Portland, OR 97215
503-517-1000 or www.warnerpacific.edu

Warner University
13895 Highway 27
Lake Wales, FL 33859
800-949-7248 or www.warner.edu

You might also contact Christian colleges in your local area. Keep in mind that any potential candidates you contact through a college that is not affiliated with the Church of God may have a wide range of theological perspectives. (In fact, just because a student attends a Church of God school is no guarantee!) Be sure you are specific about pertinent doctrinal issues in your job description.

Parachurch Organizations

Again, remember that potential candidates you contact through these organizations may vary in their theological perspectives. Be sure you are specific about pertinent doctrinal issues in your job description.

www.youthspecialties.com/jobs

This Web site features a wide variety of churches seeking and candidates seeking.

www.ChurchStaffing.com

This Web site includes churches and candidates in youth ministry and other categories.

www.youthpastor.com/jobs/index.cfm

This Web site also includes youth ministry positions that are not parish-based.

If there is a local minister's organization or youth pastor's organization in your area, contact them to inquire about potential candidates or open ministry positions.

SAMPLE FORMS AND DESCRIPTIONS

Job Descriptions

The purpose of a written job description is to give the church and the youth worker a clear understanding of work expectations. The job description protects the youth worker from being assigned tasks beyond his or her immediate responsibilities. The job description also gives the church a specific way to evaluate the work performed by the youth worker.

No job description can cover every situation or circumstance in the ministry. Thus the job description should spell out the process by which ministry happens in the church and the lines of responsibility. If staff or church members ask the youth worker to do tasks other than those stated in his or her job description, the youth worker should discuss the problem with those directly involved. He or she can also refer everyone involved back to the job description and seek clarification of the ministry tasks listed.

It is always wise to construct the language of the job description to allow the youth worker to express God-given gifts and abilities that are not concretely stated in the description itself. Because the church is more an organism than an organization, it would prove frustrating to all to allow a narrow and rigid position description to interfere or prohibit the youth worker from serving Christ and the church through his or her passion, abilities, personality, and gifts. A description should not be worded so tightly that it fails to allow for flexibility. On the other hand, it should not be worded so broadly that it leaves everyone unclear or foggy about what is expected of the youth worker.

The following examples are good ones overall—even though they are constructed differently from one another. Feel free to use them as a guide for composing your own church's job description.

Community Church of God Director of High School Ministries
JOB DESCRIPTION

REPORTS TO:	Senior Pastor
PURPOSE OF POSITION:	The primary purpose of this full-time position is to oversee the development and growth of a dynamic, Christ-centered, biblically based ministry to high-school students that parallels our church's vision for changing individuals in our city through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES:

A. HIGH SCHOOL MINISTRY

- Evaluate and adjust programming for effective ministry.
- Build intentional and strategic relationships with high-school students at their homes, school events, and other informal situations.
- Serve as the primary leader on all high school trips, retreats, and youth group functions.
- Oversee the recruiting, training, and equipping of parents, volunteer leaders, and teachers.
- Oversee the high-school Sunday school program, which involves establishing the curriculum, teaching or delegating teaching, and designing the look and feel of the program.
- Oversee the planning and implementation of weekly youth group meetings.
- Oversee the planning and implementation of special events (service projects, concerts, Super Bowl parties, and so forth).

B. CONGREGATIONAL

- Fill the pulpit by arrangement with the senior pastor, conduct hospital and family visits in regular rotation, and attend special services, concerts, retreats, and conferences as required.
- Develop and implement a strategy for integrating the high school ministry into the overall life of the church.
- Participate in the long-range planning process of the congregation as it applies to the needs of the high school ministry, particularly in the area of leadership development.
- Explore ways to build stronger relationships with the church-sponsored high school.

C. STAFF

- Supervise high school intern(s).
- Attend weekly staff meetings (pastors, directors, and support staff).
- Attend district meetings and specialized meetings as required.
- Meet with the senior pastor on a regular schedule for support and accountability.

