



Faith Formation in Christian Practices with Youth and Young Adults

Don C. Richter

The twentieth century was fascinated with the spiritual formation of youth and young adults. Not just in North America, but throughout the world, leaders of all stripes were obsessed with harnessing the power and passions of youth—for evil purposes as well as for good. If we can just get young people committed to our cause, these leaders reasoned, we can tap their great reservoir of power (*potentia*) and recruit them to suffer (*passio*) and even die for the sake of our enterprise.¹ History has confirmed that these assumptions are well founded. For better or worse, twentieth-century youth movements have defined the religious and political landscape.²

With respect to youth, the twentieth century began in 1904 with the publication of G. Stanley Hall's *Adolescence*. Hall described the teenage years as a “golden stage” of life in which the unbridled energies of youth were like a raging mountain river rushing wildly toward the sea. Drawing on the image of a dam, Hall urged society to contain, control, and channel the life energies of the young.

And so within a decade all manner of institutions sprang up to provide “holding environments” for adolescents: the high school movement, scouting, and Christian youth groups and associations. In industrialized countries the timing was optimal, as youth by the thousands were leaving the farm for jobs in the city. How convenient for industrial capitalism that an emergent psychological theory legitimated this large-scale social migration by advocating places of safe harbor for untethered teens and young adults.³

The twentieth century both idolized youth and domesticated them, putting youth on a pedestal while stripping them of rights, worthwhile work, and mature responsibilities. For millennia teenagers had worked alongside adults, contributing to their household economy and the greater social good. Now youth were socially constructed as “adolescents” and held in limbo for an extended period, at the very time of life they experience enormous physical, cognitive, and spiritual changes. With the advent of modern-day marketing and advertising in the early part of the twentieth century, youth came to be viewed as a distinct subculture, a commercial niche ripe for exploitation. The demographic bubbles reflected in the Baby Boom and Echo Boom generations each, in turn, accelerated this trend.⁴

The developmental psychologist Erik Erikson posited “identity formation” as the central task of adolescence. Writing in the mid-twentieth century, Erikson observed how teens become a substantial social

Don C. Richter is the Associate Director of the Valparaiso Project on the Education and Formation of People in Faith. He is the author of the new book, *Mission Trips That Matter: Embodied Faith for the Sake of the World*, and co-editor of *Way to Live: Christian Practices for Teens*. Don was the founding director of the Youth Theology Institute at Emory University and has taught Christian education at Emory's Candler School of Theology and Bethany Theological Seminary.

force through negotiating ideologies and values. Beliefs matter, claimed Erikson, especially in conjunction with behaviors shaped by those beliefs. Religious movements have recognized this and have long appealed to the ideological hunger of young people. Likewise, totalitarian movements—whether from the right or left, whether defiantly atheistic or stridently religious—make their primary pitch to the hearts and minds of youth. Convert young people and your project will become self-perpetuating.

The twentieth century did not end with the apocalyptic predictions of Y2K. The punctuation mark occurred on September 11, 2001, when the spiritual formation of young Islamic jihadists came to fruition. For those who consider ministry with youth simplistic or beneath their dignity or the stepping stone to *real* ministry with adults, let's be clear about what's at stake. Al-Qaeda is powerful and pernicious precisely because this organization effectively recruits and trains young people; it is an effective transnational model of youth ministry. For Christian communities and for the many moderate Islamic communities that hope to promote a different worldview, we must ask ourselves: are we prepared to invest our best time, talent, and treasure to strengthen alternative, life-giving models of ministry with youth?⁵

Faith Shapes a Way of Life

Christian faith is not an achievement but a gift, the assurance of God's saving grace through Jesus Christ. Faith is both personal (God loves and redeems me) and communal (God loves and redeems the whole world). Faith in both senses involves believing, of course. Belief, however, does not operate in a vacuum but comes to make sense in the midst of life. Life-shaping belief is dynamic; it gets reframed as individuals grow and change over the course of a lifetime. This does not happen automatically; rather, growth in faith can occur at any developmental age or stage. Some persons experience intense growth in faith during a brief period. Others may coast for a lifetime on childhood faith.

