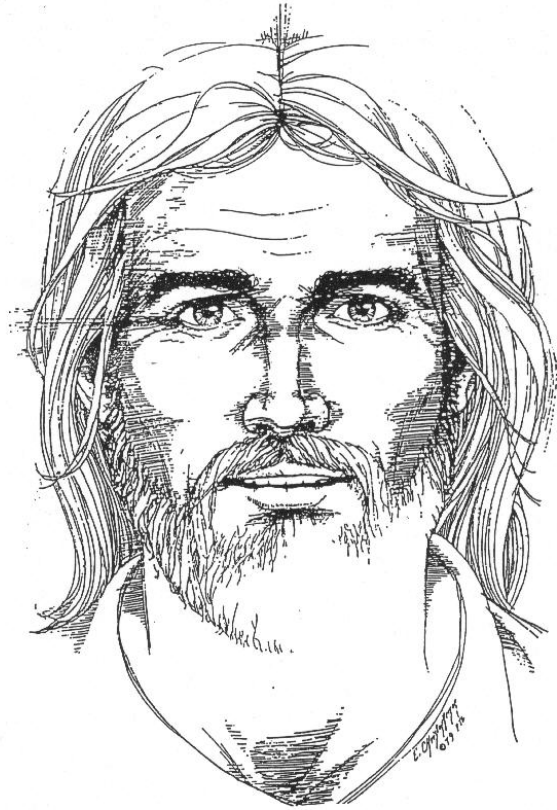


Ministry Excellence

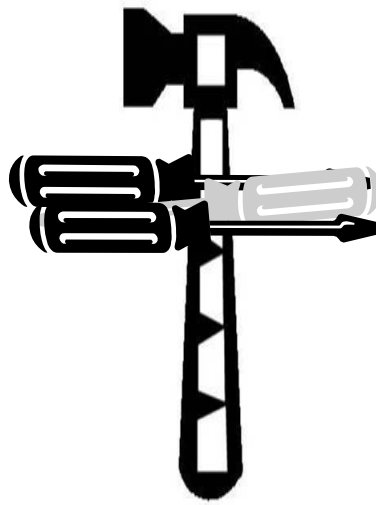
A Set of Tools for
Congregational
Ministry



**Central Illinois
District**

**1850 North Grand Avenue West
Springfield, Illinois 62702
(217) 793-1802**

cidlems@cosine.com



Dear Fellow Youth Leader,

You have been blessed by Jesus Christ with a unique ministry with the youth of your congregation. We are pleased to support you with **"Youth Ministry Excellence"** ~ A Set of Tools for Congregational Youth Ministry." We hope and pray that the materials in this notebook will assist you as you serve in youth ministry.

We have chosen a notebook format so that we can update materials periodically, both as new ideas and new trends in youth ministry come along. We encourage you to make good use of the ideas in this notebook. We also encourage you to come up with your own ideas...and to share them with us!

We give credit and thanks to God for the work of Lee Belmas, Youth Ministry Advisor for the Department of Youth Ministry, North Wisconsin District, whose work inspired this packet.

Don't wait to get started...or to improve your youth ministry. It is always a good time to take a good look at your youth ministry and think about ways to better serve your young people and provide them with opportunities to grow in and live out their faith in Jesus Christ.

We pray that God will bless you with a growing ministry to and with youth into the future!

In Christ's Joy,

The Youth Committee
Congregational Life Commission
Central Illinois District
Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod

Youth Ministry Excellence

A Set of Tools for Congregational Youth Ministry

The tools in this notebook are designed to assist adult leaders in planning and goal setting within their congregation's youth ministry. The tools can be used by the pastor, professional youth worker and the volunteer adult leader.

TOOLSET #1

The first toolset is divided into four levels of achievement containing twenty-two individual goals. Each set of goals leads to a more challenging level of achievement. As each level is attained, a congregation's youth ministry is given an

"Award of Excellence"

The first award is a framed certificate recognizing the congregation's efforts in developing their youth ministry. As subsequent levels are achieved, additional awards will be added to highlight the ministry being accomplished by the congregation. This first set of tools can take up to one year to complete. Some groups can complete these goals in less time. There is a check-off part in each level for a group to use to monitor its progress. When a level is completed, that page should be copied and mailed to...



Glenn W. Goeres
Central Illinois District - LCMS
1850 North Grand Avenue West
Springfield, IL 62702

After reviewing the level, the congregation's youth ministry will then receive their specific "Award of Excellence." A review consists of making sure each goal has been checked and evidence provided as needed. The congregation is encouraged to display their award in a highly visible area where it can be a constant reminder that youth ministry is alive within the parish.

TOOLSET #2

The second toolset provides numerous ideas for a congregation's youth ministry. They are organized based on the **FIVE FUNCTIONS OF MINISTRY** (*see pages 10-12 in TOOLSET #1*) This toolset can be added to and removed throughout the years, depending on the times and needs within a youth ministry. There are no awards associated with this toolset, just a variety of ideas for consideration. Use them to the best of your ability.

TOOLSET #3

The third toolset includes several leadership development resources for adults and youth who serve as leaders within youth ministry.

Youth Ministry Excellence is designed to involve youth and adults together in ministry. Each will have the opportunity to take on responsibility through positive leadership roles. Youth Ministries will be challenged by these tools and will learn in the process that youth ministry is more than just a "youth group." They will learn that ministry can be done in many ways and is done for one purpose: to serve and glorify our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and to tell the whole world about Him.

Central Illinois District Youth Ministry Consultant Service

? Need some assistance with Youth Ministry in your church?

? Want some good advice and direction on the best ways to serve within youth ministry?

☺ Then maybe you're ready for a Youth Ministry Consultant!

The Central Illinois District Youth Committee wishes to support you by providing you a short-term consulting service directly related to your church's youth ministry.

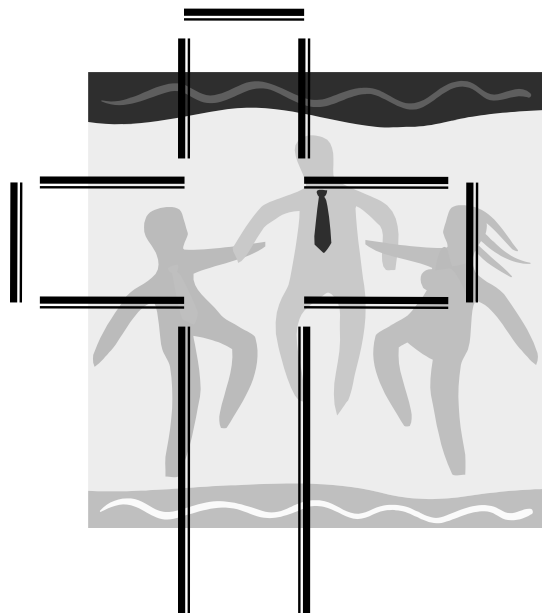
The Purpose of the CID Youth Ministry Consultant is to provide information, to communicate ideas and resources and methods of acquiring resources, to an individual church to equip them for growing youth ministry.