REQUIREMENTS (EDUCATION, SKILLS, AND EXPERIENCE):

- Educational requirement for this position is ordinarily a bachelor's degree in a ministry-related field. A master of divinity degree is preferred.
- Interpersonal communication and leadership skills are a must and can make up for minimal experience.
- We seek a candidate with a minimum of three years experience.
- We seek a candidate who is familiar with and in acceptance of the doctrines and practices of the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana).

We offer a base salary plus housing allowance, health insurance, and retirement. For more information or to submit your résumé, please contact John Smith at xxxxx@xxx.xxx.

Community Church of God seeks to glorify the triune God as it embraces the gospel, builds community, makes disciples, and transforms society.

First Church of God Youth Director
JOB DESCRIPTION

Passionate about youth ministry?

First Church of God in Anderson, Indiana, is seeking a part-time (20 hours per week) youth director for our growing youth program. The youth director will provide overall leadership and personal ministry direction to the youth of First Church. The ministry will include fellowship, worship, biblical teaching, discipleship, evangelism, and ministry and mission opportunities. The ministry will be highly motivational for youth with the goal of personal spiritual growth, strengthening of family relationships, and maturing as members of the body of Christ.

POSITION REQUIREMENTS:

- Coach and oversee the Sunday evening youth meeting throughout the school year.
- Attend Sunday morning services.
- Have at least one special event each month.
- During the summer, plan at least one major event each month.
- Oversee and participate in youth fund-raisers.
- Participate in visitation and other community outreach.
- Oversee and attend youth mission trips.

In addition to a part-time salary, this position also offers college tuition assistance. For more information or to submit your résumé, please contact John Smith at xxxxx@xxx.xxx.

The Hamptons Community Church Youth Pastor

JOB DESCRIPTION

We are seeking a full-time youth pastor who is committed to Jesus Christ, to the church, and to ministry with young people and their families. This individual will possess the administrative skills necessary to perform his or her duties and carry out details as needed, as well as the interpersonal and relational skills necessary for working with teens and their families within the congregation. He or she shall further work in conjunction with youth ministry endeavors within the community and on the district and national levels. We seek an individual who is familiar with and in acceptance of the doctrines and practices of the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana).

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Recruit, train, encourage, and support lay people in the various volunteer ministries of working with young people in the church.
 - Provide regular training sessions for teachers and volunteers.
 - Have regular volunteer and teacher meetings for planning and programming, Work with the youth ministry team to identify and recruit potential volunteer youth workers.
2. Support teens and adults in planning and programming evening and weekend fellowships.
 - Work closely with the youth ministry team.
 - Develop a quarterly calendar of youth programs and events.
 - Help implement plans by ordering needed materials, scheduling speakers, handling setup details for events, and so forth.
 - Attend evening and weekend fellowships whenever possible.
3. Provide for the growth of the middle school and high school youth group.
 - Make regular pastoral visits to active, inactive, and prospective young people and their families.
 - Develop effective publicity for youth activities through the church newsletter, bulletin, youth newsletter, mailings, media publicity, and so forth.
 - Research and schedule special events such as camps, conferences, seminars, retreats, lock-ins, trips, and so forth.
 - Locate resources to meet the needs of small groups in such areas as spiritual growth, Bible study, drama, and personal and interpersonal growth.
 - Offer service opportunities throughout the year to involve young people in ministering to others within and without the church, including service projects such as the Special Olympics and Project Mexico.
4. Work with the youth and education teams to coordinate youth ministry endeavors with other Church of God congregations in the district.
 - Provide the teams with information about quality resources for curriculum materials.
 - Offer ideas and personal input about future goals for the congregation's ministry with young people.
5. Build relationships with the parents of students in the youth group.
 - Visit teens and their families in their homes.
 - Provide resource seminars for parents based on their needs.
 - Call on young people and their parents in pastoral-need situations such as sickness, hospitalization, crisis, family death, and other occasions when support may be needed.
 - Meet with parents regularly (suggested at least three times a year) to discuss the youth ministry calendar, volunteer needs, parental concerns, and so forth.
6. Work with adult volunteers and other members of the congregation to make youth ministry an effective effort.
7. Work as a professional under the direction of the senior pastor to provide for the pastoral needs of the church.
8. Attend workshops and personal growth conferences to stay informed on new and effective ways to implement youth ministry.