During much of the twentieth century religious educators asked: How do we teach and learn Christian faith in ways that are developmentally appropriate? This is an important question—but it is a secondary one. It is rooted in a psychological paradigm and focuses attention on the capacities of the individual learner. This question highlights the capacity of youth to think in a new key (Piaget, Kohlberg), to postpone commitments in service of a “psychosocial moratorium” (Erikson, Marcia), and

to search for personal meaning by going on a “faith journey.”

Without dismissing developmental insights, religious educators first need to ask a different question: How are Christian practices shaping a way of life within this faith community, and how do we teach all the members of this community through their participation in those practices? The practices paradigm prompts educators to evaluate the ecclesial health of a parish or congregation by paying attention to fundamental activities, such as honoring the body, offering hospitality, sharing life at table, giving and receiving forgiveness, prayer, and singing our lives to God.⁶ Evaluation questions include:

- Which practices are flourishing and seem most vital within this parish?
- How are people being initiated into these vital practices and led into deeper participation and more faithful discipleship?
- Which practices seem anemic and need a spiritual infusion?
- Where in the Body of Christ today or throughout history can we find wisdom and resources for strengthening Christian practices?

Knowing the practice profile of a parish is a crucial starting point for the spiritual formation of youth and young adults. Before inviting young people into a particular way of life we need to have some sense of what this way of life entails, and how it shapes our own daily lives as people of faith. This is not a simple or straightforward matter, for within North America myriad lifestyles compete for our loyalty. Followers of Jesus are not above the fray, for the competition takes place within each of us as well. That's why youth ministry needs to be understood as “growing in faith with youth.” Youth ministry is not something adults do to or for young people. It's something adults and youth do together, in partnership, as we congregate and as we go out into the world to serve.

Way to Live

From 2000-2002 the Valparaiso Project on the Education and Formation of People in Faith assembled eighteen adults and eighteen teens to collaborate on a writing project about Christian practices. Our goal was to produce a book for a teenage audience that would portray the abundant way of life Jesus invites us to live *now*—in our family, our neighborhood, our school, our world. Our hope was to provide substantive guidance and spiritual nourishment for teens as well as for their parents and other adults who care for them. The

resources we designed encourage adults themselves to grow in faith with youth.

As we prepared the book, our teen and adult group gathered four times for writer conferences, although we didn't jump into writing the chapters right away. First we spent time exploring different practices in small groups, considering biblical and personal stories, songs, and images related to each practice. We played and worshiped together as we became a community shaped by ongoing practices. Between meetings, we stayed in touch with other via mail and e-mail. Once we established sufficient trust, we presented drafts for mutual critique, aided by a writing coach. Our young contributors took their roles to heart, keeping teen sensibilities before us as *Way to Live: Christian Practices for Teens* took shape. When we met the final time to review our manuscript, we also planned strategies for a companion leader's guide and website.⁷

In the first chapter of *Way to Live*, fifteen-year-old Martha reflects on a mission trip with her youth group. Martha notes how a way of life unfolded for her and for her companions while on the road. Each day they cared for children and helped an elderly man clean his house. They ate meals together, read the Bible, prayed, played, and sang. They didn't worry about their appearance or who had the latest cool stuff, because they all wore work clothes and lived out of their suitcases. There were no cars, no TVs, no cell phones, no i-Pods, no e-mail, no commercial clutter. With few distractions, Martha began to notice a pattern emerging: "I was getting involved in what God was doing. It was like God was working through me to care for those little kids, who usually don't get the kind of attention I was giving them. It was like I was becoming God's hands in that place." (*Way to Live*, 2)

Back in her Midwestern home Martha finds herself yearning for the clarity of life she experienced on her trip. Sustaining her convictions seems daunting, especially given the demands of school, sports, and social life. Martha knows she can't do this by herself. She needs companions—trusted adults as well as teens—to continue the journey with her and hold her accountable. She suspects and hopes that the church might offer such support.