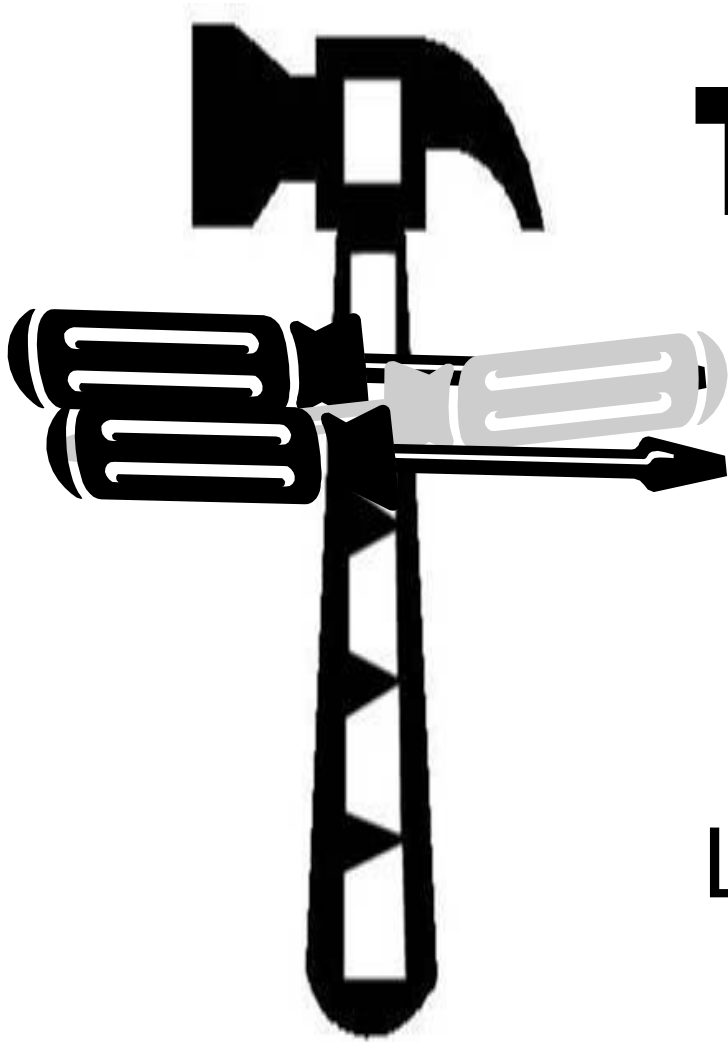
The Consultant's task is to assist a committed congregation, equipping them for growth in youth ministry with resources, leadership training, and strategies. The congregation is expected to do the work for itself. The Consultant will have materials and provide guidance and follow-up.

Consultants will be growing experts in the practice of youth ministry in their churches. They might be DCEs, pastors, teachers or even experienced adult lay leaders.

There is a fee for this service. Consultants are paid \$10.00 per hour plus mileage based on I.R.S. standards. The congregation will be responsible for payment for resource materials provided.

If you are interested in this service, please call the CID Office (217-793-1802) and ask for Glenn Goeres.





Toolset

1

Levels and Goals

Awards for Excellence will be given based upon a congregation's achievement of the goals and levels on the following pages.

Level I

Award

A framed certificate will be given to your youth ministry upon completion of the first four goals.

Goals

- 1) Write a purpose statement for your youth ministry. Use the **EASY PLANNING METHOD (1ST STEP)** on *page 8* for suggestions on how to develop and write a purpose statement.
- 2) Name your youth ministry ~ Remember to "Keep it Short & Simple".
- 3) Meet at least two times the first month.
- 4) Conduct a local servant event project within your church.

Goals & Levels Check Off

Within each level the **Goals** may be accomplished in any order, at any time of the year. Levels must be completed in order, though, as each level depends on the one preceding it. When you are finished with a level, check the appropriate blanks and write a few words explaining how you accomplished each goal. When you have completed each level, photocopy that page and send it into the CID Office. When each level is reviewed, you will be sent you the appropriate recognition award.

Level I ~ Goals Check Off

- ☐ Purpose Statement
- ☐ Group Name
- ☐ Meeting Dates
- ☐ Servant Event

Comments:

Level II

Goals

- 1) Plan the first 3 months activities on paper, using the **EASY PLANNING METHOD** on *page 8* or use your own method. Meet at least seven times during these three months.
- 2) Prepare a youth budget consistent with your purpose statement for the upcoming year and present it to your youth board, council, ministry teams, etc.
- 3) Group participates in a one-day fellowship event.
- 4) Conduct a local servant event project in your community.
- 5) Challenge another group in your circuit to a game.

Level II ~ Goals Check Off

- ☐ Plan the first three months of activities; meet at least seven times during these three months
- ☐ Prepare a youth budget
- ☐ One-Day Event
- ☐ Servant Event
- ☐ Challenge another church in your circuit to an activity

Comments:

Level III

Goals

- 1) Plan the next four months activities on paper, using the **EASY PLANNING METHOD** on *page 8*. Meet at least nine times during these four months.
- 2) Recruit young people to consider serving as a professional church worker.
Suggestions include:
- 3) Conduct a topical study outside the church
- 4) Conduct another local servant event project in your community.
- 5) Sponsor a Confirmation Party welcoming the confirmands into the youth group.
- 6) Plan to or actually participate in at least one Central Illinois District Youth Event.

Level III ~ Goals Check Off

- ☐ Plan the next four months of activities; meet at least nine times during these four months
- ☐ Professional Church Work Recruitment activity
- ☐ Topical study outside the church
- ☐ Conduct a servant event
- ☐ Confirmation Party
- ☐ CID Youth Event

Comments:

Level IV

Goals

- 1) Plan the five remaining months activities on paper, using the **EASY PLANNING METHOD** on *page 8*. Meet at least 11 times during these five months.
- 2) Plan to or actually participate in a LCMS national event
- 3) Conduct a youth night on stewardship.
- 4) Pick a book of the Bible and do a study of it.
- 5) Participate in a worship service with the consultation and guidance of your pastor.
- 6) Conduct another local servant event project in your community.
- 7) Conduct an end of the year celebration for your high school graduates or just have an end of the year party.

Level IV ~ Goals Check Off

- ☐ Plan the five remaining months' activities; meet at least eleven times during these five months
- ☐ Participate in a large group activity
- ☐ Stewardship Youth Night
- ☐ Book of the Bible in-depth study
- ☐ Participate in worship
- ☐ Service activity
- ☐ End of year celebration

Comments:

EASY PLANNING METHOD

Planning is a very important aspect in any organization. In order for a youth group to move ahead, you need to know where you are going. The following is a guide to assist you in planning.

Each step is listed in a suggested order. If you see a need to switch a step around, feel free to do what will work for your group. The whole process revolves around the needs of the youth. It is important that youth have the majority of input in this planning process, helping out when there are questions and making sure that the ideas brought up are realistic for your group.

Following is the easy-to-administer approach to planning:

1. **Develop and write down a Purpose Statement.** A purpose statement will show your group why it exists. Try to use 25 words or less with your final statement.

Here is one way to develop a **Purpose Statement**.

- a. Divide your group into small groups of two or three each. Select a recorder for each group (*person whose birthday is closest to today*). Each group is to come up with a list of seven words or phrases describing why they come to youth group or church (*i.e. fun, to be with friends, mom makes me come, food, learn about God, etc.*). You may also want to share with them as a resource the “**Five Functions of Ministry**” (three copy-ready sheets on *pages 10-12*). This resource is helpful in the discussion. Give them 3-5 minutes to come up with their list.
- b. Come together as a large group and share your lists, writing down each response on a whiteboard or newsprint. After all have shared, go over the master list and combine ideas that mean nearly the same thing.
- c. From the remaining words or phrases on the list have them develop a purpose statement. Start with the following words: “The purpose of (*your church name*) Lutheran Church Youth Group is to...” Share the sample purpose statements with them so they can get an idea of what you are looking for.

Here are some sample purpose statements:

- Through God’s Word and Sacraments, Trinity’s youth and adults worship, grow and serve in faith, witness of God’s love, and support and encourage one another.
- Our purpose is to equip youth to praise and honor God with their lives, reach others in friendship and help in the work of the ministry that we have been called to.
- Redeemer’s youth ministry exists to **R**each non-believing students, to help all students **H**onor God with their lives, to **C**onnect them with other Christians, to **G**row them in their faith, and to challenge the growing to **D**iscover their ministry.
- The purpose of Trinity Lutheran Youth is to KNOW, LOVE & SHARE Christ!!
- Faith Lutheran Youth is to go expand our Christian fellowship and strengthen our faith in Christ in a positive atmosphere through serving, outreach and spiritual growth.

2. **Select a Monthly Bible Study Topic.**

Here is one way to determine ideas for Bible study.

- a) Use the ***TOPICAL BIBLE STUDIES SURVEY*** on *pages 13-14* or develop one that best fits your situation. Explain that you are going to see where the youth’s Bible study interests are by having them circle or check off between 10-15 ideas on the survey. They do not have to give their name on their sheet. Blank spaces are provided for them to write in topics not included on the list. Encourage them to write in their own ideas.

- b) After the youth have completed the survey, collect them and have your adult helpers or youth leaders tabulate the results. Write down all the results on a whiteboard or newsprint, including how many youth chose each idea. Discuss any trends. Decide as a group which 10-15 Bible study topics ideas they wish to use during the year.