ACCOUNTABILITY

1. The senior pastor will supervise the work of the youth pastor.
2. The youth pastor will provide to the education team a written report each month to summarize his or her work.
3. The youth pastor will communicate the plans and activities of the young people to the church staff and the church at large as necessary.
4. The youth pastor will be evaluated annually by the senior pastor. A written report will be provided and explained.
5. Should the youth pastor feel mistreated by any staff member, church member, or committee in the church, he or she may discuss such grievances confidentially with the pastoral relations committee or the senior pastor.

We offer a competitive salary and benefits, including housing allowance, health insurance, pension, and continuing education funding. For more information or to submit your résumé, please contact John Smith at xxxxx@xxx.xxx.

ABC Church of God Youth Director

JOB DESCRIPTION

PURPOSE OF POSITION:	To introduce teens to Christ, lead and encourage them to have a personal relationship with Christ, and teach them a lifestyle of service to others.
JOB SUMMARY:	This full-time position will be responsible to the senior pastor for the overall development and implementation of reaching and discipling students of ABC Church of God. This position will plan and teach weekly Bible studies for youth grades seven through twelve and partner with the Youth Ministry Council (pastor, youth representative, youth pastor, and parents) to schedule events. This position will also conduct regular parent meetings to inform and share details as to what is taking place in the student ministry. This position also works with our Youth Leadership Team in planning, implementing, and submitting an annual budget to the Finance Committee.

YOUTH DIRECTOR DUTIES:

1. Evangelism/Missions

- Coordinate "big events" to reach unchurched youth on their turf (e.g., lock-ins, 5th-quarter fellowships, retreats, and so forth).
- Train and equip students to utilize various methods of sharing their faith.
- Provide ministry opportunities in the community where students can utilize their giftedness for Kingdom work (e.g., service projects such as soup kitchen ministry, crisis pregnancy center, yard work for the elderly, and so forth).

2. Worship

- Develop, along with adult leadership, a youth band, vocal team, and drama team.
- Facilitate an environment that encourages youth to experience God's presence.
- Create youth-specific worship opportunities with the wider church body (e.g., youth ushers, youth special music, youth speakers, and so forth).

3. Discipleship

- Develop opportunities for discipleship through the Sunday morning youth service, Sunday school, mid-week classes, and small groups. This includes curriculum selection in conjunction with the Leadership Team.
- Provide short-term small groups to disciple new believers.
- Coordinate and lead at least one annual student retreat.

4. Ministry

- Provide ministry opportunities in the church where students can utilize their giftedness for Kingdom work.
- Develop an ongoing process whereby students are taught about spiritual gifts.
- Establish a youth leadership team to give ownership of the ministry to the youth and to help develop their God-given gifts and abilities.

5. Fellowship

- Plan, coordinate, and implement monthly fellowship events to build and strengthen relationships within the youth ministry and with unchurched youth.

QUALIFICATIONS

Education (preferred): BS in Christian education and/or Bible theology with a youth focus.

Experience: At least three years' demonstrated leadership in youth ministry.

Character: Be an example of a godly leader by maintaining the highest level of moral purity, biblical stewardship, servanthood, unity, honest communication, and trustworthiness.

Other Qualifications: A vital personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ; musical skills (preferred); a special concern for youth and their spiritual lives; the ability to establish good rapport with students; committed to teamwork with the pastoral staff.

We offer a good salary, housing allowance, paid vacation and sick days, health insurance, and pension. For more information or to submit your résumé, please contact John Smith at xxxxx@xxx.xxx.

North Side Church of God Student Ministries Director
JOB DESCRIPTION

Does the thought of planting a church—that feeling of going where no man or woman has gone before—really pump you up? Do you love to think outside the box and stay awake at night dreaming of ways to reach a missing generation with the sitting-on-the-edge-of-your-seat story about the God who is searching for them? If so, then joining our community may be just what God is calling you to do.

The person we are looking for would serve as part-time student ministries director by overseeing the development and leadership of all student ministries gatherings and the spiritual formation of our middle school and high school youth. This person would also have a heart that beats passionately to reach the students who are not here yet, in ways we have not dreamed of yet. We are a church plant in Indianapolis, Indiana, committed to bringing Kingdom transformation to our community. Compensation would consist of a one-bedroom apartment with utilities included (and all the Ramen noodles you can eat).