Exploring Practices in Context

Way to Live shares reflections on what teen-adult teams discovered as together we explored Christian practices. Note first the emphasis on seeking local knowledge. Readers may be inspired, for instance, by

what WTL authors have to say about the practice of "managing our stuff." Yet our formation as Jesus' disciples always occurs in specific times and places. So "managing our stuff" will take a different shape and prompt a different call to discipleship in urban Los Angeles than in rural Iowa. *Way to Live* resources challenge youth and adults to go out and explore practices for themselves in their own local settings.

On the other hand, some features of "managing our stuff" will be similar across contexts. Consider how Christians throughout history have struggled mightily to be faithful stewards of their material resources, and how their efforts might help us resist the worst impulses of global consumer culture. Young people today don't have to reinvent the wheel or figure out how to do this from scratch. They can seek wisdom as embodied in the life and witness of forbearers such as third-century teenager Anthony of Egypt or thirteenth-century young adult Francis of Assisi. In the company of wise adults, they can learn from contemporary faith communities that share a rule of life how to manage and regard their material possessions.⁸

Household Wisdom

Young people yearn for trustworthy guidance in living wisely. Now and then they may act like rebels without a cause for the sheer sake of bucking authority. But most of the time young people crave sustained, meaningful relationships with adults who will care for them and nurture their hopes and dreams. This is a second and crucial emphasis of *Way to Live*: adults and teens grow in faith as we share life together. A group of teens led by one or two adults can explore the practice of "managing our stuff" up to a point. But engaging in this practice with an equal number of youth and adults makes for deeper exploration; it makes transparent to youth how adults discern their own participation in this practice. Why is this so?

Adults typically determine the rules for how household stuff is managed. Gospel wisdom addresses both explicit and implicit rules governing the full range of household activities, from sharing food to exchanging gifts to caring for clothes. Teens and their parents can grow in faith together as they practice good stewardship in managing their stuff. They can acknowledge the household as a pivotal locus for lifelong spiritual formation.

The importance of the parental household is corroborated by a key finding of the recent National Study on Youth and Religion (NSYR): teens identify their parents as the single most significant influence

in their religious and spiritual lives.⁹ While parents look to the parish to teach their young, teens look to their parents for cues about a life of faith.¹⁰ Most teen respondents characterized themselves as religious even though they don't think practicing religion requires belonging to a local faith community. Religious teens appreciate parish life, and seventy-five percent of those who do attend worship services find them "warm and welcoming." Yet even churchgoing teens believe faith is more a matter of personal choice than communal affiliation.¹¹

Sound familiar? Religious teens are highly conventional in their beliefs—conventional in that their worldviews correspond to the worldviews of their parents. This allegiance to parental worldview lasts at least through the first year of college.¹² Few teens described themselves as "spiritual seekers" or "spiritual but not religious." What teens reported in the NSYR surveys and interviews by and large reflects what their parents believe. Again, this study underscores the vital importance of youth and adults—especially parents—growing in faith together. Today the most effective approaches to ministry with youth build-on youth-adult partnership rather than age segregation.

In the ten years since its publication, *The Godbearing Life* has sparked renewal for many youth leaders by emphasizing the spiritual formation adults need as they minister with youth. Adults often feel inadequate and self-conscious about their lack of biblical and theological knowledge. What teens need from adults, claim co-authors Kenda Dean and Ron Foster, is not more information. What they need is to know what and whom adults love. When youth leaders convey that they love God, and invite youth to join them in loving God, teens will go in search of whatever additional information they need. When we love someone that's what we do; we find out all we can about that person.

In *Contemplative Youth Ministry*, Mark Yaconelli summons the entire congregation or parish to pay careful attention to young people in order to serve with them in ministry. Yaconelli counsels adult leaders to resist the latest youth ministry fads and program ideas. Instead, classic contemplative disciplines of prayer and meditating on Scripture open the eyes and ears of adults to discern what God is calling them to do with young people in their care—not just parish youth but every young person who might be considered a neighbor to the parish.