3. Develop a **Master Activity Ideas List**.

Here is one way to select activities.

- a) Hand out small sheets of paper and pencils/pens to each youth. Have them write down five activity ideas they would enjoy being involved in throughout the year.
- b) Have the youth share each of their ideas one at a time. Write them down on newsprint. Put checkmarks by duplicate ideas. Ask for clarification about an idea, but do not go into detailed planning about each activity idea. Don't forget to write down traditional activities your youth group does (Easter Breakfast, car wash, helping with a Confirmation Banquet, having a Sub Sale for Super Bowl Sunday, going on a Campout, delivering Thanksgiving Baskets, etc.).
- c) Now, write across a blackboard or on newsprint each month you are planning for. A blank sample **Monthly Youth Calendar** is on pages 15-20. Have the youth help assign ideas to various months. Have youth volunteer to assist an adult leader with leading each activity.
- d) At a separate time someone in your group should create a calendar of Bible study topics and scheduled activities to be distributed to every youth family. Give a copy to your church office.

Activities are a good time to witness to our faith in Jesus. Activities are also a good time to include a devotion and prayer. It is important for God's young people and adults to always keep in mind that it is God who brings us all of these good gifts.

This **EASY PLANNING METHOD** works very well for groups that make an effort to follow through with their plans. Using real life issues in your plan will make God's Word come alive for youth and adults in a day when we are torn in many directions.

If you need resources for any of the topics that are chosen, or ideas and support to help you in your planning, check with the Central Illinois District Office.

FIVE FUNCTIONS OF MINISTRY*

The Central Illinois District Youth Committee takes into account these Five Functions of Ministry as it plans its events. These five functions, with the accompanying servant leadership ideas, help provide balance within a youth ministry. Events/Activities planned to support these functions should be guided and reviewed by the pastor and/or other professional church worker. Below is a description of each:

WORSHIP – The group gathers together to praise God, to pray and to sing hymns and songs. They gather around the Word to hear the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper may often be a focal point of a youth group's worship experience.

Servant Leadership Ideas

- Young people may serve as leaders by serving on the worship committee:
 - ✓ Submit ideas from fellow youth to the committee.
 - ✓ Volunteer to help carry out creative ideas.
 - ✓ Visit other congregations and glean worship ideas from them.
- Youth may serve as leaders by using their talents in creative worship:
 - ✓ Make banners and other worship "decorations."
 - ✓ Write and perform music for worship services.
 - ✓ Write and perform dramas and skits in worship settings.
- Young people may serve as leaders for Sunday worship:
 - ✓ Greet worshippers as they arrive at church.
 - ✓ Bake the bread used for communion.
 - ✓ Assist with ushering tasks.
 - ✓ Tape the service and share the tapes with shut-ins or elderly persons who might not otherwise be able to get to church.
 - ✓ Prepare special youth-led worship services.
 - ✓ Prepare the church bulletin.
 - ✓ Read scripture.

NURTURE – Nurture is growth, education if you will. Opportunities are provided for youth to grow spiritually and personally. Nurture activities may include Bible Study, special presentations by guest speakers, topic discussions, rap sessions, etc.

Servant Leadership Ideas

- Young people may serve as leaders in youth Bible study activities:
 - ✓ Offering topics which relate the Bible to young people.
 - ✓ Offering creative and innovative study opportunities.
 - ✓ Organizing group Bible Studies apart from Sunday morning.
 - ✓ Directing special study opportunities to unchurched youth.
- Young people may serve as leaders in adult Bible study activities:
 - ✓ Offering adults the same creative and innovative Bible studies.
 - ✓ Offering intergenerational opportunities for youth and adults to study together.
 - ✓ Youth and adults team teaching together.

WITNESS – Group members are given the opportunity to learn how to share their faith. They have the opportunity to share with those who do not know Christ and also to reach out to the young members of their congregation who are not a part of the on-going youth activities of the parish. Also, members participate in the support of the on-going mission activity of the larger church, especially through their support of special mission projects.

Servant Leadership Ideas

- Young people may serve as leaders in reaching out to all the young people who are members of the congregation:
 - ✓ Develop a roster of all young persons who are affiliated with the congregation.
 - ✓ Invite each one personally to youth activities and worship, both through mailings and individual personal contact.
 - ✓ Follow up on the kids who have attended, make them feel welcome and encourage them to come back again.
 - ✓ Individual “active” youth “sponsor” inactive youth, making special effort to get to their youth events and to church.
- Young people may serve as leaders inside and outside the church:
 - ✓ Attend an OAF (Ongoing Ambassadors for Christ) event.
 - ✓ Invite non-members to both church-related and non-church activities.
 - ✓ Follow up on non-members who have not been attending church.
 - ✓ Encourage school friends to join in church related events.
 - ✓ Advertise church events in public places like video game rooms, fast food restaurants, school bulletin boards (*where allowed*), etc.
 - ✓ Advertise upcoming events well in advance so people can make plans.

SERVICE – Service is doing for others; motivated by and modeled on Christ’s example as He cared for people in need. Service is sharing time, energy and experience inspired by Christ’s love for us.

Servant Leadership Ideas

- Young people may serve as leaders by meeting the needs of people in their communities:
 - ✓ Identify specific needs of the elderly, infirmed, shut-in, the homeless and other persons in need and finding ways of helping them out.
 - ✓ Greet new people in the community and making them feel welcome (*a congregational “welcome wagon”*).
 - ✓ Provide an information service handout for people with questions about where to seek help in your community.
 - ✓ Invite people to join in youth activities and programs.
- Young people may serve as leaders by communicating with their church on a regular basis:
 - ✓ Plan youth activities well in advance and in conjunction with the church calendar.
 - ✓ Inform the church membership/council of upcoming youth activities, specific needs and expectations of the events.
 - ✓ Report on the outcome of the events, evaluation and projection for future.
 - ✓ Accept the critique and suggestions of the congregation for future planning.

FELLOWSHIP – Fellowship is being together, enjoying each other, being involved in any variety of activities with fellow believers. Fellowship can happen in highly structured activities or an informal coming-together. Fellowship is caring for each other, affirming each other, and celebrating each other. Fellowship is a legitimate activity of a Christian youth group.

Servant Leadership Ideas

- Young people may serve as leaders by welcoming and caring about everybody:
- ✓ Know who all the young members of a congregation are.
- ✓ Regularly invite all youth to youth events.
- ✓ Offer opportunities for all generations represented in the church to get together.
- ✓ Regularly attend church events (*i.e., worship, Bible Classes, church suppers, special events/anniversaries, etc.*)
- ✓ Plan a variety of fun activities, look for new ideas while continuing to use the successful activities of the past.
- ✓ Keep everybody up-to-date on what's happening where and when.

**Developed by the former Board for Youth Services, St. Louis, MO with leadership ideas used with permission from the Ohio District Youth Committee.*

TOPICAL BIBLE STUDIES SURVEY

Directions: Have youth circle or check off 10-15 topics/Bible study ideas they are interested in. Collect the sheets and have youth tabulate the top ten vote getters. While there are lots of ideas listed here, you are encouraged to add your own at the end.

| | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Abortion | Brothers | Dating Depression | Forgiveness |
| Abstinence | Bulimia | Death | Friends |
| Abuse | Care-Giving | Decency | Future |
| Acceptance | Celebration | Demons | Gangs |
| Adoption | Change | Devotion | Girlfriend |
| Adultery | Cheating | Dignity | Glue Sniffing |
| Adversity | Choosing Friends | Discipleship | Goals |
| Affirmation | Christian Music | Discouragement | God's Call |
| Age to start dating | Christmas | Divorce | Going steady |
| AIDS | Church Dropouts | Doctrine | Gospel |
| Alcohol | Cliques | Doubt | Gossip |
| Aloneness | Commitment | Drugs | GPA |
| Angels | Communication | Drunkenness | Grace |
| Anger | Community Service | Easter | Grandparents |
| Anorexia Nervosa | Compassion | Eating disorders | Grief |
| Arguments | Competition | Elderly | Handicaps |
| Athletics | Complexion | Environment | Hell |
| Attitudes | Conflict | Eternity | Holy Spirit |
| Bad habits | Conscience | Euthanasia | Homosexuality |
| Behavior | Cooperation | Everlasting Life | Hospitality |
| Belonging | Creation | Evil | Hunger |
| Bible Study | Criticism | Failure | Hypocrites |
| Bitterness | Crying | Faith | Idols |
| Boasting | Cults | Falling in Love | Impatience |
| Born Again | Cussing | Family | Insecurity |
| Boyfriends | Dancing | Fear | Jealousy |
| Breaking up | Dares | Feelings | Jehovah's Witness |
| Jesus | Opportunities | Temptation | |
| Jewish | Pacifism | Time Management | |
| Joy | Partying | Tithing | |
| Judgment | Peace | Trust | |

| | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Justice | Peer Pressure | TV Evangelists |
| Latchkey Kids | Perfection | Unchurched |
| Laughter | Pornography | Unconditional Love |
| Law | Power of God | Values |
| Leadership | Prayer | Vices |
| Listening | Pregnancy | Violence |
| Loneliness | Questions | Virginity |
| Looks | R-Rated movies | Volunteering |
| Love | Relationships | War |
| Lust | Repentance | Weekends |
| Lyrics of Songs | Resurrection | Weight Loss |
| Making a Difference | Sacrifice | Winning |
| Materialism | Salvation | Witnessing |
| Me-ism | Satan | World View |
| Mercy | School | Worship |
| Miracles | Self-Esteem | Younger Siblings |
| Missions | Sex | Zealousness |
| Money | Sexual jokes | Zits |
| Moods | Shoplifting | YOUR IDEAS |
| Mourning | Sin | <hr/> |
| Movies | Smoking | <hr/> |
| Music | Spiritual Gifts | <hr/> |
| Neglect | STD's | <hr/> |
| New Life | Step-Parents | <hr/> |
| Nuclear War | Suicide | <hr/> |
| Nurturing | Swearing | <hr/> |
| Occult | Teachers | <hr/> |
| Older Friends | Television | <hr/> |

Monthly Planning Calendar

January _____

Worship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Nurture (topic):

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Service:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Witness:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Fellowship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Traditional Activities:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Monthly Planning Calendar

February _____

Worship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Nurture (topic):

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Service:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Witness:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Fellowship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Traditional Activities:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Monthly Planning Calendar

March _____

Worship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Nurture (topic):

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Service:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Witness:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Fellowship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Traditional Activities:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Monthly Planning Calendar

April _____

Worship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Nurture (topic):

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Service:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Witness:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Fellowship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Traditional Activities:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Monthly Planning Calendar

May _____

Worship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Nurture (topic):

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Service:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Witness:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Fellowship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Traditional Activities:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Monthly Planning Calendar

June _____

Worship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Nurture (topic):

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Service:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Witness:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Fellowship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Traditional Activities:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Monthly Planning Calendar

July _____

Worship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Nurture (topic):

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Service:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Witness:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Fellowship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Traditional Activities:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Monthly Planning Calendar

August _____

Worship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Nurture (topic):

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Service:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Witness:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Fellowship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Traditional Activities:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Monthly Planning Calendar

September _____

Worship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Nurture (topic):

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Service:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Witness:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Fellowship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Traditional Activities:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Monthly Planning Calendar

October _____

Worship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Nurture (topic):

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Service:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Witness:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Fellowship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Traditional Activities:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Monthly Planning Calendar

November _____

Worship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Nurture (topic):

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Service:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Witness:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Fellowship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Traditional Activities:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Monthly Planning Calendar

December _____

Worship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Nurture (topic):

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Service:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Witness:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Fellowship:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Traditional Activities:

Volunteer Leaders: _____

Candy Bar Personality

✓ *Baby Ruth*

You can be sweet and loving. You love warm, fuzzy items...but you can be a little nutty.

✓ *Milky Way*

You can be adventurous. You love new ideas and are willing to try new things...but you can be a little spacey.

✓ *Hershey's Chocolate Bar*

You care about other people and can be counted on in a pinch...but you tend to melt when things get hot.

✓ *3 Musketeers*

You can be a champion of underdogs and a slayer of dragons...but when tempers flare up, you over-react and whip out your saber.

✓ *Butterfingers*

You can be smooth and articulate. You can be eloquent in a debate...but you can't walk and talk at the same time.

✓ *Almond Joy*

You are very energetic and really enjoy life. You find joy in everything...but you would rather be a beach bum.

✓ *Pay Day*

You love sports. You prefer play, but you also like to watch...but you don't like to lose control or give up the remote.

✓ ***Snickers***

You can be fun and playful. You love a good joke... but others should be careful shaking hands with you.

✓ ***Reese's Peanut Butter Cup***

You are a very funny person. You like to laugh and to make others laugh... but your sense of humor is somewhat bizarre.

✓ ***Kit Kat***

You are intelligent. You are very independent. You would rather be by yourself... but all of life is passing you by.

✓ ***100 Grand***

You are willing to work hard for what you want. You are self-sufficient and clever... but nobody's perfect!

✓ ***Heath***

You are a traditionalist. You don't like changes; you have a set routine... but you were once a rebel yourself.

Icebreakers/Games

Name Tags: everyone creates their own name tags, with not only their name but another piece of information about themselves, or a picture depicting a passion of theirs.

Lineup: Everyone lines up in order by: birth date, month, year; height; shoe size; alphabetically first name, last name; etc.

Map It: have a map of the US/world on the wall. Have everyone pin place of birth; wish to visit; favorite vacation; etc.

Name Game: Divide group into 2 teams. Use a sheet/blanket to separate the teams. Each team decides which person will stand, when the sheet is dropped, that person shouts out the other person's name. If they know each other fairly well, use other challenges, such as: birthday, favorite subject, favorite band, etc.

Clusters: Youth mill around until a number is called; they cluster into a group of that number. Keep the groups moving, calling new numbers frequently.

M & Ms: each color is assigned a topic, such as red is friends; yellow is family; green school, etc. Everyone receives a handful of M & Ms, and then as they identify each color, they state something they are thankful for with that color.

Childhood Revisited: How long has it been since you colored, cut shapes, glued papers, etc. Provide a supply of school supplies, let the inner child out.

Creative Box: Bring several boxes with various supplies in each box. Such as pipe cleaners, paper clips, straws, sheets of paper, rubber bands, popsicle sticks, spools, etc. Each team is given one box and are required to use the items in the box to design a bridge, a tower, a car, a boat, etc. Have a competition, such as: tallest tower, strongest bridge, fastest car, etc.

Intro Bingo: Have a BINGO card divided up into grids. Each person creates categories, such as "Born in May", "Vacationed in TX", "Born in CA", "Can recite all the books in the NT", etc. Find someone who can initial a category. The first to fill the card BINGOs.

The Artist: Line up chairs, all facing same direction. The person in the back has a piece of paper and a pencil. The person in the front is facing a simple drawing. The front person describes, bit by bit, the drawing to the person in back of them, they pass on the information to the next person, and so on and on until the artist in the back has completed the drawing. Then see if the drawing looks anything like the original. Make it a team competition. Each team looks and describes the same drawing, which team is done first? Which looks like the most like the original?

Train Wreck: Youth sit in chairs that are set up in 2 rows with space between each chair. One person is "It". That person calls a category, such as: wearing yellow, brown hair, wearing sandals, etc. The youth fitting that category must jump up and change chairs with another person in that category, while "It" tries to take a chair just emptied. The last person standing is "It".

Deck of Cards: Each card in the deck is assigned a question, such as: K: What is your favorite food? Q: What is your favorite song? As each person draws a card they answer the question assigned.

4 Square: Each corner of the room is set up 1 – 4. A question is asked, with 4 possible answers. Each person must choose 1 answer and go to that corner. Good way to see who shares opinions, likes, dislikes with you. Examples: “After a long day, I like to...” 1. Watch TV; 2. Hang out with friends; 3. Go for a walk; 4. Eat. “The one thing I would not get along without is...” 1. Indoor plumbing; 2. MP3 player; 3. TV; 4. Junk food.

