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The New Rhetoric of Youth Ministry



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Surprisingly, despite the litany of crises that ushered in the twenty-first century, the rhetoric of despair that once mainline Protestant youth ministry shows signs of softening. This article traces three developments that have gathered thirty years to set the stage for a rhetorical change of heart surrounding youth ministry. Today's conversation about youth ministry aligns itself with practical theology as well as Christian education, claims as its context global postmodernity as well as its curriculum as the spiritual practices of the Christian community, and not simply as youth programs. Armed with this context, and a broader curriculum, the present discourse surrounding youth ministry suggests an emerging "rhetoric" that will redefine the church as well as youth ministry itself.



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