Check out our Web site (xxx.xxxx.xxx) to find out more about us and the passion we have for missional living.

For more information or to submit your résumé, please contact John Smith at xxxxx@xxx.xxx.



For More Ideas

If you're looking for some more ideas, check out *The Big Book of Job Descriptions for Ministry* by Larry Gilbert and Cindy Spear (Ventura, CA: Gospel Light Publications, 2002), available at www.amazon.com or www.gospellight.com.

SAMPLE APPLICATION #1

JOB APPLICATION

Name	Date
Street Address	Phone
City, State, Zip	E-mail

Education

School Type	School Name	Location	# Years Completed	Major & Degree
High School				
College				
Business or Trade School				
Professional School				

Have you ever been convicted of a crime? ___ No ___ Yes

If yes, please explain. _____

References

Please list five references, including two professional, two personal, and your current pastor.

Name _____ Position _____ Company _____ Address _____ City, State, Zip _____ Phone _____ E-mail _____ Name _____ Position _____ Company _____ Address _____ City, State, Zip _____ Phone _____ E-mail _____ Name _____ Position _____ Company _____ Address _____	City, State, Zip _____ Phone _____ E-mail _____ Name _____ Position _____ Company _____ Address _____ City, State, Zip _____ Phone _____ E-mail _____ Name _____ Position _____ Company _____ Address _____ City, State, Zip _____ Phone _____ E-mail _____
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Work Experience

Please list your work experience for the past five years beginning with the most recent job held. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Name of Employer _____
City, State _____
Employment Dates _____
Supervisor's Name _____
Supervisor's Phone _____
Your Job Title _____
Reason for leaving (be specific) _____

List the responsibilities you held, duties performed, skills used or learned, advancements or promotions while you worked at this company. _____

May we contact your present employer? Yes No

Name of Employer _____
City, State _____
Employment Dates _____
Supervisor's Name _____
Supervisor's Phone _____
Your Job Title _____
Reason for leaving (be specific) _____

List the responsibilities you held, duties performed, skills used or learned, advancements or promotions while you worked at this company. _____

Name of Employer _____
City, State _____
Employment Dates _____
Supervisor's Name _____
Supervisor's Phone _____
Your Job Title _____

Reason for leaving (be specific) _____

List the responsibilities you held, duties performed, skills used or learned, advancements or promotions while you worked at this company. _____

Name of Employer _____
City, State _____
Employment Dates _____
Supervisor's Name _____
Supervisor's Phone _____
Your Job Title _____
Reason for leaving (be specific) _____

List the responsibilities you held, duties performed, skills used or learned, advancements or promotions while you worked at this company. _____

Name of Employer _____
City, State _____
Employment Dates _____
Supervisor's Name _____
Supervisor's Phone _____
Your Job Title _____
Reason for leaving (be specific) _____

List the responsibilities you held, duties performed, skills used or learned, advancements or promotions while you worked at this company. _____

Church Experience

Please list any churches where you have worked or volunteered, starting with the most recent church first.

Church Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Contact Person Who Can Verify Your Service _____

Phone _____
E-mail _____

Church Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Contact Person Who Can Verify Your Service _____

Phone _____
E-mail _____

Church Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Contact Person Who Can Verify Your Service _____

Phone _____
E-mail _____

SAMPLE APPLICATION #2

General Information

Name		Today's Date	
Home Address		City/State	
Work Phone: Cell Phone:	Home Phone: Fax:	E-mail	
Are you <input type="checkbox"/> married or <input type="checkbox"/> single? If married, list the name of your wife/husband as well as your children's names and ages.		Date of Birth:	
Previous or current church name and address:			
Name of your senior pastor:	How long have you been a youth pastor at your present church? (if applicable)	How long have you been in full-time youth ministry?	

Education

School Type	School Name	Major & Degree	Year of Graduation
College			
Graduate Education			

What are the top three books you have read that have had the most influence on your life?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What book(s) are you currently reading?

