



Helping Faith Take Root

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR YOUTH MINISTRY



Contents

03

Introduction

04

Faith Community

10

Relationships

14

Beliefs

18

Personal Experience

22

Spiritual Practice

26

Resources

27

About Darkroom

Introduction

Helping Faith Take Root

Every youth pastor wants their students to develop a faith that lasts— a faith that’s real, resilient, and rooted in daily life. The kind of faith that shows up at school, in family conversations, and long after graduation.

This **practical guide for youth leaders** was created to help you strengthen that kind of faith. Drawing on research from organizations like Barna and the Fuller Youth Institute—as well as the experiences of pastors and students who have used Darkroom Faith resources—it highlights the practices that make the biggest difference in long-term spiritual growth.

Each section explores one of the five core dimensions of faith formation that shape how students grow:

- **Faith Community:** Building belonging that lasts
- **Relationships:** Creating a network of trusted mentors and peers
- **Beliefs:** Establishing a firm biblical foundation for understanding core truths
- **Personal Experience:** Guiding students toward real encounters with God
- **Spiritual Practices:** Putting faith into daily action for relevant, lived-out faith



Together, these areas offer a holistic picture of how faith develops and endures. The research—and the stories from countless youth ministries—confirm what you’ve likely seen firsthand: faith grows best in relationships, through consistent practice, and within a community that models the love of Jesus.

This guide is designed for action, not theory. Each section includes practical tools and resources from leading Christian teen ministries you can apply right away. Whether your students are thriving in their faith or struggling to see its relevance, you can help them encounter God in ways that are personal, biblical, and lasting.

You don’t have to overhaul your entire program to make a difference. Start small. Take one faithful step at a time. As you do, you’ll help students not only learn about God—but experience Him, live for Him, and stay connected to His church long after youth group ends.



Faith Community Building Belonging That Lasts

Students today are desperate for belonging. They long to be known, loved, and accepted—but too often, instead of turning to the church, they turn to TikTok, Instagram, or their peer group at school. While those spaces may offer fleeting moments of connection, they rarely provide something enduring. Viral posts fade, friend groups fracture, and digital affirmation disappears as quickly as it arrives.

This is where the faith community matters most. Belonging in a youth group, active participation in the life of the church, and connection with other Christians form the foundation students need to anchor their identity in Christ.

Research backs this up. Barna’s Connected Generation study shows that a sense of belonging is one of the strongest predictors of long-term faith engagement (Barna Group). The Fuller Youth Institute’s Sticky Faith project echoes the same: deep, intergenerational connection to the local church is what makes faith last (Fuller Youth Institute).

**BELONGING IS THE SOIL WHERE FAITH TAKES
ROOT—AND THE CHURCH IS WHERE STUDENTS
LEARN THEY ARE TRULY KNOWN AND LOVED.**

How to Make a Youth Group Truly Welcoming

Create a culture of hospitality.

Hospitality should be the norm, not just the leader's task. Encourage every student to greet others—especially unfamiliar faces—and help them see that welcoming outsiders is everyone's job. Make sure your space feels just as inviting as your people do.

Resource: [Ministry Coach: Creating a Welcoming Youth Room](#)

Train leaders to notice.

