

## Vision Statement

My desire is to lead a youth ministry team that is intentional in meeting teens where they are at and bringing them to maturity in their faith. I am one who understands the struggles of the post-modern young person and am willing to engage their world in some progressive ways.

## Core Competencies

### Missional

*I believe it's vital that youth ministry be others-focused and have outreach at its core.*

I have deep experience working with both urban and suburban youth which has contributed to my understanding of the nuances of teen subcultures. This knowledge has enabled me to galvanize the youth I've ministered to, resulting in youth ministries that have shown remarkable growth. At First Baptist Church of Hazel Park, I initiated a mentoring program and a basketball outreach called "Hang Time" for the at-risk teens I was ministering to. At Orchard Lake Community Church, I established a strong mid-week program and launched a contemporary worship service that gave the young people a more dynamic worship alternative. I am currently serving at St. Margaret's Episcopal Church, where I have set in motion a thriving coffee house outreach and an energetic Sunday night youth meeting. In all three of these churches I've inherited a small group of about 25 youth and have more than tripled teen involvement. What's more significant is that so many of these teens have remained faithful to God and engaged with the mission of the church to this day.

### Theological and Biblical Orientation

*I believe that teens have a hunger for Biblical truth.*

Young people have many questions that need addressed and wrestled with. Their inquisitiveness requires a youth minister who is neither dogmatic nor close minded, but is eager to share with them in a relational and dynamic way the soundness of historic Orthodox Christianity. My years of study at William Tyndale College and Mars Hill Graduate School have included extensive work in exegetical skills, theology, counseling, spiritual formation, post-modern thought, and youth ministry. I've had the privilege of studying with the likes of Brian McLaren, Dr. Dan Allender, Dr. Carl Raschke, Dr. Tremper Longman, and Dr. Heather Webb; all leading authors and thinkers on the cutting edge of ministry, philosophy, counseling, and Biblical interpretation.

### Arts and Creativity

*I believe that God's creative nature should be reflected in the lives of our young people.*

I am passionate about expressing my faith and communicating the Scriptures through creative means. My creativity has displayed itself in every last detail of the youth ministries that I've led: from the alternative hip-hop I've written and performed, to the flyers I've used to promote our events. I possess an artistic edge that effectively communicates a Christian worldview in a time when the medium has become the message.

## Final Thoughts

There is obviously more to know about me than what I can communicate in this short space. I am not a typical candidate. I bring an energy and zeal combined with experience and insight. Underlying all of my efforts is the goal of seeing this generation transformed by the Spirit so they can creatively enter the fray with God's love.

*For the cause of Christ,*  
Buzz Matthews



# Experience and Education

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## Ministry Experience

### **St. Margaret's Episcopal Church, Bellevue, WA**

2003 to 2006

#### **Director of Youth**

- Organized activities and retreats, conducted weekly Bible studies, developed new confirmation program.
- Established a youth council, expanded youth staff and parental involvement.
- Planned and facilitated service projects, summer mission trips.
- Launched a dynamic student ministries website ( [www.fuzionstudents.org](http://www.fuzionstudents.org) ), produced and performed alternative hip-hop.
- Conceptualized and implemented high-energy weekly meetings geared for outreach.
- Launched a successful coffee house for the area high school students.

### **Orchard Lake Community Church, Presbyterian, West Bloomfield, MI**

1996 to 2002

#### **Director of Youth**

- Led and developed small group ministry with emphasis on discipleship and friendship evangelism.
- Facilitated foreign mission trips, service projects, group work camps.
- Public school campus presence (Bible studies and prayer rallies).
- Implemented weekly contemporary worship service (i.e., speaking, drama, PowerPoint, video, etc.).

### **First Baptist Church of Hazel Park, Hazel Park, MI**

1994 to 1996

#### **Director of Youth**

- Merged un-churched sociologically disadvantaged youth with middle class church youth, initiated a basketball evangelistic outreach, organized after school tutoring program.
- Developed youth staff, organized activities and retreats.

### **Youth for Christ of Detroit, MI**

1993 to 1996

#### **Ministry Team Member**

- Ministered to underprivileged and at-risk youth.
- Led a Life Line Club at Pelham Middle School in Detroit.

## Education

### **Mars Hill Graduate School, Seattle, WA**

2003 to 2006

M.A., Christian Studies, (will graduate in May 2006)

### **William Tyndale College , Farmington Hills, MI**

1993

B.A., Youth Ministry / Psychology and Counseling

## **Specialized Training**

- Student Impact Leadership Conference at Willow Creek, Barrington, IL
- Various Youth Specialties National Youth Workers Conventions
- "The Core" training provided by Youth Specialties

# My Philosophy of Youth Ministry

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Because effective youth ministry demands it, I feel obliged to articulate and apply a philosophy that is thoroughly biblical, relevant, comprehensive, and practical.

At the heart of any youth ministry should be the aspiration to reach out to non-Christian teens, help them come to know Jesus Christ and nurture them to maturity so they can in turn impact the church and the world. Everything that occurs in youth ministry should in one way or another be aimed at this target. My philosophy can be condensed and summarized into the following values that will help guide me in accomplishing these aims:

Maintaining a heart for knowing and pleasing God (I Timothy 4:16, II Timothy 2:4). I believe a passion for God is the foundation for all ministry.

Maintaining a heart for communicating truth creatively (II Timothy 4:2, Colossians 1:28-29). A creative teacher will present the gospel message in a variety of spiritually stimulating and culturally relevant ways.

Maintaining a heart for understanding today's youth and cultural penetration (John 10:14, Matthew 9:36, II Timothy 4:5, I Thessalonians 1:9-10). It's critical that youth ministers understand the cultural differences of teenagers and view the campus as a mission field.

Maintaining a heart for relationships (Philippians 2:19-20, Ephesians 4:11-12, Hebrews 13-17). Involvement of parents, volunteer staff, church staff, and student leaders is crucial for ministry that is personal in nature, connecting adults with teens.

Maintaining a heart for excellence in activity planning (Ecclesiastes 9:10). Sometimes one shot is all we get, it should be our best one. Also, all of our activities should have a clearly defined purpose.