



As the Center for Youth Ministry Training moves into 2010, we should take a moment to pause and remember all of the incredible things that we have accomplished in 2009. We received a continued support grant from the Lilly Foundation for \$530,000. This grant will continue to support the initiatives from our first Lilly Foundation grant to strengthen our CYMT program, develop a second campus, develop a youth ministry resource site (YMtoday.com), and continue the national youth ministry education discussion at our annual think tank. As a product of the grant, we hosted our second national youth ministry think tank, where CYMT was affirmed by national leaders as an important and innovative way to educate and train youth workers.

Internally we are grateful because we commissioned our second class of students as youth ministers in the Body of Christ. Our third class of students arrived, and currently we have 19 students serving in partner churches where young people's lives are being touched by the Good News of Jesus Christ. Our partner churches continue to see growth in their youth programs both numerically and spiritually as CYMT mentors and guides both our students and the leaders in those congregations.

Our partnership with Memphis Theological Seminary last January created new opportunities for our ministry and students. CYMT has expanded to the Memphis area and has begun placing students in greater Memphis and Northern Mississippi. Students can now earn a Master of Arts in Youth Ministry through Memphis Theological in conjunction with our program.

We held our second "Imagine...the Future" event that raised over \$80,000 in new pledges for CYMT. Additionally, a friend of CYMT gave a gift to make it possible for us to hire an Academic Director in 2010. We are approaching \$1,000,000 in pledged or given funds which puts us well on our way to our 2012 goal of \$1.5 million.

As we look to 2010, we see a year full of new and exciting opportunities for our ministry. Andrew Zirschky will be joining our staff as our Academic Director in July. We will be one of the few programs in the country with a professor who has a PH.D in Practical Theology with an emphasis in youth ministry. We are excited about what this means for our academic program development. We have identified potential sites for second campuses in other regions of the country, and we hope to launch a new site in 2010 or 2011.



CYMT students at the Princeton Forum held in Hendersonville, North Carolina in November 2009

We have much to be thankful for at the CYMT. In these difficult economic times, we are grateful for your continued support of our ministry. Your prayers and gifts keep the mission of the CYMT alive. Brentwood UMC and First Presbyterian Church continue to strengthen and bless our ministry. Please pray for our board, staff, students, and churches as we continue this important ministry.

Serving Christ,

Rev. Dietrich "Deech" Kirk,
Executive Director



An Interview with CYMT Student Trey Wince

Trey serves as the Director of College Ministries at First Presbyterian Church in Nashville, Tennessee.

1. What are your impressions on the CYMT program?

Tell us about your experience with CYMT so far and why you decided to do this after years of working in ministry.

I've been really pleased with the entire CYMT experience so far. I've been in ministry for nearly a decade now, and in the past few years, it has become increasingly clear that seminary was in my future. At the same time, as I got involved in more projects at my church, seminary became less and less of a possibility. CYMT is well aware of the demands of a youth worker, and they've created a program that allows me to start earning seminary hours while still retaining a majority of my sanity.

2. How has CYMT helped your church and youth program?

It's definitely given me a venue and system to work out a lot of things I would normally have to do alone, and that certainly creates a positive effect on the life of my ministry at church. Beyond that, the class work has exposed me to some really impressive minds and authors in the youth ministry world whom I never would have otherwise known. Frankly, there aren't a lot of social outlets where the subjects of "the sovereignty of God" or "incarnational ministry versus influential ministry" come up in conversation. The CYMT family has provided that outlet.

3. What is the community like at CYMT?

It takes a strange person to want to spend their lives doing youth ministry. I think I forget that until we all get together in one place for class. Seeing everyone in one my discussion group reminds me that youth workers tend to have a creativity and optimism that you can't find just anywhere. Admittedly, there's also a level of energy and quirkiness that you can't just find anywhere either. But it's been a huge gift to be able to sit with fellow youth workers and share some of the things, both good and bad, that are going on in the context of my own ministry. It's a support network that I know a lot of youth workers don't have the advantage of experiencing.

4. Why did you choose CYMT?

CYMT's a great exposure to seminary that allows me to continue with my ministry for the time being. Eventually, I may decide to go into full-time seminary, and if that day comes, I'll be able to walk in with a lot of hours and a good foundation. For now, they've been great to work with the erratic schedule of a youth worker.



Trey Wince (center) with two students from the First Presbyterian Church Youth Ministry

CYMT Hires Academic Director



With the addition of fully accredited graduate-level classes for all CYMT students, it wasn't long before the need for a designated Academic Director for CYMT became apparent. And after lots of conversations with our friends at Memphis Theological Seminary, our academic partner, we are thrilled to announce the hire of the first Academic Director for CYMT, Andrew Zirschky.