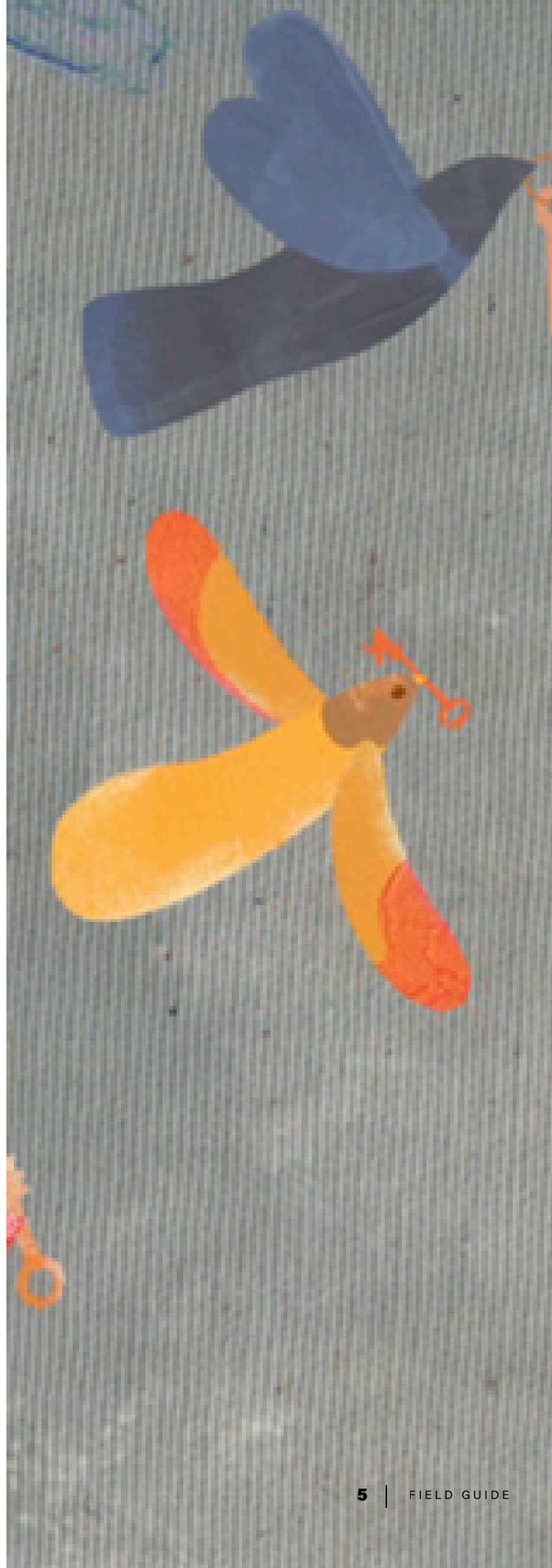
Remind adult volunteers to skip the “leader huddle” and connect with students right away. Give them a simple goal: say hello to five students before talking to other adults. Small, intentional actions like that can change the room's atmosphere.

Design a system for newcomers.

Create a plan so new students never feel invisible. Assign “welcome buddies” or form a small hospitality team to ensure every visitor knows they matter from the moment they arrive. *Resource:* [Practical Ideas for Welcoming Students](#)

Listen first.

Teach leaders how to listen actively and empathetically—without freaking out, judging, or rushing to fix things. Encourage curiosity through good questions, guide students toward biblical wisdom instead of quick answers, and always follow up the next week to show genuine care. *Resource:* [Rooted: Quick to Listen, Slow to Speak](#)



Getting Students Involved in Youth Group

Empower student leadership.

Anything an adult can do, a student can do—with the right training and encouragement. Build student teams for tech, hospitality, social media, worship, setup, and prayer so they learn to lead and serve alongside adults. *Resource:* [DYM Guide to Student Leadership](#)

Organize by gifts and interests.

Help students discover their talents and give them meaningful ways to use them. A student who loves media design might manage your Instagram, while one who thrives on connection could lead your greeting team.

Model ownership.

When students see their peers leading, it changes the culture—youth group becomes something they help create, not something done for them.

Spend quality time together.

Build time into every gathering for students to talk, laugh, and connect. Encourage leaders to ask about hobbies, schools, and families. Create small group spaces where teens feel known, loved, and cared for.

Create space for play.

Fun breaks down barriers and helps students feel at home. Use simple, low-cost games like Minute to Win It, screen games, or conversation starters such as Would You Rather? *Resources:* [Minute to Win It Games](#) | [Free Games from Download Youth Ministry](#)



Helping Students Engage the Larger Church

Youth group should not become a silo. A sense of belonging grows when students are integrated into the broader church community.

Bridge the gap.

Give students meaningful jobs within the broader church body: serving in kids ministry, joining the worship band, or assisting with hospitality.

Mirror adult roles.

Create positions in youth group that reflect those in the larger congregation so the transition feels natural.

Highlight the “why.”

Emphasize that service isn't busywork—it's discipleship. Research confirms that meaningful service is a key pathway to resilient faith ([Barna, Faith for Exiles](#)).

Build intergenerational connections.

Train students to see themselves as part of a multi-generational family of faith, not just a teen program. Discuss events that occur outside the youth group. Even small acts of service—like helping with a bake sale—can open doors to deeper relationships across generations. *Resource:* [Small Church Ministry: Building Intergenerational Connections](#)

Elevate student visibility.

Help the broader congregation see the value of youth. Let students share testimonies in the main service to highlight how Jesus is changing lives. *Resource:* [Rooted Ministry: Involving Students in the Larger Church](#)



Engaging with Disengaged Students

Train eyes to see.

Instruct leaders to notice who is on their phone or sitting alone. Invite engaged students to draw them in. Remind leaders that not everyone is excited about being at youth group—they may need a reason to look forward to coming!

