



Wondering where your life is going? Want to gain some direction while making a difference in the world?

Through a placement experience, retreats at Five Oaks and conversation with a mentoring elder participants will deepen self-understanding, increase passion for social justice and gain direction in their lives.

Launch! is a program for young adults, ages 18-25, to:

- Be exposed to life changing opportunities.
- Connect with community.
- Develop leadership skills.
- Learn about social justice.
- Engage in theological reflection.
- Discern life's calling.

There are four main aspects to **Launch!**:

- 1. Placement:** Participants will be placed in a United Church Outreach Ministry within Southwestern Ontario (such as Wesley Urban Ministries in Hamilton) for 4 days a week. The participant will gain hands-on experience, develop life skills and participate fully in the work of the ministry. The exact tasks will depend on the nature of the Outreach Ministry and will be decided in consultation with a Supervisor. This Supervisor will also give guidance to the participant related to their work and will provide the participant with education and resources pertaining to social justice and community action.
- 2. Engagement in Community:** Participants will commit 1 day a week to making a connection with the local community surrounding the Outreach Ministry. This may mean participating in the life of a congregation or volunteering with an organization.
- 3. Mentoring:** Participants will meet with a Mentoring Elder over the course of the program. The Mentoring Elder will reflect with the participant about meaningful experiences in their placement setting and will be available to talk with the participant about an emerging sense of call for their life's work.
- 4. Retreat:** *Launch!* will also include retreats at Five Oaks Education and Retreat Centre for orientation, training, reflection, renewal and program evaluation. These retreats will give participants the opportunity to meet one another, to integrate the learning that has occurred, and to experience the importance of spirituality.

For More Information:
Email: launch@united-church.ca

Other important information about *Launch!*:

Dates:

The program will begin with orientation on **January 7, 2009** at Five Oaks Education and Retreat Centre in Paris, Ontario. The program will end on **May 22, 2009**.

Housing:

Participants who require assistance with housing during the program will be placed with a billeting family.

Participants who already live close to the Outreach Ministry where they will be working and who are able to support themselves financially are welcome to choose their own living arrangements.

Cost:

Launch! is highly subsidized and will cost participants nothing. In fact, a *modest* stipend will be provided to participants to honour their work and to help cover basic living necessities.

How to Apply:

1. Fill out the application package (go to www.fiveoaks.on.ca, click on Programs and click on Launch Application Forms) and return by October 15, 2008.
2. Applicants will be notified of a possible interview in the two weeks to follow.
3. Notification of acceptance will be given by November 10, 2008.



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Launch! is a new initiative of the United Church General Council and Five Oaks Education and Retreat Centre. This first phase of *Launch!* will be a demonstration project to evaluate all aspects of the program. It is our hope that *Launch!* will become an ongoing program starting in 2010.

The demonstration project is planned and supported by a Design Team whose members include:

Andrea Buttars (Wesley Urban Ministries)
Amy Crawford (General Council)
Rick Garland (General Council)
Adam Mason (Member at Large)
Diane Matheson (Five Oaks)
Robin McGauley (Five Oaks)

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