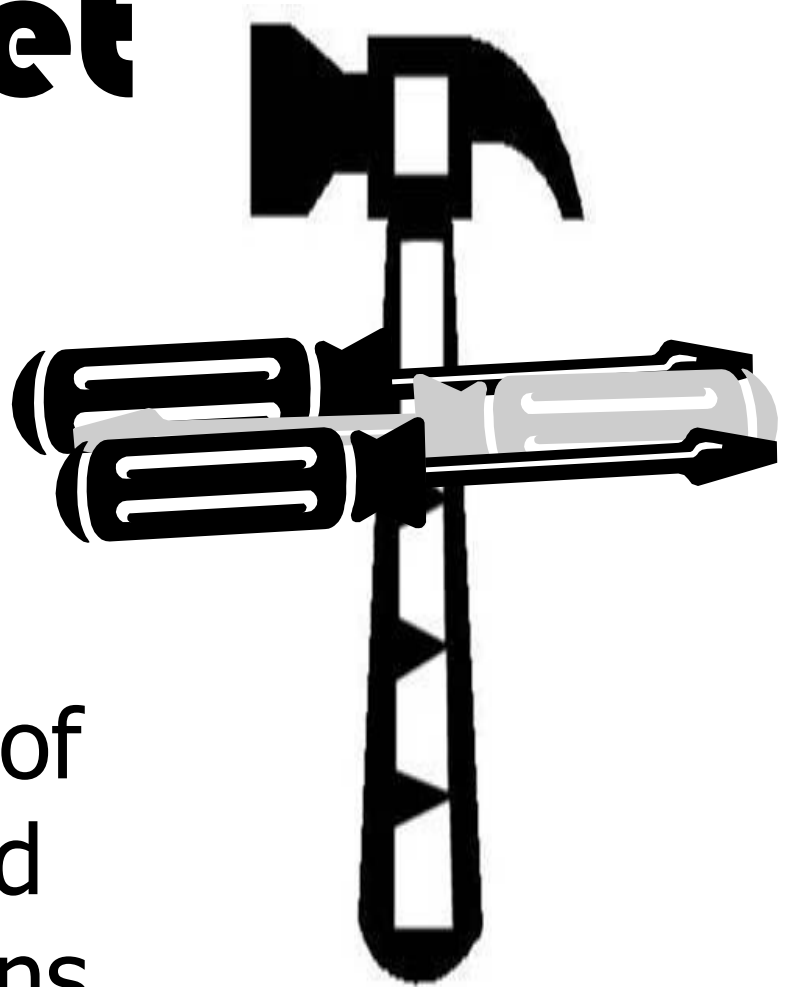
Paper Wars: Divide up into 2 teams, each team selects a King or Queen. Provide lots of newspapers to each team. The team creates “Bomb” from the paper. Object of the game is to try to dislodge the paper crown off the opposing teams King/Queen.

Broom Hockey: Everyone brings rollerblades and broom. Divide up into teams, provide a soft ball. Object of the game is to use the brooms to push the “puck” past the other team into their goal.

Ultimate Frisbee, Basketball, Football: Divide into 2 teams. Pass the Frisbee, or whatever, to the others on your team. Movement is only allowed if you do NOT have the Frisbee. Object is to get your Frisbee to your goal, make the basket, or whatever.

Toolset

#2



A Variety of
Ideas and
Suggestions

The following pages may be added to or removed based on the times and the needs of your ministry.

helping teens learn

by Lee Belmas

Have you ever wondered why people like children's messages? Why do you remember what was said during those short messages?

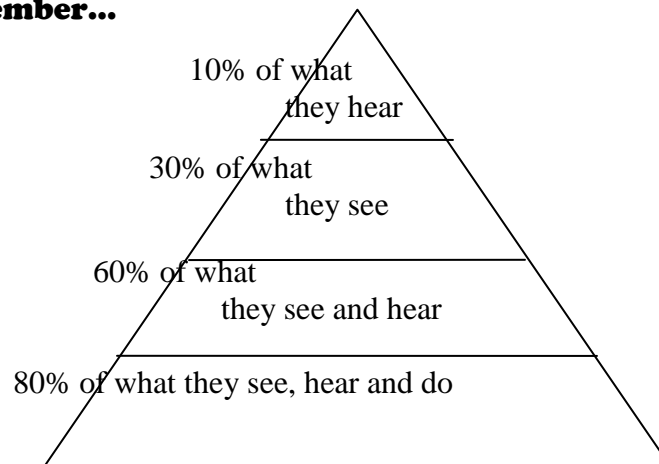
The answer – kids (youth and adults, too) remember what they see, hear and do. Children's messages use objects that kids can see, touch, smell, hear, etc. That's why adults, teens included, like these lessons well.

That's why people remember sermons when the pastor uses an object in his message.

When working with youth and trying to teach a lesson, remember to use an object with it. Use objects youth are familiar with. You can even have them make something that goes along with the message like a necklace, bracelet, small banner, etc.

Here's how learning takes place. It's called **Dale's Cone of Learning**.

People remember...



The next time you do a lesson, remember **Dale's Cone of Learning**. Using it will help make your lessons more interesting, memorable and fun. Check with your pastor and in the church library to see if there are object lesson books available, or make up your own. Let your youth make up their own, and let them do a lesson on a Sunday morning. It's a great way to help them grow in their faith.



Promoting Professional Church Work Careers

Youth leaders, volunteer and professional, play a big part in helping youth to consider serving as full-time professional church workers. The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod is in critical need of men and women to serve as pastors, teachers, deacons, deaconesses, etc. We need your encouragement with youth to consider serving fulltime in the church.

Here are some ideas you could do with help youth know they might serve fulltime in the church...

- ✝ Take time to talk about church work careers with your youth. Share your story about how you came to be called to service. Encourage participation in circuit, district and synodical youth gatherings and servant events. Select individual students and tell them how they might serve in a ministry.
- ✝ Show joy in your own ministry. Satisfaction and enjoyment are primary reasons people stay in a career. Be a role model.
- ✝ Promote the Concordia University System schools and the seminaries. Put up a display or bulletin board. Highlight different careers. Suggest Lutheran options to college-bound students.
- ✝ Invite guests from our Lutheran universities, seminaries and other church agencies to your church or school. Let them share their stories. Encourage guest preachers for special or Sunday worship service. Book musical and entertainment groups from our universities or Lutheran agencies to share their faith at church dinners, youth gatherings, etc.
- ✝ Share the call to serve from God's Word. Talk about the call wherever you are able to in sermons, youth discussions, devotions and Bible classes. Excellent sources of encouragement for church-work consideration can be found in Isaiah 6:1-8, Isaiah 2:7, Jeremiah 3:15, 1 Timothy 3:1, Ephesians 4:7-16.
- ✝ Send information about prospective church-work students to our Lutheran universities and seminaries. List their names, addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses. Let them know what year in school they are.
- ✝ Visit the universities of the Concordia University System and the two seminaries. Expose youth to a wide range of jobs within the church. Take youth to Lutheran university activities designed to introduce those schools and their programs. Take advantage of a campus for a retreat setting.
- ✝ Support the church work professionals in your own parish. Pray for current and future church workers in Sunday worship. Support church work students with financial and emotional support. Honor church work students in Sunday worship when they are home from school. Celebrate anniversaries of church work professionals. Use church work professionals as models when teaching Bible truths.

Fund Raising Ideas

Fund raising is an important aspect of the stewardship ministry of a congregation. The process of fund raising provides opportunities for people to learn about finances and how best to handle money in a church-setting. It gives leaders an opportunity to share with others about God's understanding of how we are to view money. Fund raising can be used to directly support events or they can be used to support mission projects.

Fund raising should always have a purpose in mind. Fundraisers should only take place when there truly is a need for funds, not just because we don't think we have enough money. Fundraisers can be a great way to raise funds for missions. Fund-raisers should also be ethical and appropriate for a congregational setting. Fund raising also requires good leadership, accountability and management of funds. Finally, fund raising should always leave everybody in a good mood, knowing that the funds raised are to assist in the ministry of God's Church.