Andrew has a decade of experience as a youth and college minister at churches in Idaho, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. He has a M.Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary and is currently completing his PhD there as a Timothy Scholar in Youth and Young Adult Ministry made possible by the United Methodist Foundation for Evangelism. Andrew is also ordained minister in the Church of the Nazarene.

Andrew was first introduced to Mark DeVries, our board chair, in April of 2008. At that time, Kenda Dean, Princeton's widely respected youth ministry professor, had recommended Andrew as a possible consultant for Youth Ministry Architects, a role he has served in for almost two years now. Mark said, "Not only does Andrew bring one of the most brilliant minds I've ever encountered to the task of youth ministry, he does so with such disarming humility and sensitivity that people just can't help but learn around him. I couldn't be more pleased that he'll be joining the CYMT team."

Andrew was first introduced to the work of CYMT at its first Lilly-funded Youth Ministry Think Tank in June of 2008, where Dietrich Kirk was immediately impressed by Andrew's sharp

thinking and his collaborative abilities. Within the next year, Andrew was invited to teach a CYMT class under the new partnership with Memphis Theological Seminary. And the response to his teaching from our students has been extraordinarily positive.

After Andrew's interview with the Personnel Committee and other members of the CYMT board, there was unanimous agreement that Andrew would be perfect fit for CYMT and would bring a level of academic experience and sophistication beyond that of almost every other youth ministry training organization in the country.

Andrew's role as Academic Director will be to work closely with CYMT staff and academic partners to create a curriculum that develops our students into the best theological practitioners of youth ministry in the country. Andrew will be teaching the classes at our Nashville campus and also working with our future campuses as they develop their curriculum programs as well.

"The impact of having a PH.D. on our staff cannot be underestimated. We are excited about the impact Andrew will have on our students education and know that he will be one of the important voices nationally in youth ministry education" says Dietrich Kirk.

Andrew has been married to his wife Kristina since 1995, and they have two small children, Evan and Anna. When in Idaho he enjoys snowboarding and white water rafting. In New Jersey he reads, writes, and takes an occasional jog. CYMT is anxiously awaiting their arrival in July 2010.

New Professor Brings Relevancy to Old Testament and Ministry of CYMT Students

In the Fall of 2009, CYMT's official relationship with Memphis Theological Seminary began. The campus staff was incredibly welcoming, hospitable, and accommodating to the students. The CYMT students had a very positive experience from their interactions and from their education at MTS. They took Old Testament taught by MTS Professor, Dr. Aliou C. Niang. Professor Aliou is from Senegal, West Africa. Lindsay Brooks said of Professor Aliou, "He brought a rich and unique perspective to Biblical perspective and interpretation. He also challenged us to do the same, to approach Scripture with open eyes and understand that we all have stories and lenses through which we view Scripture."

Lindsay Brooks went on to say, "Professor Aliou is intelligent, engaging, enthusiastic, and encouraging. He created an environment in our classroom for open and honest dialogue among us, the students. He also made many attempts for us to dialogue how our class discussions and learned knowledge related to our vocational youth ministry settings."

When asked what he enjoyed about the class, Curt Gardiner also responded, "In Aliou's Old Testament class, I really appreciated how much he encouraged discussion. Even when I thought that I understood, Aliou would challenge me to dig a little deeper."



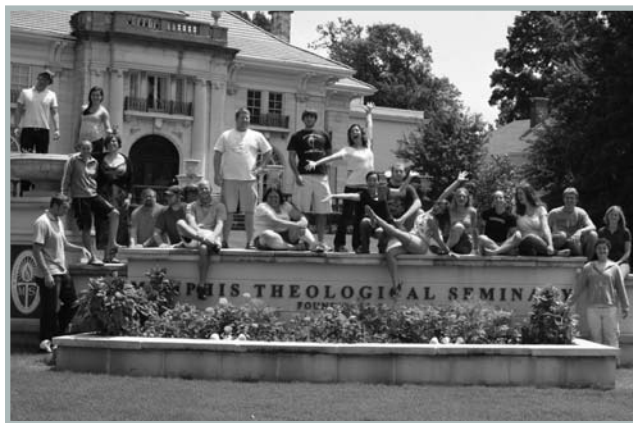
A welcomed sight upon CYMT's arrival to the Memphis Theological Seminary Campus

Lindsay said further, "I enjoyed the opportunity to not only learn, but to ask thought-provoking questions and challenges to the material. This type of learning environment that we participated in greatly parallels the type of environment that is conducive to teenagers struggling with theological questions themselves." Curt echoed Lindsay's comments with one thing in particular he will take away from class is "the understanding that it is important to raise questions about Biblical Text if we are to truly understand what is being said."

