

Youth Pastors' Retreat led by National Youth Ministry Director, Kaeleigh Moffitt

Kaeleigh Moffitt
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Thirty-two youth pastors from around the country met at the International Peace Education Center in Las Vegas for a Youth Pastors' Retreat led by National Youth Ministry Director, Kaeleigh Moffitt.

"I would say it was definitely the most well-received retreat I've done with the youth pastors," said Kaeleigh. "In retrospect I can see that this is a result of consistent investment over the last year and a half."

The National Youth Ministry runs on five themes (Connect, Inspire, Empower, Contribute and Expand), which were built into the structure of this retreat. Activities based around these themes were well received and instilled confidence in each of the youth pastors to implement them in their own communities.

"I'm happy to see this because I know these themes work," said Kaeleigh, "and I'm glad that by giving the space and freedom for people to experiment with them, we are seeing that it has become a helpful model for communities to exchange ideas and form their educational curriculum."

Despite Kaeleigh's role as the retreat's director, 75 percent of the retreat was led by the youth pastors themselves. This allowed youth pastors to gain tips, tools and style points from other fellow leaders. They each brought something very unique to the table that added to the experience.

The retreat had a relaxed atmosphere while still maintaining a clear schedule. Rev. Kevin Thompson, pastor of the Bay Area Family Church, stopped by as a guest speaker. He spent several sessions with the group and his talks were a major highlight for many of the youth pastors.

"His down-to-earth and relaxed approach is the kind of energy these young leaders respond to and are inspired by," said Kaeleigh. One of the main takeaways from the retreat was clarity on the pastor-youth pastor relationship, which Rev. Thompson and participant Sungil Fleishman led in an informative session.

Youth pastors also shared in a brainstorming session about the future of retreats and whether they should hold them nationally, regionally or even consider a retreat for pastors and youth pastors together to encourage trusting relationships and being on the same page. The consensus was almost unanimous to continue to hold national retreats yearly, five simultaneous regional retreats yearly, and a pastor/youth pastor seminar once a year on a trial basis.

"I am so very hopeful for the future of National Youth Ministry and I now feel confident to try new things and push the envelope a bit," said Kaeleigh.