Track attendance intentionally.

Memory is unreliable; systems are not. If a student misses more than two weeks, send a text or note—better yet, have a small group leader or peer do it. Use an attendance app like [Stuff You Can Use](#) (free for 25 or less students!) to track who's missing and who might need a personal check-in.

Practice persistence.

Don't stop after one attempt. Weekly, low-pressure contact (“We missed you! Can't wait to see you back.”) communicates care. Mix communication methods—text messages, postcards, letters, or pictures—to show students they're remembered. *Resource:* [Fuller Youth Institute: Cultivating Teenagers Trust](#)



Helping Students Connect with Each Other

Activate peer ministry.

Teach students to notice who's disconnected and reach out. Remind them that building a welcoming youth group is part of their discipleship. Encourage them to sit with new students and invite them into their friend circles.

Connect by context.

Pair students who attend the same school and encourage them to connect during the week. Simple hallway conversations like "Hey! Missed you at youth group!" can go a long way toward creating belonging beyond Sunday.

Tell belonging stories.

Share testimonies of how connection to the church has transformed students' lives. Use video interviews, short written stories, or live testimonies to inspire empathy and action. *Resources:* [How to Help Students Share Their Faith](#) | [InterVarsity: Writing a Testimony Guide](#)

Normalize mutual responsibility.

Help students see that everyone contributes to the culture of belonging. Celebrate students who take initiative to welcome others—highlight them publicly to reinforce that this is what discipleship looks like in community.

EVERYONE CONTRIBUTES TO
THE CULTURE OF BELONGING . . .





Relationships

Building a Faith Support Network

Students need people in their lives that they can trust and share with openly. They need trusted adults who will listen to their questions, guide them to maturity, and walk alongside them during their teenage years.

Faith is relational, and God often uses people to shape people. If you think back on your own faith journey, chances are there were adults who guided you toward Jesus, and without them your story might look very different. The Fuller Youth Institute points out that every teen needs five caring adults in their life, a framework that has proven essential for raising faithful young people.

Friends also have enormous influence, and when students are surrounded by peers who are seeking Jesus, they are more likely to do the same. Yet even with all of that, [parents remain the most influential voices in a teenager's spiritual formation](#), and research shows again and again that teens often reflect the beliefs of their parents.

GOD USES PEOPLE TO SHAPE PEOPLE. EVERY STUDENT NEEDS ADULTS AND PEERS WHO HELP THEM SEE JESUS MORE CLEARLY.

Strengthening Peer Relationships

Invite students to mentor younger peers.

Create space for older students to lead younger ones. Pair high school students with middle schoolers for encouragement, prayer, and Bible reading. Build a culture where “older siblings” in the faith pass down wisdom under the guidance of loving adults.

Use relationally strong students as group ambassadors.

Identify natural connectors and empower them to welcome new students and seek out those who feel disconnected. Give them simple goals: greet newcomers, sit with someone new each week, and follow up with a text or postcard. *Resource:* [DYM Blog: Creating a Student Leadership Team](#)

Facilitate friendships through shared experiences.

Use intentional spaces where friendships grow naturally—small groups for conversation and accountability, service projects for shared purpose, and retreats or mission trips for lasting bonds.

Resource: [YouthWorks: Guide to Planning a Mission Trip](#)



Empowering Parents

Encourage faith conversations at home.

Give parents simple tools to reinforce what students are learning. Send a “question of the week” by email or hand out cards with discussion prompts as students leave youth group. Share brief summaries of key themes so parents can follow up at home.

Resource: [Axis.org provides free resources to help parents disciple their teens.](#)

Normalize parent involvement.

Talk often about being thankful for faithful parents. Invite them to share testimonies or stories of faith during youth group. Encourage leaders to affirm parents’ influence in small group discussions—ask if a student has already talked with their parents about a question before answering it in group. *Resource:* [How to Get Parents Involved in Youth Ministry](#)

Connect with parents regularly.

Meet with parents a few times a year—before a new semester, ahead of big events, or at the start of a teaching series. Use these gatherings to reinforce their irreplaceable role in discipling their teens, share what students are learning, and invite feedback. Create space for parents to share ideas, practices, and challenges with one another so they feel supported rather than alone. These periodic touchpoints build trust, open communication, and a unified vision for spiritual formation at home.

Creating a Small Group Ministry

Start simple.