Here are some suggested events for raising funds:

| | |
|--|---|
| ♥ Host Lenten soup suppers | ♥ Ask for sponsorship for servant events. |
| ♥ Hold a holiday party and collect funds for a world relief agency | ♥ Have a walk-a-thon for world hunger |
| ♥ Have a candle-making party and make baptismal candles | ♥ Check with Thrivent about providing matching funds for a major benevolent project |
| ♥ | ♥ Have a dinner theater |
| ♥ Host a congregational garage sale | ♥ Have youth volunteer and auction off their services |
| ♥ Have a silent auction of donated items | ♥ Have a seniors dance to help raise funds for Alzheimer's |
| ♥ Have a free-will donation car wash or bake sale | ♥ Sell Stock in your youth |
| ♥ Your own ideas... | |

Spiritual Reasons for Christian Service

#1 Reason ~ Our response to Christ's love for us!

#2 Reason ~ God's call to us to serve Him and others in love!

Additional Reasons Include...

- ☺ Serving promotes healthy lifestyles and choices among teenagers. Teenagers who serve develop values and priorities that help make positive choices.
- ☺ Serving helps to develop positive self-esteem, self-confidence and social skills. As they serve they learn that they can make a difference in the world – that they have important things to contribute.
- ☺ Serving helps young people discover their personal gifts and abilities. Research suggests that involvement in service can increase self-esteem and moral reasoning abilities.
- ☺ Serving helps the community see young people as a vital resource to address some of the problems and needs it faces. No longer do communities look at young people as “problems to be solved”, but they begin to see them as valued contributors to the community.
- ☺ Serving builds leadership skills and abilities in youth. Through service, young people learn leadership skills such as decision-making, planning motivating others, following through, and problem-solving.
- ☺ Serving teaches young people new skills and perspectives. Youth see the world with a new perspective when they've been exposed to different people and different needs.
- ☺ Serving nurtures a lifelong commitment to service and justice involvement. People who learn to serve when they are young are more likely to be service oriented when they are adults.
- ☺ Serving builds a stronger sense of community among the youth who serve. By serving side by side with others, they recognize the sometimes hidden skills and abilities of their peers.
- ☺ Serving has an impact on individual people who are served. Their needs are met, and they receive a sense of hope and empowerment.
- ☺ Serving helps young people have an impact on critical issues facing the community, nation, and world. Through their service, young people become important contributors to the community.
- ☺ Serving improves the quality of life and the climate of the community. The youths' efforts not only meet important needs, but they also give people a sense that things can be done to make the community a better place.
- ☺ Serving can be a powerful teaching tool for schools and congregations. When youth serve others they must apply skills and knowledge to concrete situations. It challenges them to learn and grow.

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Involving Youth in Ministry

There are many challenges within church youth ministry, but two of the primary ones are how to involve more youth in the ministry and how to get parents involved. It seems to be a consistent problem over the years, one that doesn't seem to have a perfect solution. So, how do you deal with this? What can you do to resolve this concern?

First, you need to understand some truths that connect to each other, truths which have to be dealt with...

Truth #1 You know you are not going to get every youth from your congregation to attend every youth ministry activity.

But, typically we continue trying to get everyone and set ourselves up for failure.

Truth #2 You know you are not going to get every parent to help you out in youth ministry.

But, typically we continue trying to get them all and set ourselves up for failure.

One Final Truth

God has called each of us to serve in the youth leadership role we are currently in. He has also given us all we need to make youth ministry happen in this time and place.

Believe it – move on – know that God is with you and will never give you more than you can handle!

Now that you know these truths, you can continue to work on doing the best job you can in reaching your youth and in getting help from parents, without guilt holding you back. Remember that God calls you to be faithful to Him. He wants you to do the best you can with the resources He has given you. You are to water and plant, but God gives the growth. Too many times we want to do the growing ourselves.

So, what now? Just be faithful and serve well. God is always with you, no matter the numbers who participate in the ministries of His Church. Do what you can, believing that with God all things, big or little, are possible with Him!

On the next page is one idea you can use to help youth become involved in the life of your church and thus, within your youth ministry.

Youth Ministry ~~ Youth Involvement

(based on a tool developed by DCE Scott Wycherley of St. John Lutheran Church, Townsend, WI)

As part of our total ministry here at church, you are asked to make a commitment to at least three aspects of our youth ministry for the coming school year. We want you to make sure that you continue building your faith and we believe that happens best when you are involved in the life of your church. Following are some of the options you can choose from (*please note that participation in worship is not an option*):

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> At least one youth group meeting/ activity each month | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth or adult choir | <input type="checkbox"/> Tutor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading Scripture lessons in worship | <input type="checkbox"/> Acolyte | <input type="checkbox"/> VBS helper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Join a Bible study group | <input type="checkbox"/> Usher | <input type="checkbox"/> SS helper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Servant Event project | <input type="checkbox"/> Instrumental group | <input type="checkbox"/> Church clean-up |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Idea | |

You are also asked to write down...

- ❖ at least one way you are going to grow in your faith life this new school year.
Growing in your faith life could be something as simple as committing to daily meal time prayer, morning and/or evening prayer, reading a chapter in your Bible each day, doing a devotion daily, being regular in worship, etc.
- ❖ at least one way you can grow in becoming a servant to someone or an organization.
Growing in your servanthood skills might include visiting grandma/grandpa regularly, helping a neighbor out, volunteering at a hospital/nursing home/food bank, tutoring children, etc.

Your youth leader will help you as you need it and will encourage you often. Remember that youth ministry is more than just coming to youth group. It is involvement in the life of the church.

YOUTH MINISTRY ACTIVITY SHEET

Name: _____

Email: _____

Three youth ministry activities I will be involved with this year are...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

One Faith Building Activity: _____

One Servanthood Activity: _____

Youth Signature: _____ Date: _____

ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNERS

SPIRITUAL LIFE

Trinity Lutheran Church, Bloomington, IL

Purpose of Accountability:

To each day become more Christ-like in all your ways. Remember it is Jesus who is the object of our search, our devotion, our sacrifice, and our affection.

Suggested Guidelines:

1. At first, establish which questions you definitely want asked each time you are together. This may change as you go along, but it is a beginning for you and your partner.
2. Ask each other about your spiritual/ministry goals.
3. Give each person equal "air time."
4. Really listen to your partner.
5. Be open and honest with each other.
6. Confidentiality and Trust are key here.
7. Write down ways you can be praying for your partner all month.
8. Remember the difference between accountability, fellowship and counsel.
Stick to accountability.
9. Don't neglect the prayer time on your knees together.

The Checklist:

Here are some questions you can focus on. You can call this a "checklist." The goal is not to complete all the questions, but rather to be made answerable to the goals you set and the standards God has established.

1. Have you read God's Word daily? Have you been in Bible study?
2. Describe your prayers. (for yourself, for others, praise, confession, thanksgiving)
3. How is your relationship with Christ changing?
4. How have you been tempted this week? How did you respond?
5. Do you have any unconfessed sin in your life?
6. Are you walking with the Spirit?
7. Did you worship this week? Was your faith strengthened? Was Christ honored?
8. Have you shared your faith? In what ways? How can you improve?
9. Other: _____
10. How have you been doing with your spiritual goals and ministry goals?

My Personal Time With God:

Trinity Lutheran Church, Bloomington, IL

Date:

What I read today:

What did the passage say?

What does it mean?

What should I do?

What is the verse that stuck with me?

MY QUIET TIME WITH GOD:

Trinity Lutheran Church, Bloomington, IL

Before your study, pray: “Father, reveal something new to me. Open me up to your Word.”

Read the passage a few times.

What are the two main lessons from the passage?

What has God spoken to you personally?

What does this teach about Jesus?

What is one personal goal you can make from reading this text?

YOUTH ROOM DEDICATION SERVICE

Trinity Lutheran Church, Bloomington, IL

Make some changes in your youth room such as painting or rearranging furniture to give it a new feel. You can use that as a time to dedicate your "new" youth room to the Lord and His purposes.