From Program to Practice

In many North American congregational religious education is chiefly driven by *program management*. The professional church educator, including the youth minister, is viewed as a program director or coordinator of parish programs. "A program is a list of events to be performed, a plan of activities to be accomplished" (Foster, 29). The program paradigm appeals to our desire to organize, schedule, compartmentalize, and offer a range of choices for consumption in the religious marketplace. "Program options emphasize personal choice, often without criteria to assess the relative value of the options offered" (Foster 29). The monthly church calendar shows meetings and events, typically clustered on Sundays and perhaps Wednesdays or other weekdays. Sometimes this calendar is shaped by rhythms of the liturgical year; more often it is shaped by school and vacation schedules as well.

In some churches, leaders are promoting a shift from program to practice. Rather than viewing parish life as a series of episodic and disconnected events, church educators and youth ministers are guided by an overarching vision of how practices nurture and sustain faith, of how practices anchored in worship flow into the world and throughout daily life.

Maria Harris, a religious educator of blessed memory, described how classic forms of Christian communal life—*kerygma*, *didache*, *diakonia*, *leiturgia*, *koinonia*—provide a framework for faithful ministry with youth. Harris redefines these early church terms in relation to contemporary teenagers. For instance, she describes *kerygma* as "the ministry of advocacy" and *diakonia* as "the ministry of troublemaking." *Portrait of Youth Ministry* is still as relevant for prophetic, life-giving youth ministry today as it was when Harris penned it almost three decades ago.

In *Black and White Styles of Youth Ministry*, William Myers presents contrasting portraits of two Protestant youth ministries. St. Andrew's Church is an affluent, mostly white Presbyterian congregation in suburban St. Louis. Grace Church is a large, black, south-side Chicago congregation affiliated with the United Church of Christ.

At Grace Church the entire congregation assumes leadership for nurturing youth in faith. Every fifth Sunday the youth at Grace Church lead the entire worship service, including the sermon. Grace youth are (explicitly) taught that church is like *family*, and that survival depends on cooperation and mutual aid. For young people at Grace, the goal is to become

competent adults by resisting forces within the dominant culture.

At St. Andrew's Church, youth are provided programs directed by designated youth leaders. St. Andrew's (implicitly) teaches that church is like a *corporation*, and that success comes to those who compete well as rugged individualists. Youth are taught to become competent managers by learning to adapt to the dominant culture.

Myers's comparison of St. Andrew's and Grace shows what's at stake in the paradigm shift from program to practice. The contrast prompts questions as we evaluate our current youth ministry: What explicit and implicit formation goals does our parish hold for young people? Are these goals more akin to those of Grace Church or to those of St. Andrew's? What would it take for our youth ministry to become more courageous, more challenging, to adopt an alternative way of life?

Honoring the Body

Grace Church proclaims itself "unapologetically black and unashamedly Christian." The story of African slavery in the Americas is a story of people struggling to maintain human dignity in the face of massive oppression and humiliation. Slavery also perpetuates dishonoring the body through internalized shame and oppression. The antidote to this legacy of self-loathing is a healthy sense of pride and the practice of honoring the body. To honor the body is to respect the sacred vulnerability of oneself and others, to see every body as created in the image of God.

The Valparaiso Project describes faith practices as "embodied wisdom," to distinguish our approach from "spiritual practices" that ignore the body. Young people, especially youth of color, harbor the suspicion that Christianity is more concerned about saving their souls for the world to come than redeeming them *body and soul* for life in this world. Youth need more than well-intended slogans such as "just say no" or "true love waits." They need a capacious practice of honoring the body grounded in the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation, bolstered by theological scaffolding provided by Paul's insistence that human bodies are "temples of the Holy Spirit," beloved by our Creator (see 1 Corinthians 6:12–20).

Sharing life at table is a palpable practice for honoring the body. Food plays a pivotal role in founding stories of Judaism and Christianity; indeed, the Church began as meal fellowship. In my home congregation we have Sunday dinner each week following worship. Parishioners come from

throughout metropolitan Atlanta, so breaking bread together provides time and space to reconnect. Some teens dine with their friends while others sit with their families—perhaps a rare occasion given their weekly schedules. College students and single young adults are grateful for this food and fellowship opportunity. It's the best meal in town for five dollars! People who live on the streets find their way to the buffet line and appreciate the warm meal and words of welcome. Every Sunday young people witness these gestures of ecclesial hospitality and learn how they too can be more involved in this graceful activity.