Even a basic format matters. Pair students with adults after each youth group talk to process and apply what they’ve heard. You don’t need a full curriculum—giving students a space to connect with caring adults is already a win. Small groups turn teaching into conversation and transformation.

Choose the right leaders.

Select adults who love Jesus and genuinely like students. Look for people who are approachable, kind, and consistent. Some volunteers may want to serve but not fit well with youth ministry—learn to say no graciously and redirect them elsewhere. *Resource:* [YouthMinistry360: Identifying the Right Volunteers](#)

Train leaders for meaningful conversations.

Provide open-ended discussion questions and coach leaders to listen well and ask follow-ups. Encourage them to allow silence to breathe—sometimes students just need time to think.

Encourage connection beyond group time.

Ask leaders to reach out weekly through quick texts or handwritten notes. Challenge them to show up at students’ games, concerts, or performances as a tangible sign of care. *Resource:* [Youth Pastor Theologian: Creating Effective Small Groups](#)

Modeling and Training for Leaders

Model vulnerability.

Train leaders to engage with empathy and honesty. Move beyond “I had it worse as a teen” and toward “Tell me about your experience.” When leaders share their own stories, students see that authenticity is a vital part of faith. *Resource:* [YDisciple: How to Be a Great Small Group Leader](#)

Foster relational depth.

Encourage leaders to share stories of both struggles and successes. Remind them that trust grows through time spent together, not quick fixes. *Resource:* [YouthWorks: Guide for Leading a Small Group Well](#)

Coach consistency.

The greatest gift a leader can give students is showing up. Consistency matters more than charisma—steady presence builds long-term influence.

Adult Mentorships and Intergenerational Connections

Build a mentorship program.

Consider inviting adults in the church to “adopt” students for mentorship, prayer, and fellowship. Ask them to greet their student on Sundays, pray regularly, and check in throughout the semester. Older members or young couples often make wonderful mentors. *Resource:* [How to Start a Youth Mentorship Program](#)

Highlight the role of other adults in the church.

Help students see faith as a shared, intergenerational journey. Invite pastors or ministry leaders to visit youth group and share their stories. This helps teens connect their faith to the broader life of the church. *Resource:* [Encircled App for Discipleship Connections](#)



Offer Deeper Theology and Interactive Learning

Go beyond surface-level lessons.

Students need more than “Jesus loves you.” They need to understand why the Bible is trustworthy, why Jesus’ resurrection matters, and how Christian faith holds together. Teach the “why” behind what they believe so their faith can stand when challenged. Depth builds confidence—shallow answers do not. *Resource:* [Rooted Ministry: Teaching Apologetics in Youth Ministry](#)

Make it engaging.

Turn theological learning into participation. Try Q&A nights where students submit questions anonymously, or debate nights where they explore opposing views and you guide them toward biblical truth. After trips or retreats, host student panels where teens share what they’ve learned and how it’s changed their perspective. *Example:* [Bible Project: Who Is God?](#)

Encourage Students to Teach and Lead

Give ownership.

Faith becomes personal when students take part in teaching it. Invite them to lead short devotionals, share a passage during small group, or co-lead discussions. When students teach, they remember and internalize truth more deeply. *Resource:* [YDisciple: Peer-Led Small Groups Guide](#)

Model how to study Scripture.

Show students how to read the Bible before asking them to teach it. Spend a few weeks demonstrating a simple study process—Read, Explain, Apply, Pray—and let them practice in pairs or small groups. *Resource:* [Dare2Share: How to Teach Teens to Read the Bible](#)

Start small.

Not every student is ready to give a full talk—and that’s okay. Begin with peer-to-peer sharing about what they learned from Scripture that week. Gradually build toward small group devotionals or youth-night reflections. Each step grows confidence and courage.

Create Space for Honest Doubt

Normalize questions.

Students often think doubt disqualifies faith—but it can actually deepen it. Remind them that even the disciples doubted, and yet Jesus met them with compassion. Share your own questions and experiences to model that doubt and faith can coexist.

Respond with honesty and humility.

Leaders don't need to have all the answers. When you don't know, say, "That's a great question—let's explore it together." Your authenticity will build more trust than polished answers ever could. *Resource:* [Darkroom Faith: Doubt Episode](#)



**Doubts are the ants
in the pants of faith.
They keep it awake
and moving."**

Frederick Buechner

Use Accessible Apologetics to Strengthen Faith

Start with essentials.