Lindsay Brooks serves as the Associate Youth Minister, Student Programming at Brentwood United Methodist Church in Brentwood, Tennessee. Curt Gardiner serves as the Youth Minister at The Episcopal Church of the Nativity in Greenwood, Mississippi. Both Lindsay and Curt joined CYMT in the fall of 2009.

Partnership with Memphis Theological Seminary Becomes a Reality

When Memphis Theological Seminary (MTS) alumnus Dietrich Kirk contacted me about a potential partnership with the Center for Youth Ministry Training, I was immediately intrigued. The more I learned about CYMT and the vision Deech had been given while still a student at MTS and the ways that vision had developed in the early years of CYMT, the more fascinated I became.



CYMT students during orientation week at Memphis Theological Seminary in August 2009

CYMT is dedicated to educating people for hands-on youth ministry.

Our mission at MTS is centered on preparing men and women for the practice of ministry. Our faculty members have over 100 combined years of direct, practical, and pastoral ministry that they bring to the classroom. Some seminaries are excellent at providing education for scholars; we see our role as education for hands-on, day to day ministry in churches and other ministry settings.

CYMT is interested in bringing together academic excellence and on-the-ground mentoring. At MTS we are intentional about combining academic work with practical mentoring, as reflected in our commitment to field education, formation, and the significant partnership with practitioners in the field. The majority of our students are in active ministry during their studies at MTS.

CYMT is committed to developing an ecumenically diverse student body. MTS has one of the most denominationally and racially diverse student populations in the nation. Though we are grounded in a particular tradition (Cumberland Presbyterian), our mission is to serve women and men from wide spectrum of Christian traditions. At any given time, we have almost thirty denominations represented in our student body.

Our partnership with CYMT has enabled us to offer a quality educational program in Youth Ministry, practically focused and tailored to the needs of churches and active youth ministers. Because of our institutional commitment to flexible scheduling based on the needs of our students, we were able to provide CYMT an academic partner to enhance their already nationally recognized program. I am convinced that God is in this, and that the future of our partnership promises the continued development of a new way of educating youth ministers who are passionate about serving young people in the name of Jesus Christ.

*Jay Earheart-Brown
President and Professor of Theology
Memphis Theological Seminary*

"Imagine...the Future" Campaign Update

Endowment Goal of \$1,500,000

Pledged to Date	\$945,700
Received to Date	\$699,540

Annual Fund Goal of \$25,000

Pledged to Date '09 - '10	\$22,000
Received to Date '09 - '10	\$5,645

The CYMT continues to be humbled by your support. In light of difficult economic times, CYMT continues to grow closer to our fundraising goals. Our initial campaign in 2007 will end this June. We have received almost all of the initial pledges in full. If your pledge is still outstanding, we will be contacting you later in the spring to let you know your pledge balance. We are planning a celebration in early fall 2010 to update our initial investors on all of the progress that we have made over the past three years.

CYMT anticipates needing 1.5 million dollars in the endowment fund and annual pledges of \$25,000 to support our ministry long term; therefore, we are planning some fundraising events this spring. If you would be interested in attending or know someone who you think would like to hear about CYMT, please let us know by contacting our office at 615.823.7595.

Thank you for your support and investment in young people's future.

Board Members



Mark DeVries, First Presbyterian Church

Overton Colton, First Presbyterian Church

Emily Eberle, First Presbyterian Church

Jim Edwards, Brentwood United Methodist Church

Dan Elkins, Brentwood United Methodist Church

Jason Fisher, Brentwood United Methodist Church

Hank Hillard, At-Large Member

Kris Lott, CYMT Alumnus

Marty Martin, First Presbyterian Church

Maral Missirian-Dill, Brentwood United Methodist Church

Crea Sielbeck, First Presbyterian Church

Amy Vaughn, Princeton Theological Seminary Representative

Fred Edie, Duke Divinity School Representative

The staff at CYMT wants to express their appreciation to Jim Perkins, Steve Bartlett, and Rob Harvey who have given of themselves to the CYMT and completed their terms on the CYMT board of Directors this year.

Kenda Creasy Dean, Associate Professor of Youth, Church and Culture Director, Tennent School of Christian Education from Princeton Theological Seminary, said after laughing with CYMT students til her side hurt, ***“Youth ministers without their students are the most fun people on the planet.”***



CYMT students, Regina Rigney, Samantha Tidball, Steph Dodge, Sara Ellet, Joanna Cummings, taking a break from their retreat this fall

The Center for Youth Ministry Training works in collaboration with Memphis Theological Seminary, Princeton Theological Seminary, and Duke Divinity School.