



YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT  
**MINISTRIES**  
✧ Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast ✧



SMALLER CHURCH COHORT COACHING PLAN

## WHAT IS THE COHORT/COACHING PLAN?

This program has been designed by Ministry Architects and The Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast to help parishes produce healthy, sustainable ministries by strengthening the lay leaders and staff within their congregation, designing a ministry plan, and growing congregational support of the targeted ministry. It is not a cookie cutter approach, but rather one designed to build systems and processes within each ministry at each church's optimal level.

Ministry Architects is the nation's leading provider of church consulting. Ministry Architects partners with churches and their leaders, working alongside key stakeholders – including rectors, associate clergy, staff, parents, and students – to customize strategic plans for building successful and sustainable ministries.

### HOW CAN A CHURCH PARTICIPATE?

We are aiming for 10-15 churches to begin the process in January. Churches interested should contact the Rev. Molly Payne-Hardin at [mollypaynehardin@icloud.com](mailto:mollypaynehardin@icloud.com) or Bishop Kendrick at [russellediocgc.org](http://russellediocgc.org). Churches that meet the criteria for this program have:

- Clergy support of the ministry by being an active part of the cohort process.
- Team members who will calendar the four onsite days and make them a priority.
- Team members who will come to each onsite day with their "homework" done.
- Team members who will bring a laptop or tablet for the tech portions of the training.
- Team members who make a commitment to the coaching calls by calendaring them and being available for the calls.
- Team members who commit to the reading plan.

## WHAT ARE THE STEPS?

- A) SHARED LEARNING EXPERIENCES
- B) TELEPHONE COACHING
- C) ON-LINE MINISTRY ASSESSMENT

### A) SHARED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Each church establishes a team of 4-5 members (including key volunteer leaders and the rector) who meets with other teams from other churches from within the diocese for four learning sessions led by Melissa Rau, Lead Consultant, Ministry Architects. This experience will help your team learn key concepts and best practices in developing sustainable ministries.

### The One-Year Scope and Sequence

- Thriving Ministry in Small Churches: What's happening statistically, assets and challenges, achieving that precious critical mass, etc.
- Volunteer Development: How to recruit, maintain, and fire volunteers.
- The Vision: mission statements, core values, target audience, 3- year goals, 1-year benchmarks, next steps, YM org chart.
- "Great Leaders Are/Aren't": Adult/Student Leadership Training.
- Making it R.E.A.L.: Teaching Tips and Classroom Management.
- Creating a Christian Formation Path: Ages & Stages, Milestones, Core Competencies.
- Squaring the Corners: The systems EVERY ministry must have!
- Healthy/Unhealthy Boundaries.

### Each session will consist of:

- "Tribe Time"—Small groups mixed from all the churches that will stay in the same small group for the course of the year.
- "Team Time"— Each church ministry will review the learning agenda for the day and determine their goals for "take-aways."
- "Tech Time"—A quick lesson in technology for making each ministry more organized and cloud-based.
- "Teaching Time"—The meat of the day's learning and what the follow-up coaching will be based on.
- "Take-Away Time"—A moment to decompress at the end of the day where next steps are determined.

When/Where  
are the  
sessions?

**Where will the sessions be?**

Locations are To Be Determined

**When will the sessions be?**

January 13  
April 7  
August 18  
October 13

Sessions are held from 9:00 a.m.  
to 3:00 p.m. Lunch and snacks  
are included.

## What Happens Between Sessions?

Each participant on the team will read a book that pertains to session topics. Each church team will meet at least once at their church between each session to debrief the session, discuss the reading, and to see how each person is doing at applying the concepts personally. A one-hour phone coaching session will be scheduled each month (between session months). Sustainable Youth Ministry, Thriving Youth Ministry in Smaller Churches, Smaller Church Youth Ministry, and 99 Thoughts for the Smaller Church Youth Worker are just a few examples of the types of the required reading.

## B) TELEPHONE COACHING

Each team will receive six coaching calls (one hour of phone coaching each month between the onsite months) from Melissa Rau, the Ministry Architects Small Church Expert.

The calls will be pertinent to each church's specific ministry context and will help churches apply what they've been learning during the onsite training days. Generally, the coaching agenda will include a check-in, celebrate something great, debrief the topic from the last onsite day, discuss any pressure points the church might be facing, and assign next steps.

Teams will sign up for coaching times through [doodle.com](https://doodle.com) or some other online scheduling app.

If a team doesn't "show up" for the call or cancels last minute, the diocese still pays for the call. So for good stewardship, it's best to keep the scheduled call or reschedule at least 24 hours in advance. Otherwise, the church may get billed for the missed call.

## C) ON-LINE MINISTRY ASSESSMENT

Each church will receive a link to an online multi-user survey that will indicate areas of strengths and weaknesses. This will be reviewed with each church and the Ministry Architects coach.

### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

This year-long process will help each church:

- Deepen each leader's understanding of important ministry concepts and practices.
- Develop vision and clarity for ministry in their congregation.
- Develop a plan for ministry that is fruitful and sustainable.
- Equip laity and develop a strong volunteer team.
- Incorporate children and youth into the life of the church as leaders.
- Build a strong culture of call within the ministry.
- Expand or strengthen its ministry outreach efforts.
- Develop a ministry administrative plan (budgeting, calendaring, database, etc.)
- Equip leaders to lead meaningful gatherings and studies.
- Create a ministry discipleship plan.
- Evaluate staffing (paid and volunteer).

### WHAT IS THE COST?

The cost will be \$250.00 per church and this offsets the cost of the materials, as well as a set of the books to be used, and the session manual. Each church should pay this fee in full upon registering.

### QUESTIONS?

For any questions about how the cohort will work please contact:

- The Rev. Molly Payne-Hardin at [mollypaynehardin@icloud.com](mailto:mollypaynehardin@icloud.com) or
- Melissa Rau at [melissa.rau@ministryarchitects.com](mailto:melissa.rau@ministryarchitects.com)