Apologetics doesn't need to dominate your teaching, but weaving it in regularly can ground students' beliefs. Focus on core questions like:

- *Can we trust the Bible?*
- *Did Jesus really rise from the dead?*
- *Why does God allow suffering?*
- *Resources:* [Darkroom Faith: The Bible](#) | [Sean McDowell YouTube](#)

Keep it age-appropriate.

Translate big theological ideas into accessible truths. Avoid overloading students with philosophy or abstract logic. Use analogies, visuals, and relatable examples that connect biblical truth to daily life. Focus on your church's non-negotiable beliefs first before tackling complex questions.

Leverage media and conversation.

Students live in a connected world—meet them there. Use podcasts, short videos, and interactive discussions to keep apologetics engaging. Ask open-ended questions and listen carefully to how students respond. The goal isn't to win arguments, but to help them think biblically and critically about their faith.

Reinforce Gospel Foundations Through Teaching and Testimony

Repeat the essentials.

Students forget quickly. Teach the Gospel often and in many ways—not just at camp or on Easter Sunday. Reinforce the foundational truths of Jesus’ death, resurrection, and redeeming love in every series or season.

Use stories that make the Gospel real.

Stories help truth sink in. Share testimonies from leaders, students, or Scripture that reveal how Jesus’ power transforms daily life. Help teens see that their own stories—of failure, forgiveness, or growth—can reflect the Gospel. *Resource:* [Navigators Testimony Worksheet](#)

Teach God’s heart for justice.

Justice isn’t political—it’s biblical. From Genesis to Revelation, God calls His people to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly (Micah 6:8). Help students understand that justice flows out of the Gospel: because we’ve been reconciled to God, we work to reconcile with others. *Resources:* [Starting Line: Equality vs. Equity](#) | [Bible Project: Justice](#)

Tie everything back to the Gospel.

Every teaching topic connects to the Good News:

- **Relationships?** The Gospel gives us value, not our popularity.
- **Justice?** The Gospel motivates it.
- **Spiritual growth?** The Gospel fuels it.





Personal Experience

Building a Lasting Faith Through Transformative Encounters With God

Students often leave the church not because they never heard the truth, but because they never felt it was real. A student who learns to sense God's presence in worship, prayer, and daily life will be stronger when facing doubt or difficulty.

Research confirms this gap between belief and experience. Barna's Guiding the Faith Journey study found that nearly two-thirds of churched teens say they want to "experience God personally," yet far fewer report actually doing so. Likewise, the Fuller Youth Institute notes that authentic, emotional connection to God is one of the strongest predictors of faith that lasts into adulthood.

Your role as a youth pastor is to create spaces, rhythms, and relationships that move faith from head knowledge to heart transformation.

FAITH BECOMES REAL WHEN STUDENTS ENCOUNTER GOD FOR THEMSELVES, NOT JUST HEAR ABOUT HIM FROM OTHERS.

Create Intentional Pathways for Encounter

Normalize seasons of distance.

Teach openly about biblical figures who felt far from God. Reassure students that distance is not abandonment. Share your own stories of doubt and how God met you there, and invite leaders to do the same. Modeling honesty helps students understand that faith includes both mountaintops and dry seasons.

Shape small groups into safe spaces.

Train leaders to let students process their questions without fear or shame. Encourage them to ask more questions than they answer, helping students name what they're experiencing and notice where God might already be at work.

Build rhythms into every program.

Carve out time for silence, prayer, and reflection during gatherings. Plan special worship nights, prayer experiences, or creative practices that invite students to encounter God. These moments help students step out of routine and recognize His presence. *Resource:* [Ministry Coach: How to Plan a Worship Night](#)



Helping Students Recognize and Share Their Faith Stories

Give students a platform to share.

Schedule student testimonies regularly so they can tell how God is shaping their lives. Use both leader and peer stories to reinforce that God is active and near. Ask students to write down what they plan to say—this helps them reflect deeply and grow in confidence as they share.

Introduce reflection tools.

Teach students how to journal, use guided prayer, or reflect weekly on where they've seen God at work. Provide simple take-home tools that make reflection accessible. Writing down spiritual insights helps students remember God's faithfulness and connect truth to real life.

Resource: [Lindsay Farren: Bible Journaling for Teenagers](#)

Build roots for dry seasons.

Give students small, consistent opportunities to practice faith when emotions fade—like praying before youth group, reading Scripture aloud, writing prayer requests, or leading a simple act of service. Low-pressure spiritual habits prepare students to stay grounded when their feelings waver.



Developing Personal Faith Habits

Create a space for personal growth.