- Start outside the Youth Room (*even outside the church*).
- Pass out different colors of votive candles as you prepare for worship. Have a lit Christ candle with your group.
- Begin in prayer.
- Have everyone light their votive candle from the Christ candle as they pass by single file and heading to the youth room while singing a song (*i.e., "Give Thanks"*).
- When they arrive in the youth room have them put their candle in a "lying down cross" (*use a 5ft x 3 ft cross made from 4x4s with an indentation all through the middle where the candles will sit - this cross will be hung on the youth room wall as it looks like stain glass - keep candles lit throughout the service*)
- When everyone has arrived in the room circle around the cross and begin singing another song (*i.e., "I Love You Lord"*).
- Psalm 150 is read aloud as an opening to worship. Have 4 youth read from all four corners (compass points) of the room. Every time the word "Praise" is used they switch readers.
- Sing a Confession Song (*i.e., "Sanctuary"*). Then say - *"In order to be where God dwells, we must be made clean. Being made clean must happen regularly on your walk with God and must be as automatic as sleeping and getting dressed so you can experience the fullness of Jesus everyday."*
- With the confession, we now have an opportunity to respond with "take us back, God." Please kneel as directed during the confessional. Have 1 youth read the confession taken from "The Book of Uncommon Prayer" by Steven Case. Youth Specialties. Page. 99.
- Sing or listen to "Breath" (*Michael W. Smith Worship CD*).
- Share a Message using a theme of JOURNEY. (*Psalm 150/Jesus is our true direction/God is our compass as you heard voices from each corner of the room. Add extra candles at the cross - these represent future youth to come. God wants our ministry to grow/journey. We don't want youth to miss the one path God has laid for us through Jesus. May this room be a place where they see and experience Jesus to the fullest measure.*)
- Share a Testimony - Have a youth share about their journey with the Lord.
- The Blessing of the Youth Room - Scatter youth and have everyone put one hand on the wall. Have a certain number of people pray blessing prayers for the room.
- Sing a Closing Song in a circle (*i.e., "Lean on Me"*).

Sample Devotion

Provided by Pastor Daniel Smith

Strength and Weakness

Supplies needed: Bible, paper, pen or pencil.

Begin by asking the group to make a list.

- The first list should contain everything about themselves that they consider to be a strength that they possess. (*ie...good looks, money, good shape, athletic, smart, wise, artistic, friendly, outgoing etc...*) This can be very private, so don't ask anyone to share their list with others unless they wish to do so.

Under this list, ask them to write down a number of things that they can do with their strengths in the future, or the way they see themselves taking advantage of their strengths, as they get older.

- Have the group make a second list a list of things that they consider their weaknesses. This can be very private, so don't ask anyone to share their list with others unless they wish to do so.

Under this list, ask them to write down how they see their weaknesses hindering their growth and potential for success in the future.

Read: 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

What does Paul say about his weaknesses? How does God use our weakness for His glory?

Read Hebrews 4:14-16

Close with prayer.

10 Spiritual Growth Ideas

1. LOST AND FOUND

submitted by Leon Jameson, DCE

This event will help your group discover what it means to find the lost even as they struggle themselves to walk by faith. It's a fitting activity to precede or follow a study of the three lost-and-found stories in Luke 15. The objective is for each team to make it as far along a course as they can in five minutes — blindfolded — while in the process finding as many items as they can.

What you'll need:

large room with lots of tables and chairs, fishing line, 10 items from an office (*pencil, cassette, key, aluminum can, dart, coffee cup, coat hanger, book, etc.*), Bible, masking tape, 2-4 blindfolds, watch, and prizes (*optional*).

Set up as follows:

- Trash the room. Turn all the tables and chairs on their sides. It should be hard to walk through.
- The path through this chaos will be a fishing line. Tie one end of the fishing line to a chair leg just inside the door. Then run the line all over the room, wrapping it around numerous tables and chairs to keep the line tight. The line should not cross over itself.
- Mark 10 locations along the path (*though not on the fishing line itself*) with pieces of the masking tape. At these sites you'll put the "lost" items for each group to find; then you'll replace them after each group goes through the course.
- Put your 10 items on the tape-marked sites.
- Blindfold the teams before they travel the course.

Introducing the lesson:

If you haven't already studied Luke 15, tell the kids that Christians walk by faith. Though we do not always know where the Lord is leading us, if we study the Bible and stay tuned into the Spirit, we will be led to where God wants us. One thing is certain — we will encounter the lost. Then share with your students the highlights of your study of the three lost-and-found stories in Luke 15.

Playing the game:

To start the game, divide your group into teams of two, three, or four. Tell them that in a nearby room you have lost 10 items; list them for the teams. Each team has five minutes during which to find as many of the 10 items as they can. When one team member finds an item, the whole team is to "hoot and holler" (*Luke 15:6-7, 9, 23-24, 32*). The catch is that the teammates wear blindfolds and the lights are out. On the other hand there is a fishing line strung throughout the room that, if they can locate it by feel, will lead them to at least the vicinity of all 10 lost objects. Furthermore, they'll encounter obstacles along the way — they may have to step over chairs, tables, and the fishing line itself.

Blindfold the first group, release them into the darkened room, and let them have a go at their task. After five minutes, turn on the lights and allow the team to remove their blindfolds. Count the number of items they found, and how many (*if any*) finished the course. If the fishing line needs to be drawn tight again, have that team help you. Then allow this team to watch the next team go through. After all the teams have finished, award a prize to the team that found the most items.

Post-game ponderings:

Assume that following the line represented walking by faith and that the objects the kids found in the dark room were lost people we encounter. Your observations may resemble the following:

- "Josh made it almost all the way through, but he never found a single lost item. Walking by faith is a struggle in itself, and sometimes you struggle so hard that you go right past the lost."
- "When Caitlin and Danielle lost the line, Hector helped them find it again. Sometimes we stray from our walk with God, and then we become the ones who need to be found."
- "When Lauren started humming the theme song to 'The Twilight Zone,' it distracted Clay enough that he

stopped following the line. It reminded me how the world diverts us from our walk with God."

Conclusion:

Turn it over to your group to share their own observations. You may want to close by reading the Great Commission (*Matthew 28:18-20*).

2. Object of faith

submitted by Mary Bloebaum, DCE

Have the youth take any object and come up with as many ways that it describes faith, God, where they are with God or Christianity. Have each youth take a turn. You would be amazed at the parallels that can be made.

3. Prayer Retreat

submitted by Mary Bloebaum, DCE

Take the youth for a day hike and demonstrate for them what it means to go out from the world and spend intimate time with God. After you have been hiking for a while, find a spot where everyone can take their water, snack, Bible, notebook, pen, and a "A Spiritual Retreat Just Between You and God" question sheet and find a quiet spot where they can be alone. After an hour, gather everyone together and share how God spoke to them or what changes they want to make, what they will commit to or attributes of God that were brought to light. Tell them to keep this sheet in their Bible and schedule some longer appointments with God away from routine.

4. Four Corners Bible Study

submitted by Curt Jungkuntz

This can be a themed activity or not. Find four volunteers to put together one short (*15 minute*) Bible Study each. Position those leaders in four corners of a room. Split your youth into four groups and rotate. Again, the four Bible Studies could be thematically linked or you can allow your volunteers to share what's on their hearts. Give your volunteers plenty of lead-time prior to the event – encourage and support them with prayer. Warm-up activities could include the playground game "four-square", or the math game "buzz" using multiples of four. Afterward, snacks could include square crackers and cubes of cheese, lemonade frozen in ice cube trays, or burgers from Wendy's (*they're square*).

5. Tour a Farm

submitted by Curt Jungkuntz

The Bible is full of references to the farmer. Before you go, check out: Matthew 13:1-43, Matthew 20:1-16, Luke 12:54-56, Isaiah 28:24-29, James 5:7-8. If you don't have access to a farm you could check with your local Lutheran Camp for resources or check out the local petting zoo. Bring the youth back together and talk about the experience. Draw conclusions – "how is our spiritual life like the life of the farmer?"

6. Foot Meeting

submitted by Leon Jameson, DCE

This creative program idea combines some fun with serious learning about servanthood and discipleship. The theme of the meeting is feet. Start the meeting with some feet games:

Foot Signing - Kids take off their shoes and socks, and receive a felt tip pen (*the kind that will wash off*). On a signal, the group has one minute to see how many signatures they can get on the bottom of their feet.

Foot Wrestling - Kids pair off and sit down with right feet together. They lock toes. On a signal, they try to pin the other person's foot, like regular arm-wrestling.

Feet by the Foot - Teams line up with their feet in a single file line, heel to toe, to see which team has the most footage. Longest line wins.