Several congregations have made table fellowship the centerpiece of their ministry with youth. Matt Smith drew on insights from *Way to Live* to develop a model of youth ministry called *Grace Café* for United Methodist congregations in Davis and Sacramento, California. Supplied by local sustainable food producers, youth prepare weekly meals for themselves and various guests—some nights for presenters and some nights for street people.

Tina McCormick is associate pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Westfield, New Jersey. Tina coordinates Agape Community Kitchen, an outreach ministry that prepares and serves a nutritious meal every Wednesday night to 250 people in the nearby town of Elizabeth. Young people started and continue to lead this soup kitchen ministry, which also provides a clothing closet where guests can receive blankets, clothes, and shoes. Even teens and adults who aren't Presbyterian participate weekly, drawn into an activity that feels worthwhile, that matters, and that makes a difference in the world. What began as a hands-on service opportunity has become a weekly, way-of-life priority that, over time, forms participants in practices of offering hospitality, breaking bread, and seeking justice. Gospel stories and images emerge organically as youth and teens stir chili, wash dishes, and listen to the testimony of guests. As Tina says, "Our hope is to spread God's love and grace, create community with our neighbors in Elizabeth, and develop in our youth and adult volunteers a lifelong commitment to mission work."

From Disciples to Apostles

Rodger Nishioka, a longtime teacher in youth and young adult ministry, recounts a conversation with Suzanne, a thirty-year-old aeronautical engineer who wondered what God was calling her to do with her life. Suzanne recalled going on a mission trip during her high school years, where she felt fully alive

teaching the kids of migrant farm families in central Washington. Nishioka observes that over the course of those days, the young people on that mission trip “were not being *entertained* by high-powered glitzy presentations or *protected* from the world or focused internally on *fellowship* with each other or experiencing the *maintenance* of a holding pattern until they were ready for ministry. In those days, these young people were being the church. They were being *disciples* of Jesus, and Suzanne had recognized and claimed those days as a touchstone of significance and meaning in her life of faith.” (Nishioka, 25)

Suzanne and her mission team companions were also being formed as Jesus’ *apostles*, or sent ones. From its conception the holy catholic church was being sent even as it was being gathered. Jesus called disciples and sent them out two by two to minister in his name, even before they grasped the full scope of his mission (Mark 6). In his parting words before ascending into heaven, Jesus commissioned his band of followers into God’s larger mission activity: “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Mission is not an optional or exceptional aspect of the church; being sent is as constitutive an activity of the church as congregating.

At its best, the modern short-term mission trip can be viewed as evidence of ecclesial vitality, a recovery of the church’s apostolic calling. Mission trips can also be faith-centering experiences for the millions of teens and young adults who annually embark on them.¹³ And youth leaders find that they have more contact hours with their group on a mission trip than during the other weeks of the year combined.

In *Mission Trips That Matter*, I claim that mission team members (youth and adults) often return home experience-rich yet reflection-poor. Our temptation is simply to consume the experience, for North American culture teaches us to consume things and to define our worth by what and how much we consume. If we are going to invest considerable time, talent, and treasure in planning and leading a mission trip, we need to mine the experiences that occur on such outreach ventures. The more our hearts and minds are shaped by biblical and liturgical imagination, the more connections we notice as the larger story of our mission trip unfolds.

What we learn on mission trips is that we do not presume to bring Christ to others. Rather, as we literally walk with another and accompany that person in faith, we both encounter Christ joining us

on our way, often unexpectedly.¹⁴ The best framework for mission trips is ongoing reciprocal partnership so that everyone gets a chance to serve and to be served, as befits Christian hospitality. Cultivating a culture of mission doesn’t just mean sending folks out; it also means receiving mission teams. Every parish building ought to have a shower to accommodate overnight guests. Youth will enjoy hosting mission teams from other communities. Visiting teams can help us see mission opportunities we’ve missed right in our own backyards.¹⁵

New Monasticism for Young Adults

Young adults are acutely aware that Christian faith ought to shape a way of life. Drawing on wisdom as ancient as the Rule of Benedict and inspired by the witness of Catholic Worker Houses and programs such as the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, twenty-somethings and thirty-somethings are establishing intentional Christian communities around the country, often by taking up residence in “the abandoned places of empire.” This ecumenical movement is organized under the banner The New Monasticism Project, chartered by publications such as *School(s) for Conversion: 12 Marks of a New Monasticism*.