Design a “faith resource corner” where students can explore Bibles, devotional plans, or booklets to take home. Make these resources visible and remind parents they're available for continued discipleship.

Use digital tools to extend discipleship.

Consider launching a youth podcast, YouTube channel, or Instagram devotional series. The content doesn't need to be polished—consistency and authenticity matter more than production value.

Invite students to create faith content.

Ask students to share their favorite verses and why they matter. Compile these reflections into a student-written reading plan or devotional booklet. Involving students in content creation makes the faith resources feel personal and peer-shaped.

Model your own growth.

Regularly share how you're personally growing in faith. Tell students about the practices or Scriptures shaping your spiritual life, and invite other leaders to do the same. Hearing multiple stories from different seasons of life helps students see that spiritual growth is ongoing and unique for everyone.

Practical Ministry Shifts for Every Youth Group

Teach spiritual practices as rhythms, not events.

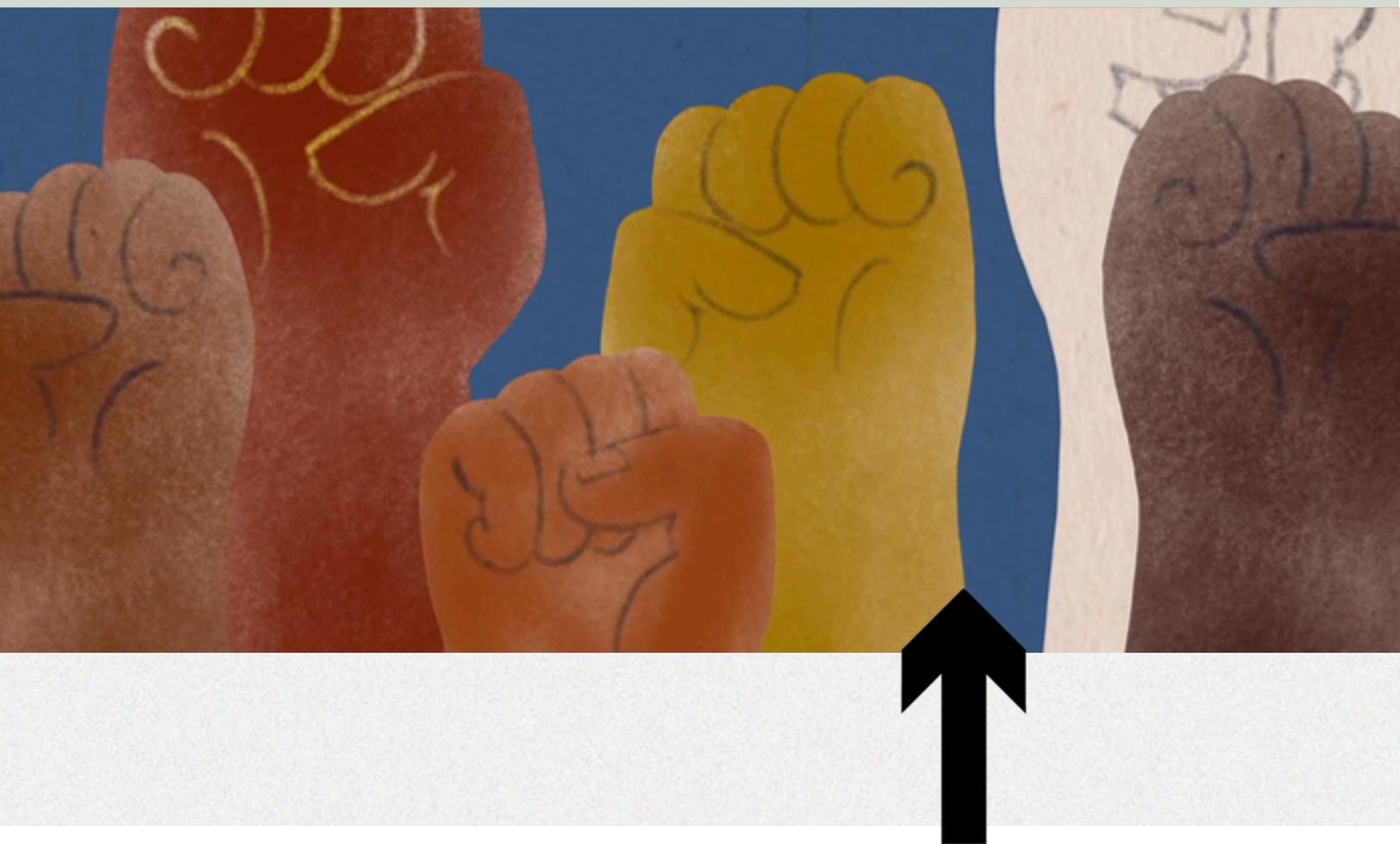
Model prayer, journaling, or Scripture reflection during youth nights so students learn by doing. Emphasize repetition over hype—daily disciplines form the roots of lasting faith.

