



The 2016 General Conference Youth Ministries Advisory, as part of its ongoing re-Visioning of youth ministry, wishes to recognize the local church as the primary location and target of its ministry for young people around the world. While it affirms the significance of large corporate events such as summer camps, rallies, camporees and congresses to foster fellowship with the wider youth community and to provide opportunities for decision making, it chooses to place ministry to young people in local churches at the center of its priorities and process. The local church is the spiritual home of our young people; their membership is in the local church. It is in their families and in their local churches that young people are spiritually nurtured, step up to follow Jesus, embrace his call to discipleship and find their place in God's service. While many of them make decisions at or during wider church events, the location where they are mentored to become devoted follower of Jesus and to live out their Christian experience is the local church.

The Seventh-day Adventist® Church has chosen an organizational model that emphasizes the priority of the local church, while providing connectedness, support and resources for fulfilling the united mission of preparing people for the coming of Jesus. The role of Youth Ministries at Conference, Union, Division and the General Conference levels is to resource and build up the local church. Our Youth Ministries must cultivate the involvement of teenagers, youth, and young adults in their local churches. In setting up corporate event, it is critical that the interests and benefits of the local church be made a priority. These events must be organized or developed to foster ministry in the local churches. It is our resolve, in the face of widespread disengagement of youth, to be intentional in making the local church a better place—an intergenerational spiritual home for our youth.

"No matter what the youth ministry specialists from the denominational headquarters say, the seminar leaders at youth ministry conferences promote, or the trainers from Christian ministries explain, youth ministry is only effective when it is a response to local needs guided by local convictions, in the hands of local people."

—Mark Senter, III

"The church, enfeebled and defective though it be, is the only object on earth on which Christ bestows His supreme regard. He is constantly watching it with solicitude and is strengthening it by His Holy Spirit."

—Ellen G. White Manuscript 155, 1902