Disciplines of grace are revealed as young adults share a life together shaped by *ora et labora et scriptura* (prayer, work, and Scripture). They attempt to resist the fragmentation of life by integrating the daily work of farming, cooking, and cleaning with disciplines of prayer, studying Scripture, feasting, and fasting. Houses typically include celibate singles and monogamous married couples and their children. Many locate in large urban centers, where power and powerlessness intersect, and go by names such as Sojourners Community, The Simple Way, The Open Door, Mercy Street, Reba Place Fellowship, Jonah House, Camden House, and Rutba House.

Anathoth Community Garden is an outreach ministry of Cedar Grove United Methodist Church, a rural congregation in the Piedmont region of North Carolina. Participants in this ministry do not share a household; rather they share a commitment to the practice of gardening on a cultivated plot of land. Anathoth daily demonstrates fidelity to place, sustainable agriculture, care for creation, and Christ’s ministry of reconciliation across racial, economic, and political lines. Young adults, seminarians, and college summer interns are enthusiastic supporters of Anathoth, and a prophetic

teaching ministry has sprouted from the good seed of this garden.¹⁶

Not every young adult can join an intentional residential community or plant a community garden. But parishes can actively sponsor local initiatives that embody Christian faith as a challenging and worthy adventure. Parishes can also recruit and send out young adults in mission for the sake of the world. University Presbyterian Church in Seattle has been sending out college students on summer missions for fifty-three years. To date, over 1,000 students have participated in the World Deputation program, serving in over forty foreign countries and twenty states in the U.S. This congregation leads the Presbyterian Church (USA) in calling young adults into ordained ministry. It offers an instructive lesson for all parishes and communions that seek to nurture leaders for lifelong faith formation and service in the church.

Hopeful Practices

Ministry that encourages disciples to discern their *vocation*—their life calling—can liberate teenagers and young adults to be the persons God calls them to be. Cultural scripts and socially defined roles must still be negotiated, but young disciples can be set free within the context of these scripts and roles to fashion their own personhood as followers of Jesus. The way of life God sets before us will not be scripted except by the liberating word of Scripture as interpreted by communities of practice, accountability, and care. These communities practice their faith as improvisational theater, with Jesus onstage as a companion actor. Youthful actors contribute their distinctive charisms of power and passion as they practice their faith, performing the gospel in the world.

Christian practices require improvisation and adaptation in every age, by every successive troupe of actors. Those who gain skill and confidence in the practices also experience them as *means of grace* by which God sustains us throughout our earthly pilgrimage. Young persons are eager to apprentice themselves to mature practitioners, and we have emphasized how crucial it is for adults to collaborate with youth and young adults as together they grow in faith.

We want young people to seek out strong faith communities wherever they venture in this world. Yet we adults need this confidence and this resilient faith in our own lives. So all the while we're building that "field of dreams" for the sake of others, in the end we realize that we're building it for our own sakes—and our own redemption as well.¹⁷

