
April 24-25, 2020 | Virtual Summit | Southern California

LIVING A BETTER STORY

SUMMIT #2



Fuller Youth Institute

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Living a Better Story (LABS) SoCal April 2020 Virtual Summit Schedule



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Contact Zach if you have tech issues:

1. Privately message FYI Help in the zoom chat
2. Or text Zach (209) 202-8488

SCHEDULE:

Friday, April 24:

- 3:00 pm: Opening Session: Living a Better Story in the Midst of a Pandemic
- 3:35 pm: Coaching Group Meetings: Sharing Our Team's Recent Journeys and Insights
- 4:15 pm: Large Group Framing & Church Team Meetings: Synthesizing Teenagers' Pre/Current COVID-19 Narratives
- 5:00 pm: Dismiss (Church teams can continue to meet until 5:30 pm in the FYI Zoom breakout room if desired.)

Saturday, April 25:

- 1:00 pm: Opening Session
- 1:15 pm: Church Team Meetings: Discovering Jesus-Centered Narratives
- 1:50 pm: Large Group Framing & Church Team Meetings: Discerning a Jesus-Centered COVID-19 Response
- 2:50 pm: Large Group Closing Session: Next Steps
- 3:00 pm: Dismiss

Opening Session: Living a Better Story in the Midst of a Pandemic



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Friday 3:00 pm

Opening session notes & ideas:

LABS Training Cohort goal: To help your church develop a new (or significantly revised) approach or model to disciple high school-aged teenagers.

Why LABS matters in this season:

You get to benefit from our previous innovation work.

- For students: Stability – instability – stability
- For ministries: Creativity is fueled by constraints

"This pandemic is terrible and I am as eager as anyone for it to end. But how might our keeping everyone apart ironically reinvent youth ministry and draw young people closer to God? Once this crisis ends, we can't default back to yesterday's answers which no longer fit the questions of today's young people."¹

¹ Kara Powell, "Can Social Distancing Reinvent Youth Ministry," *Christianity Today*, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/2020/april-web-exclusives/coronavirus-social-distancing-reinvent-youth-ministry.html>

Opening Session: Living a Better Story in the Midst of a Pandemic



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Four big questions that (still) shape this project:

- Q1: What are the _____ of identity, belonging, and purpose that define young people's lives?
- Q2: What is the content of better _____?
- Q3: What _____ might help churches and families instill these Jesus-centered narratives?
- Q4: How can _____ to begin implementing these new programs, approaches, and practices?

FYI best practices that are *still true* in the midst of the pandemic:

- Honor young people's agency:
- Practice listening:
- Respond with empathy:
- Encourage intergenerational relationships:
- Be the best neighbors:
- Make disciples:

Coaching Group Meetings

Friday 3:35 pm



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*Point leaders: Please take the lead sharing on behalf of your team, but ideally involve others (particularly teenagers) in responding to these questions. Your church will have approximately 6-8 minutes to respond to all of the questions. **Following are the questions, including space for you to write notes about your own church or ideas and insights from other churches:***

1. Please provide a 1-2 minute snapshot of what this recent season (last couple of months) has been like for your church. On a spectrum of very stable to very unstable to somewhere in between, how do things feel for your church right now?
2. Based on your listening project (if partially or fully complete) as well as any formal or informal listening you've done during COVID-19...what are the most prominent themes you're hearing from teenagers? What matters to them, or what do they need most?
3. Who do you need to listen to more in this season?
4. Where are you seeing or finding hope in this season? What opportunities do you see in your ministry with young people in this season?

Current & Christ-Centered Narratives

Friday 4:15 pm & Saturday 1:15 pm



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Friday instructions:

1. Take approximately 20-25 minutes to complete the second column (young people's pre-COVID narratives) and the third column (young people's COVID-shaped current narratives) of the chart on the next page. Articulate these narratives in the first person from the perspective of a teenager (e.g., "I'm not enough...")
2. After completing these two columns, answer these two questions as a group. If you run out of time with your group, we invite you to reflect on these questions on your own before we begin on Saturday:
 - a. Refer back to the passage in Luke 24 as needed. When the disciples on the Emmaus Road recognized that Jesus was with them, how did it change their perspective?
 - b. If teenagers in our ministry were to recognize that Jesus is with them in this season, how might it change their perspective? How might they see themselves, others, or the world differently?
3. Close with prayer

Saturday instructions:

1. Before filling out the chart, take 2-3 minutes to PERSONALLY reflect on this question: In your own faith journey, how or when have you had an "Emmaus Road moment?" A time where you experienced the power and invitation of Jesus that shaped the way you saw yourself (identity), others (belonging), and/or the world (purpose) differently?
2. Take no more than 3-5 minutes total for a couple of team members to share their answer to question #1 immediately above. After they share, please take a few minutes to finish the second (young people's pre-COVID narratives) or third (young people's COVID-shaped current narratives) columns in the chart, if needed.
3. Use the remaining time (hopefully at least 20-25 minutes) to complete the fourth column (Jesus-centered narratives). Here are the instructions:
 - a. Take some time to imagine Jesus speaking to your teenagers directly. What do you imagine Jesus might say in response to their deepest questions around identity, belonging, and purpose? Consider how this response might acknowledge teenagers' current narratives while also inviting them into something new.
 - b. Then consider how teenagers might articulate this Jesus-centered response from their perspective, if they embraced it as their own narrative. Complete the fourth column with this Jesus-centered narrative, articulating it in the first person from the perspective of a teenager (e.g., "My age does not limit what God can do through me...")
4. BONUS: If you have any remaining time after completing all of the columns, answer this question as a team: What can our team do to ensure the Jesus-centered narrative (column four) is the strongest message our church communicates to teenagers?

