

20



25

RALEIGH EVENT GUIDE

EVENT SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

MONDAY- April 28, 2025

Event Times: 2:15 PM to 9:00 PM (Eastern Time Zone)

- 11 AM to 2 PM – New 2 Ministry Pre-Conference with [Amanda Mejias](#) and [Chad Higgins](#)
 - 50 Spots Available, Lunch and resources provided. Register for this as part of your YPS Registration.
- 2:15 PM – Registration
- 2:30 PM – Doors Open
- 3:00 PM – Mainstage Session Block One
 - Worship with Luke Clevenger
 - [Dr. Jeff Wallace](#), To AI or Not to AI?
 - Illusionist [Jared Hall](#)
 - [Dr. Kathy Koch](#), Created to Be
- 5:30 PM – Dinner break on your own
- 6:45 PM – Mainstage Session Block Two
 - Worship with Luke Clevenger
 - [Chuck Peters](#), 5 Enormous Needs of Gen Z & Gen Alpha
 - [Alex Nsengimana](#), Samaritan's Purse
 - Illusionist [Jared Hall](#)
 - [Shane Pruitt](#), What We Teach About Jesus Matters
- 9:15 PM – Conference Dismissed

TUESDAY- April 29, 2025

Event Times: 8:00 AM to 3:30 PM (Eastern Time Zone)

- 8:00 AM – [Youth Ministry Booster](#) Coffee Fellowship for Early Risers
- 8:30 AM – Registration/ Doors Open
- 9:00 AM – Mainstage Session Block Three
 - Worship with Luke Clevenger
 - [Drew Worsham](#), Art of Story Telling
- 10:40 AM – Leadership Lab Session A
- 11:40 AM – Leadership Lab Session B
- 12:30 PM – Lunch provided by event sponsors
- 1:30 PM – Mainstage Session Block Four
 - Worship with Luke Clevenger
 - [Dr. Robert Smith](#), The Gospel is Still Enough
 - Illusionist [Jared Hall](#)
 - [Dr. Derwin Gray](#), Lit Up with Love
- 3:30 PM – Conference Dismissed

EVENT OVERVIEW

Youth Pastor Summit is a two-day conference that brings together student pastors, educators, and volunteers into one room to foster **collaboration, community, and soul-care**. It is a direct response to the growing need for people to pour into this generation.

As Student Leadership University trains up the next generation, we increasingly recognize the exponential impact that the leaders have on these students. YPS gathers thousands of leaders from across their regions of the country from 30+ denominations and movements. Each YPS includes mainstage sessions and leadership labs. This year, we will host spring YPS events in SoCal, Dallas, Nashville, and Raleigh and introduce the first ever YPS National in Orlando, Florida this fall.

We bring in some of the world's best student ministry minds, communicators, and practitioners to address four foundational and ever-present questions:

1. **Spiritual Formation:** Who are we becoming?
2. **God's Mission:** What story is God telling?
3. **Ethics:** How should we think?
4. **Leadership:** Why and how do we influence?

GENERAL INFORMATION

Venue & Parking Notes:

SEVEN MARKS CHURCH
3500 Spring Forest Road, Raleigh, NC 27616

Important Parking Notes: Let's Be Good Neighbors!

We are so excited to have you join us for YPS Raleigh, at Seven Marks Church. As we prepare to welcome you, we kindly ask that you review the following **parking guidelines** to help us be respectful neighbors and ensure a smooth experience for everyone (the church is located in a busy shopping area). We also suggest that you allow for extra time to find a parking spot and if you can carpool with your team, that would be great!

1. **Please avoid parking at the surrounding banks or across the street**, especially the Wells Fargo lot, as these spaces are not affiliated with the church and are needed for regular business operations.
2. **You may park in front of the building**, but please be mindful to avoid the clearly marked spots designated for **KlayStation** and **The Teach Me Store**, the church's neighboring businesses in the same complex.
3. **Additional parking is available:**
 - *Behind the **church building*** in both the upper and lower lots, including along the grass berm—double parking is permitted along the side of the building if needed.
 - *In **"the Square,"*** the lot directly behind Wells Fargo (accessed via Leigh Drive). Please park around the perimeter and leave the center open for the taco truck that operates there.
 - *Along **Leigh Drive*** itself, which has wide and accessible curbside parking.
 - *At **Home Depot***, located just behind Seven Marks Church.