End Notes

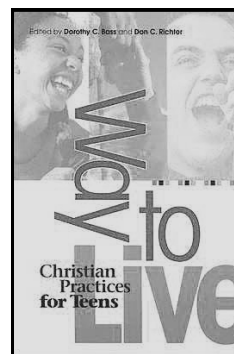
- ¹ Kenda Creasy Dean presents the most thorough discussion of passion in relation to youth and the life of faith in *Practicing Passion* (Eerdmans, 2004).
- ² Political movements in which young people played a pivotal role include the Hitler Youth (fascism), the Khmer Rouge (communism), and the U.S. Civil Rights Movement (democratic reform).
- ³ David White provides a concise overview of the social construction of adolescence in "The Vocation of Youth...As Youth," *Insights*, Vol. 123, No. 2, Spring 2008, 3-12.
- ⁴ Demographers group the Echo Boom generation as the age cohort born between 1980-2000, offspring of the Baby Boom generation born between 1946-1964.
- ⁵ Eboo Patel, founding director of the Interfaith Youth Corps, describes his youth ministry as a life-giving alternative to al-Qaeda in *Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim, the Struggle for the Soul of a Generation* (Beacon Press, 2007).
- ⁶ In our work we define Christian practices as "things Christian people do together over time to address fundamental human needs in the light of and in response to God's grace to all creation through Christ Jesus." For more background on this approach see www.practicingourfaith.org
- ⁷ *Way to Live: Christian Practices for Teens*, edited by Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter (Upper Room Books, 2002). Youth leaders report that the WTL Leader's Guide is an invaluable resource for suggested learning activities exploring Christian practices. For a free downloadable guide see www.waytolive.org. Note that this website is not simply an online reproduction of the book but is itself an engagement with Christian practices by a group of teens in an actual high school setting.
- ⁸ See *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*, by Christine Pohl (Eerdmans, 1999).
- ⁹ See *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers*, by Christian Smith and Melinda Lindquist Denton (Oxford University Press, 2005), 261.
- ¹⁰ Divorce poses a formidable challenge as the fractured parental household disrupts the continuity of everyday practices for teens. Teens must often fend for themselves in sustaining practices in the midst of chaos. See Elizabeth Marquardt, *Between Two Worlds: The Inner Lives of Children of Divorce* (Crown, 2005).
- ¹¹ See *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers*, by Christian Smith and Melinda Lindquist Denton, 72-81.

- ¹² Tim Clydesdale, *The First Year Out: Understanding American Teens after High School* (University of Chicago Press, 2007).
- ¹³ See *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers*, by Christian Smith and Melinda Lindquist Denton, 53-54.
- ¹⁴ The Emmaus Road story in Luke 24 portrays how Christ accompanies disciples on the road as they are walking together.
- ¹⁵ The Christian Vision Project, in cooperation with *Christianity Today*, has filmed a documentary on “round trip missions” that features a mission team from Chapel Hill, North Carolina partnering with a mission team from Nairobi, Kenya. The film and companion curriculum will be published in October 2008.
- ¹⁶ Fred Bahnson, master gardener and resident theologian, has published essays grounded in the experience of Anathoth Garden. “Compost for the Kingdom” appeared in the September 5, 2006 issue of *The Christian Century*. “The Field at Anathoth: How a Garden Becomes a Protest” appeared in the July/August 2007 issue of *Orion Magazine*. “The Salvation of the City: Defiant Gardens in the Great Northern Feedlot” is a chapter Fred contributed to *Places of God: Theological Conversations with Wendell Berry*, edited by Joel Shuman (University of Kentucky Press, 2007).
- ¹⁷ This is the lesson Ray Kinsella learns in the film *Field of Dreams* when he builds a baseball field on his Iowa farm. At first he’s convinced the field is for Shoeless Joe Jackson and the Chicago White Sox players who were banned for throwing the 1919 World Series. Later it is revealed to Ray that the field is for his own healing as well.

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Way to Live: Christian Practices for Teens

Dorothy Bass and Don
Richter, editors.

(Nashville: Upper Room
Books, 2002)

Written for teens by teens and adults, Way to Live presents eighteen ancient Christian practices that provide ways for young people to deepen their awareness of God in their lives and in the world, and practice their faith in daily life. The eighteen practices include: The Story, Bodies, Stuff, Food, Creation, Creativity, Work, Play, Time, Truth, Choices, Friends, Welcome, Forgiveness, Justice, Grieving, Music, and Prayer. A free study guide is available from: www.waytolive.org.

Like its parent book Practicing Our Faith, this book advocates a set of Christian practices that are crucial to human well-being and that, together, shape a life well lived. Reflecting on and growing stronger in such practices, teens encounter the possibility of a more faithful way of life, one that is both attuned to present-day needs and taught by ancient wisdom. To deepen their insights and ground their images, adult authors partnered with teenaged colleagues throughout the planning and writing of Way to Live.

www.waytolive.org