Other notes and ideas:

Instructions and Summary of FYI's Research Themes	Our Young People's Pre-COVID Narratives (from our listening) <i>Aim for 1-3 sentences per box</i>	Our Young People's COVID-Shaped Current Narratives <i>Aim for 1-3 sentences per box</i>	Jesus-Centered Narratives <i>Aim for 1-3 sentences per box</i>
<p>IDENTITY – Who am I?</p> <p>How do our teenagers describe themselves? What labels or characteristics do they use to portray who they are?</p> <p>Themes from FYI research - I am:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What others expect 2. Not _____ enough 3. My personal brand 4. More than my label 			
<p>BELONGING – Where do I belong?</p> <p>How do our teenagers describe their relationships to others and to their communities? Who do they trust or where do they feel most connected?</p> <p>Themes from FYI research - I belong:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When I feel safe to be me 2. If we share _____ (values, hobbies, experiences) 3. If I feel like I'm needed 			
<p>PURPOSE – How will my life matter?</p> <p>How do our teenagers describe their personal goals and aspirations? How do they make meaning of what they're doing right now?</p> <p>Themes from FYI research – I matter:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When I'm helping others 2. If I follow the rules (i.e. what my family or church says) 3. When I get to make choices about my life 			

Discerning a Jesus-Centered COVID-19 Response

Saturday 1:50 pm



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PART 1: This exercise is designed to help you reflect on your church's ministry with teenagers during the pandemic. Begin by each person taking 10 minutes on their own to complete the following questions (the point leader should set a timer).

1. Our church primarily connects with teenagers in this season through: *(check up to two)*
 - Regular interactions initiated by individual volunteers and/or staff members
 - Large group programming (e.g., weekly services)
 - Small group environments
 - Neighborhood community outreach
 - Various scattered ministries with little coordination
 - Other:

2. Which of the following are true of our church's current understanding of teenagers and families in this season? *(check all that apply)*
 - We understand teenagers' needs well in this season.
 - We know how to walk alongside teenagers well in this season.
 - We understand families' (with teenagers) needs well in this season.
 - We know how to walk alongside families (with teenagers) well in this season.

3. Our greatest ministry challenges are: *(check up to four)*
 - We feel overwhelmed by our own life adjustments in this season.
 - We are too busy to have a thoughtful approach to ministry with teenagers in this season.
 - We don't know how to use technology or don't have adequate technology to connect with young people in this season.
 - Teenagers are disinterested in our attempts at connecting with them.
 - We are still competing with teenagers' various commitments, such as school and work.
 - We don't have enough volunteers.
 - Our typical volunteers are unavailable.
 - Teenagers' needs are overwhelming; we don't know where to start.
 - Families' (with teenagers) needs are overwhelming; we don't know where to start.
 - We have to constantly readjust how we partner with organizations in our community.
 - We have a lack of funds due to tithing and giving being down.
 - We have church leadership transitions.
 - Other:

4. Reflect: What might be your church's hopes for ministry with teenagers in this season? Consider some of your responses to the 'Jesus-centered narrative' column of the chart on the previous page.
 - Examples:
 - Identity: To encourage young people that they are ENOUGH in Christ in a season when their typical activities and rituals that define them are being stripped away.
 - Belonging: To help young people know that we and God are WITH them in this season of isolation.
 - Purpose: To invite young people to be active participants in God's STORY in this season of confusion and so many unknowns.

- Notes:

PART 2: Team Discussion:

1. [10 minutes] Take 1 minute to silently reflect on your individual responses to #1-3 above. What one or two insights come to mind that you would like to share with your church team members as a result of this exercise? Take turns briefly sharing these insights. After each person has shared, as a team, note the three most important insights your team needs to continue processing after this webinar.
 - a. Insight 1:
 - b. Insight 2:
 - c. Insight 3:

2. [15 minutes] In light of your Jesus-centered narrative responses (from the chart), the three insights you just named, as well as the examples and your notes from #4 in Part 1 of this exercise above, what are your team's greatest hopes for ministry with teenagers in this season? Collaboratively name up to 5 hopes.
 - a. Hope 1:
 - b. Hope 2:
 - c. Hope 3:
 - d. Hope 4:
 - e. Hope 5:

3. [15 minutes] As a result of this exercise and your church's hopes for serving young people in this season:
 - a. What are 3-5 ideas or next steps your team might take to begin living into these hopes?
 - i.
 - ii.
 - iii.
 - iv.
 - v.

 - b. What is one idea you might commit to try in the next couple weeks?

4. Point Leaders: Please review your teammates' responses and turn in a completed "team version" of this exercise to your coach by May 8.