What to Pack: Make sure to pack a pen, notebook & a bottle of water for you to have during the conference.

Meals: Dinner on Monday is on your own. Take advantage of restaurants close to the church as traffic could get bad around 5, and you will want to make it back in time our evening session! Lunch will be provided on Tuesday. Make sure to stop by our sponsor tables and say thanks!

Registration: In order to expedite your registration and to minimize gathering in the lobby, please bring a copy/screen shot of your registration in one of the forms below. Having one of the options above will ensure a smooth check-in for you and your team the morning of the event. **Registration Proof (any of the options below will work):**

- Printed Copy or Screen Shot of your Registration Email
- Printed out or/Screen Shot of your registration account with YPS Raleigh Listed – you can access this from here:
<https://events.circuitree.com/studentleadership/Account/Login/?returnUrl=%2Fstudentleadership&skip=False>

Wristbands: You will receive a YPS wristband when you check in. You must wear this for the duration of the event as it is your access into all sessions and meals.

TUESDAY LEADERSHIP LAB DESCRIPTIONS

Leadership Labs (breakout sessions) are designed to inspire and equip you and your team. We encourage every participant to take full advantage of the practical and relevant training sessions the labs will provide. Make sure your group splits up and attends as many lab sessions as possible on Tuesday.

10:40 AM BREAKOUT LABS

Lab 1 in The Main Room

Dr. Kathy Koch: *Founder of Celebrate Kids*

Building Resiliency: Dr. Kathy defines resiliency and speaks into how pastors and churches can build resiliency in their students.

Lab 2 in Studio 4

Chad Higgins: *Student Ministry Specialist for Lifeway, Co-Founder Youth Ministry Booster*

Unlocking Parent Ministry – Practical Solutions for Stronger Family Engagement: Explore strategies to bridge the gap between church and home, equipping parents to be the primary discipler of their kids.

Lab 3 in Studio 1

Dr. Jonathan Denton: *Assistant Professor of Christian Studies/ Student Ministry at CSU*

StudentX - Charging into the Future of Youth Ministry: In this breakout session, we will explore how to develop a compelling vision to impact this generation and beyond, assemble a dynamic team to bring that vision to life, and execute it with excellence at every opportunity to engage and empower.

Lab 4 in Studio 3

Ryan Jackson, *Youth Pastor at Carmel Baptist Church*

Empowering Influence: Whether you are leading a ministry of 1,000 students or 10, providing leadership opportunities helps them to find a place to belong and gives you the opportunity to disciple along the way. Learn how to develop and entrust student leadership teams to discover and share their giftedness through serving in the Church.

11:40 AM BREAKOUT LABS

Lab 1 in The Main Room

[Jason Jimenez](#), *Founder and President of Stand Strong Ministries*

Challenging Conversations: Speaking the Truth in Love with those that disagree with you: Many Christians avoid tough conversations with people who see the world differently. This often stems from social anxiety—worrying about saying the wrong thing or losing control. That fear can feel paralyzing, leading to awkwardness or retreat. **Challenging Conversations** is about building the confidence and skills to engage respectfully, even when uncomfortable. In this breakout, we'll discuss the common reasons people hold back, share simple techniques for managing fear, and offer biblical advice for turning difficult moments into meaningful dialogue.

Lab 2 in Studio 4

[Ryan McDermott](#), *Teaching Pastor & Executive Director of Family Ministry at Christ Fellowship*

Alpha Brain? News headlines have labeled Gen Alpha as "Feral, illiterate, and doomed," but we are seeing something else entirely. Let's examine the latest faith-based research to understand what is really happening in this.