Design awe-filled experiences.

Plan retreats, hikes, or stargazing nights that awaken wonder and connect students to their Creator. Awe can be a gateway to worship. You don't need big lights or a flashy stage; intentional reflection and beauty will draw students to God. *Resource:* [ChurchLeaders: Leading Youth Worship Nights](#)

Reinforce gospel identity in every environment.

Celebrate students not for performance but for who they are in Christ. Remind them that they are loved, chosen, and never alone. Encourage leaders to speak these truths consistently, shaping identity in grace rather than achievement.





Spiritual Practices

Making Service and Justice Real for Teenagers

Faith grows roots when it's practiced consistently, not just talked about. Students who learn to pray, study Scripture, serve others, and reflect on God's presence daily are equipped to handle future challenges with a godly perspective. Regular rhythms of practice build resilience, identity, and a lived-out faith that lasts beyond youth group.

In a culture where anxiety and depression are common, spiritual practices can also serve as protective anchors—teaching students to process stress through prayer, Scripture, and service rather than unhealthy outlets.

Darkroom's research found that the frequency of these practices—praying, reading Scripture, listening to worship music, and talking about faith—is the strongest predictor of how relevant a student's faith feels in their everyday life.

WHAT STUDENTS PRACTICE, THEY
WILL BELIEVE—AND WHAT THEY
BELIEVE, THEY WILL LIVE. HABITS
BUILD A FAITH THAT LASTS.

Helping Spiritually Strong Students Go Deeper

Talk about lived faith.

Highlight students who are already practicing spiritual habits during youth group. Use testimonies to show how consistent prayer, service, or Scripture reading shapes their daily lives. Students who model healthy rhythms can encourage others who are just beginning.

Connect students to outside service opportunities.

Partner with local ministries and nonprofits so students can serve beyond church walls. Organize a workday at a local school, pack care kits, or join community service events. Teach them that serving others is a tangible way to live out their faith and reflect Jesus' love.

Resource: [ChurchTrac: Service Projects for Youth Groups](#)

Elevate student leadership in spiritual rhythms.

Invite students to lead worship, devotionals, or prayer times during gatherings. Remind them that practicing spiritual disciplines not only strengthens their faith—it equips them to lead others. Use peer-led models to make discipleship something teens do, not just something adults teach.

Resource: [DYM: Spiritual Disciplines for Middle School Students](#)

Creating On-Ramps for Disconnected Students

Teach and model simple rhythms.

Walk students through short, daily practices like a five-minute devotional or journaling prayer. Provide take-home prayer guides or Bible reading plans that connect with your teaching series. Talk about these practices regularly and celebrate consistency over perfection. *Resource:* [Celia A. Miller: Guide to Creating a Quiet Time Routine](#)

Offer low-barrier service opportunities.

Host small, local projects—cleaning a park, serving food, or helping teachers set up classrooms—during regular youth group times. Make sure each project connects to a biblical principle or passage so students understand the “why” behind the work.

Explore real-world issues through Scripture.

Studies show that nearly two out of three students walk away from faith as they enter adulthood because they don't see how it connects to their everyday lives. **Close that gap by pairing Scripture → conversation → practice.**

- Read James 2, then brainstorm ways to support a local pantry.
- Study Psalm 34, then plan visits or notes for nursing home residents.
- Reflect on Micah 6:8, then launch a simple mentoring or tutoring effort.

Invite students to suggest repeatable actions they can own outside church and follow up the next week on what they tried. These rhythms make faith tangible and relevant. *Resource:* [YouthWorker.com: Fostering Social Justice in Youth Ministry](#)

Helping Students Connect Beliefs to Action

Show students examples of faith in action.

Invite adults who practice specific spiritual disciplines to share their stories. Let students hear how prayer, fasting, giving, or Sabbath rest have shaped those adults' lives and faith maturity.

Journal to encourage growth.

Have students write how spiritual habits make them feel or change their outlook. Ask reflective questions: "How has prayer helped with anxiety?" "What did you learn about God while serving?" Journaling helps them remember God's work and celebrate spiritual progress.