Personal and Spiritual History

(If you are using this form as a hard copy, feel free to attach an additional sheet with numbered answers if necessary)

1. Write a brief testimony about how you became a Christian and when.

2. Write about one or more significant events in your life that have changed you spiritually.

3. Describe three major ways in which you have grown in your spiritual journey over the past five years.

4. How would you describe your spiritual journey at this time?

5. What accountability do you currently have in your spiritual journey?

6. Describe and relate events that were significant to your call into ministry.

7. What do you do when you experience conflict with someone? How do you generally handle confrontation?

8. What is the most significant thing that has left a mark on you in your years of youth ministry?

9. What is the cry of your heart, your area of passion?

10. Where do you see overall youth ministry going in the future?

11. Where would you like to see it go?

12. What do you sense is God's call for you in the near future (3–5 years)? (stay in youth ministry, another role?)

13. What are your top three spiritual gifts?

14. Are you able to use these gifts regularly? How?

Please **bold** or circle one of the following in each grouping:

15. I am generally

- a) extroverted.
- b) introverted.
- c) a combination of both.

16. I generally

- a) am organized.
- b) fly by the seat of my pants.

17. I generally

- a) am better at seeing the big picture and letting someone else put the plan together.
- b) like to let someone else see the big picture and I put the plan together.
- c) a little of both.

18. I generally

- a) think through things from every angle before I act.
- b) act more on feelings and instinct.

19. I generally

- a) have a hard time saying no.
- b) am very selective in what I commit to, often having to say no.

20. Three of my strong areas are:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

21. Three of my weak areas are:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

22. What do you think you could bring to this ministry and why do you want to be a part?

23. What are some of your expectations of us?

24. What are two things you love to do for recreation/relaxation?

Please send two reference forms to persons who can give a good perspective of your character. We suggest that, if possible, you give one to your senior pastor. We also suggest you provide them with self-addressed envelopes with postage already attached. See address on reference form.

Reference Form

_____ is applying to become a student pastor at XXX church and has given your name as a personal reference.

The person in this position will be a representative of XXX church. We want to ensure that he/she will be a model messenger. Please complete the form below to send us your evaluation of this person's character and integrity. Your response will remain anonymous.

How long have you known this person? _____

Nature of your association? _____

Printed name of evaluator: _____

Signature of evaluator: _____ Date: _____

Please explain on back any ratings that you feel need further explanation.

Relationships	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Excellent	Don't Know
<i>Please check only one box per row.</i>					
Personal					
Appearance: Neatness, grooming, physical features					
Emotional Stability: Self-control, objectivity, sensitivity to others, mental health					
Attitudes: Wholesome and positive attitudes toward others; sincerity and honesty					
Social Skills: Ability to maintain cordial relations; cooperative, tactful, pleasant personality					
Family Life: Happy and balanced home life with family members					
Knowledge: Wide range; informed on Bible, current events; studious					
Response Under Pressure: Ability to manage conflict, accept criticism					
Ministry					
Speaking Ability: Communication in thoughtful, scriptural, relevant, interesting manner					
Shepherding Ministry: Wisdom in counseling and meetings, caring of other's needs, visitation, nurture					
Evangelism: Ability to lead people to Christ and to win new people to the church					
Administrative Skills: Ability to plan, coordinate, expedite, lead democratically					
Balanced Ministry: Understands maintenance of well-rounded program, displays ability to relate to community needs					
Staff Relationships: Ability to work supportively with others					
Visionary: Allows and empowers the individual and congregation to accomplish their potential					
Other					
Standing in Ministry: Reputation and acceptance in community at large; financial and moral reputation					
Community/Area Leadership: Acts in cooperation with other churches and state/district efforts					
Missionary Concern: Commitment to meeting spiritual and physical needs locally, nationally, globally					
Appropriate balanced personal choices: Healthy boundaries with members of the opposite sex; realistic in goals and expectations of self and others					
Example: Models servant leadership, biblical values, and holiness lifestyle					
Theological: Basic beliefs consistent with those held by the Church of God					

PLEASE GIVE FRANK EVALUATIONS OR COMMENTS

These comments and/or concerns will remain in confidence.