Lab 3 in Studio 1

[Chris Brown](#), *Brand Owner and Content Editor, Lifeway*

The State of the Bible and the Future of Youth Ministry: Bible literacy is vital for true discipleship. The number of scripturally engaged teenagers is declining, and the rising levels of anxiety, depression, and identity issues among this generation are cause for concern. We need a solution! This session will explore the direct relationship between engaging with Scripture and boosting emotional well-being. Our aim is to provide practical insights and foster meaningful discussions on supporting teenagers in today's world.

Lab 4 in Studio 3

[Daniel Rose](#), *Student Ministry Strategist for NC Baptist*

Developing Volunteer Leaders: Your effectiveness and productivity in ministry are directly related to your ability to raise up leaders. Come learn practical guidelines to recruit, develop, and retain high-capacity leaders for your student ministry. This session will empower you to fulfill Ephesians 4:12 by equipping the saints for ministry.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the New 2 Ministry Pre-Conference Gathering at YPS?

Get what you need before the conference even starts! A 3-hour lunch and learn for those who are New2Ministry (2ish years or so). A roundtable session that is wildly practical, conversational, pro-active, and specifically tuned to set up you, a new-ish youth ministry leader with an action plan for how to better build a healthy ministry. Our friends at Lifeway Students want to connect and equip you with the strategy and stuff you need to lead well now. You can sign up for this as part of your regular YPS registration. Space is limited to 50 people.

Is YPS really only \$15?

Yes! Through the generosity of Lifeway Students and other sponsors, this conference is being provided for only \$15 to all advanced registration attendees who register two weeks in advance, \$20 for those under the two-week window, \$25 at the door (if the event still has space). Lunch is provided, but you are on your own the rest of your meals as well as lodging if needed.

How can I qualify for exclusive YPS benefits and make my YPS experience better?

Launching in 2025, membership has its privileges at YPS! YPS attendees have the opportunity to become a YPS Pioneer or YPS Champion and earn special perks for their YPS experience. The SLU team will email attendees directly once they qualify.

- **YPS Pioneer:** Are those that attend YPS in the spring and YPS National OR attend any YPS and refer 3 new churches. Have your friends enter your name in the referral field when registering. We'll also reach out to you with a form so that you can provide us the information of who you've referred.
 - Benefits of General Admission plus...
 - FREE Content to host a student weekend event emailed directly to you including:
 - Themed artwork
 - Opener video + slides
 - Sermon manuscripts
 - Comprehensive leader guides
 - Digital attendee booklet
 - Small group discussion questions
- **YPS Champion:** Are YPS Pioneers that also attend an SLU event in 2025 with your students.
 - All Benefits of Pioneer Status plus...
 - 15% discount on resources & custom merch at YPS and YPS National
 - On-site membership perks at National:
 - Special State of the Youth Ministry Document
 - VIP Onsite Registration Line & Early entry door
 - Exclusive Champion wristband
 - Special onsite lunch and lounge

Who should attend YPS?

Youth Pastor Summit is geared to all youth pastors and key youth leaders (staff or volunteers). It is also open to Christian educators. **All attendees must be 18 years or older.**

Can my spouse attend?

Of course! We love when couples do ministry together. Make sure you register them so that they are guaranteed a spot. Each attendee of YPS must be registered for the event and each attendee must register with their unique email address.

I have a small child; can they attend with me?

We think families are great and time together is important. However, this event is **only for those who are 18 and older** and who have graduated high school. We want everyone to have the best experience possible at this event, so please make arrangements to leave your children at home or arrange childcare outside of the conference.

Can I transfer my ticket to someone else?

If you are registered as a group, we will do a one-time transfer of any of your participants, without penalty. Transfers are not available on individual registrations. This one-time transfer must occur a minimum of ten business days before the event. To make a transfer on your account, email us at yps@studentleadership.net from your group leader's email indicating the individual(s) you are canceling and the name, email, and DOB of the new registration(s). We will only make a transfer(s) on each group registration one time, and once you have made a transfer, your group is then finalized.