Build consistent faith.

Remind students that trials will come—but practicing disciplines now prepares them to endure later. Daily faith rhythms form the foundation of resilience when life feels uncertain.



Justice and Service: Putting Faith Into Action

Let students choose the cause.

Students don't just want to talk about faith—they want to do something with it. Ask what needs they see at school or in the community. Maybe a family nearby is struggling, or a local shelter needs volunteers. Let students vote on a cause they care about; ownership makes compassion personal.

Plan and serve together.

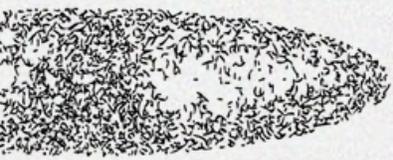
Once you've chosen a project, help students plan it from start to finish. Assign roles for communication, logistics, and follow-up. Partner with local organizations already meeting the need so students learn to listen and collaborate before acting. Afterward, debrief together:

- *What did you see God doing?*
- *What did you learn about others—and yourself?*
- *Resource: [Dare 2 Share: Guide to Outreach Ideas](#)*

Love the way Jesus did.

Justice and service aren't about fixing people—they're about loving people the way Jesus did. When students experience the joy of serving others, faith becomes personal, active, and alive. These experiences often become the anchors that carry faith beyond high school. *Resource: [Fuller Youth Institute: Restorative Justice in Ministry](#)*

STUDENTS DON'T JUST WANT TO
TALK ABOUT FAITH—THEY WANT
TO DO SOMETHING WITH IT.



Resources

Axis Free Parent Resources
axis.org

Barna Group: Connected Generation Study
theconnectedgeneration.com

Bible Project
bibleproject.com

CeliaAMiller.com

ChristianLeaders.org

Church and Culture Blog
churchandculture.org/blog

ChurchTrac.com

Dare2Share.org

Darkroom Faith
darkroomfaith.com

Download Youth Ministry
downloadyouthministry.com

EmpoweredHomes.org

Encircled App for Relational Discipleship
encircled.org

ForMinistryResources.com

Fuller Youth Institute: Blog
fulleryouthinstitute.org/blog

Fuller Youth Institute: Sticky Faith Project
fulleryouthinstitute.org/stickyfaith

InterVarsity
library.intervarsity.org

LindsayFarren.com

Ministry Coach: YouTube Channel
youtube.com/@ministrycoach

MinistryLeadership.org

Navigators.org

PlayPartyPlan.com

Reasonable Faith: YouTube Channel
youtube.com/@reasonablefaithorg

Rooted Ministry
rootedministry.com

Sean McDowell: YouTube Channel
youtube.com/@seanmcdowell

SmallChurchMinistry.com

StuffYouCanUse.org

YDisciple.com

YouthMinistry360.com

Youth Ministry Insider
youthministryinsider.wordpress.com

Youth Pastor Theologian Blog
youthpastortheologian.com/blog

YouthWorks Blog
youthworks.com/blog



About Darkroom Faith

Darkroom Faith is a free video-based curriculum and leader resource designed to help students think critically, talk openly, and grow deeply in their Christian faith. Created by filmmakers, theologians, and youth ministry leaders, Darkroom combines cinematic storytelling with guided discussion to spark real, honest conversations about God, doubt, purpose, and identity.

We believe conversations matter. When students are given safe spaces to voice their doubts and questions, they discover that faith in Jesus can stand up to honest exploration. Darkroom equips leaders to facilitate those conversations with truth, empathy, and biblical clarity—so students can wrestle well and grow stronger.

We exist because too many students are walking away from church believing faith isn't relevant to real life. However, when teens see how the Gospel connects to their daily experiences, they are far more likely to stay engaged in faith long after graduation. Darkroom helps make those connections clear.

Our vision is to help one million students worldwide discover that faith in Jesus is both intellectually credible and personally transformative.

What We Provide

- Free films and leader guides addressing the real questions teens ask
- Leader support and research on what helps faith last
- Training and impact resources for churches and schools

At its heart, Darkroom Faith is about transformation—helping young people move from secondhand beliefs to a living, personal relationship with Jesus. Like a photograph developed in the darkroom, faith takes shape when it's exposed to light.

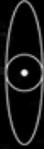
Learn more or explore resources at darkroomfaith.com





DARKROOMFAITH.COM

Ashley Cope, Executive Director – ashley@darkroomfaith.com | 713.252.4354
Randy Templeton, President – randy@darkroomfaith.com | 832.265.2701



darkroom