1. Please list any obvious failures or unique successes in this person's life and/or ministry that would be helpful in evaluation. _____

2. Does this person hold any theological belief inconsistent with Church of God teachings? If yes, please explain. _____

3. In what ways is this person supportive of state and national work? (Be specific)

4. What do you consider his/her greatest strength to be? _____

5. What do you consider his/her greatest weakness to be? _____

6. This person helps the XXX church discern and implement God's vision for youth ministry of the Church of God. Do you have any concerns regarding this person being a part of this team? If so, please explain. _____

Thank you for taking the time to answer this form honestly. Please mail this form to
John Smith
Address XXX

If you have any questions regarding this reference, please contact John Smith at XXX.

Your name _____ Position _____

Phone _____ Date _____ e-mail _____



123 WEST 6TH AVENUE ANYTOWN, NY 37200

January 1, 2009

Anderson University
1100 East Fifth Street
Anderson, IN 46012

**SAMPLE LETTER
TO NETWORK**

Dear friends:

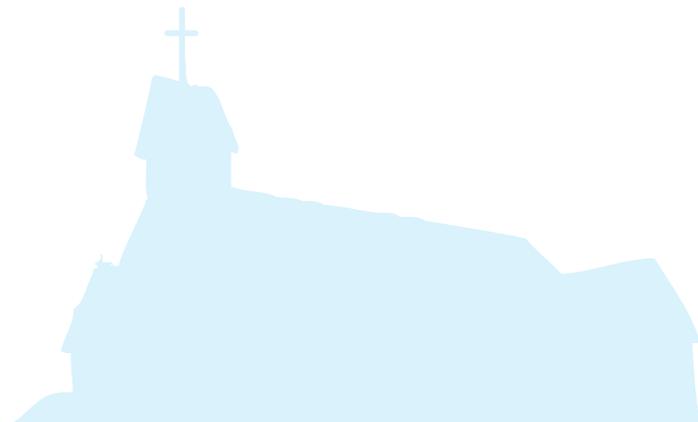
ABC Church of God in Anytown, New York, is seeking a part-time (20 hours per week) youth director for our growing youth program. This individual will provide overall leadership and personal ministry direction to the youth of ABC Church.

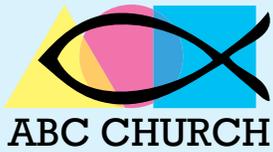
Enclosed is a job description as well as an application for employment. Would you please forward this information to the appropriate department for posting at your school? It is our desire to find a graduating student whose skills, gifts, and calling might be a good match for this position. We will be receiving applications until February 28, 2009, and plan to select final candidates by the end of that month, with employment to begin in June.

If you have any questions or require further information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

John Smith, Search Committee Chairperson
ABC Church of God
Anytown, New York
765-555-5555 or xxxxx@xxx.xxx





123 WEST 6TH AVENUE ANYTOWN, NY 37200

January 1, 2009

Richard Jones
123 Main Street
Anderson, IN 46012

**SAMPLE LETTER
TO APPLICANTS
NOT CHOSEN**

Dear Richard:

Thanks for your interest in the youth director position at ABC Church of God in Anytown, New York.

After reviewing your application (or speaking with you by phone) and after much prayer and seeking the Lord's direction, we have decided to pursue another candidate whose skills, gifts, and abilities seem to be a better match for the position.

We appreciate the time you have taken to be in communication with our search committee. May God bless you as you continue to seek out the ministry position that God has called you to. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

John Smith, Search Committee Chairperson
ABC Church of God
Anytown, New York
765-555-5555 or xxxxx@xxx.xxx



Search Committee Progress Charts

Postings

Institution	Contact Person	Phone or E-mail	Date Posted	Date Removed

Initial Candidates

Name	Date Résumé Received	Qualified? (Yes/No)	Date of Phone Screening	Still Qualified? (Yes/No)	Date Closure Letter Sent

Final Candidates

Name	Date of Personal Interview	Qualification Rankings (in order)	Date(s) of Weekend Visit	Call Extended? (Yes/No)	Call Accepted? (Yes/No)	Date of Closure Meeting