Lemon Pass - Teams remove shoes and try to pass a lemon down the line without using their

hands; only feet. The lemon cannot drop or teams have to start over.

Foot Drawing - Each team chooses some object in the room. Using only feet for patterns, they trace parts of the feet on paper to create that object. Other teams must then try to guess what the object is.

Following the games move to a Bible study, using whatever Bible study method your group prefers. A good passage would be John 13:1-17. Talk about the significance of feet in the passage. What was so unusual about Jesus being willing to wash the disciples' feet? What does that say about servanthood?

Following the Bible study gather the group around a large paper cross that has been taped to the floor. Place a pan of colored poster paint around it. Use a different color in each pan. Then talk about what it means to be a part of the cross — to be willing to walk as a servant in the same way Christ did. Invite the kids to choose a color, and (one at a time) dip in their feet and walk across the paper, leaving their footprints on the cross. This can be done as an indication of striving to walk as Christ walked. Next you can conduct a foot washing ceremony, as kids wash the paint off each other's feet. Provide pans, towels, soap, etc.

This exercise can be followed up with good discussion. As you view the cross together, you can talk about the significance of the different kinds of footprints upon it, how they are all unique, the blending of colors in the middle section, the plain cross that is now bright with colors, etc. You can close by allowing the kids to cut the cross into small poster-size pieces and to take them home to hang on their walls as a reminder of their commitment to serve as Christ served.

7. The Big Fisherman- on Location

submitted by Gretchen Jameson

Try a series of studies over a period of weeks or at a retreat on the life of Simon Peter. Each study is held at a location that relates to the incident being examined. Study his call to be a disciple by the side of a lake or at the beach; his reaction to Jesus' Transfiguration at the top of a mountain; put him on trial for denying Jesus at a courthouse; and conclude with breakfast on the beach for a study of his restoration (*John 21*).

8. Body life

submitted by the Reverend Terry K. Dittmer

Have everyone form a circle or a line. If in a circle, they should be facing inward. Give each person a three-foot piece of string. Ask each person to tie one end around his own left hand and the other around the right hand of the person standing on his left. After everyone does this, everyone will be tied together. You could also use tape, and have the kids tape their wrists together. Then give the group a project that requires cooperation and time. One example is to walk into the dining room, sit down around a table, pour a drink into glasses for each person, pass out cookies, say grace, eat and drink, walk to the kitchen, and each person must wash his own cup and plate.

After this experience, cut the string (or tape), form a circle on the floor or around a table, and discuss what feelings were experienced during the experiment and why. Ask them what they thought the purpose was, and then how this related to being in the body of Christ. What problems, joys, or principles surfaced during the experiment? You might close by reading Romans 12 or 1 Corinthians 12.

9. Images of the church

submitted by Jeffrey Meinz, DCE

The New Testament uses quite a few metaphors to describe the function of the church in the world. These metaphors help us understand not only who we are as the church, but also what our relationship should be to Christ and to each other.

You might want to begin with a study of each of these word pictures of the church, and then have the students rank them from most important to least important, or from best to worst. Of course, the idea is not necessarily to imply that any of the metaphors are unimportant or more important than others, but simply to generate discussion on the subject. You might have the students think of some additional metaphors, borrowing from modern-day culture to create their own images on the church.

Here is a list of metaphors used in the New Testament:

- Bride. We are the bride; Christ is the bridegroom. (2 Cor. 11:2, Eph. 5:25, Rom. 7:4, Rev. 19:7)
- Branches. Jesus said that he was the vine, and that we are the branches. (John 15:1-8)
- Flock. Jesus said that we were sheep and that he is the Good Shepherd. (John 10:11-15, Matt. 10:16)
- Kingdom. Jesus was called the Mighty King, the King of Kings, and we are brought into his kingdom. (Col. 1:13)
- Family. We are the sons and daughters of God, brothers of Christ, brothers and sisters to each other, joint heirs with Christ, the household of God. (Heb. 2:10-11, Gal. 4:1-7)
- Building. We are temples of the Holy Spirit, a building not made with hands. (2 Cor. 5, Eph. 2:19-22)
- Body. We are all part of the body of Christ, each person being a different part of the body.

(1 Cor. 12, Eph. 4)

- Salt. We are the salt of the earth. (Matt. 5:13)
- Light. We are the light of the world. (Matt. 5:14)
- Fishermen. Jesus called us to be fishers of men. (Matt. 4:19)
- Soldiers. Fighting against "principalities and powers," wearing the full armor of God.

(Eph. 6:10-17, 1 Thess. 5:8)

10. APATHY PARTY

submitted by Leon Jameson, DCE

This object lesson is worth a million laughs and deals with a problem that Christ addressed in his letters to the seven churches in Revelation (Rev. 3:14-19).

Announce ahead of time that you are going to have an apathy party and that everyone is to come dressed in the most bland and boring clothing they can dig up. Have them wear what they would wear if they just didn't care. As kids arrive have sponsors greet them at the door and hand out a list of rules for the party. Each sponsor is to have several paper bags large enough to cover the heads of anyone who laughs or gets excited or shows any enthusiasm whatsoever.

The following games may be played at this party:

- Monotone readings. Provide books of prose, poetry, phone books, and dictionaries so that each person can read a selection from one using a monotone, emotionless voice. The driest, most boring reading will be declared the winner.
- Costume contest. Judges declare the winner wearing the most blah clothes.
- Deadpan face staring. Have an elimination contest. Have kids pair up and try to outstare their partner. The winner is the one who stares the longest without laughing or looking away or closing her eyes (*blinking is permitted*). Each contestant may say things to get the other one to laugh but must not act or sound enthusiastic herself.
- Balancing-air-on-a-spoon relay. Tell teams that you were going to have them balance raw eggs on spoons for a relay but that you weren't in the mood to go to the store. So they can balance air on their spoons instead. The first player on each team walks to a mark and back while balancing air on a spoon. Upon that player's return the next player heads to the mark and back. Sponsors have the right to indiscriminately make runners start over if they deem that runners have dropped the air from their spoons.

The first team to complete the relay gets disqualified for trying too hard, and the last place team gets disqualified for trying to lose.

- Book-balancing relay. This is another team relay like "Balancing Air" but kids must balance a book as they walk to the mark and back. However, they may hold the book however they want to because after all it doesn't matter anyway and besides that...who cares?

Sponsors may then announce that all further games have been canceled because by now everyone is thoroughly bored and utterly apathetic. Sponsors may commend those in the group who gave exceptionally fine demonstrations of apathy and boredom. Those who refused to participate in the games are to receive highest praise for their apathy and lack of cooperation. In order to really get into the feel of the lukewarmness of it all, the proper refreshments would include the following:

- Flat, lukewarm soda in small cups or, better yet, lukewarm tap water. (*The sponsors may explain that they just didn't have the energy to get anything better.*)
- Small pieces of cold frozen pizza.
- Small cups of melted ice cream.

Follow the refreshment time with a discussion on Revelation 3:14-19 about the consequences of being lukewarm or apathetic. Allow the kids to share their reactions to the party and the refreshments. This might be a good way to creatively shock a lukewarm youth group out of its doldrums. You might wrap up with some good refreshments and a little enthusiasm.

10 Service Ideas

1. Living Water

submitted by Leon Jameson, DCE

This is both a service project and an opportunity to witness for Christ! Beaches, recreational areas, parks, and large community festivals are great locations to share some “Living Water”. Materials needed are a five-gallon cooler filled with ice water and paper cups (*Bottled water works too*). The cooler can be pulled in a wagon or may be carried on a backpack frame. Offer the water at no charge, with a smile, and a word about “Living Water” (*John 4*).

2. Windshield Witnessing

submitted by Leon Jameson, DCE

Find a parking lot with a lot of cars in it and supply the youth group with window cleaning materials (*soap, rags, squeegees, etc.*). The kids move up and down rows in twos and clean dirty windshields on cars, leaving the following note:

Your windows have been cleaned with love by the youth at Immanuel Lutheran Church. We just wanted to do something nice for people today to demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ, and we hope that's okay with you. We also hope that you'll see you way clear to attend the church of your choice or our church next Sunday.

3. Mother's Day Delight

submitted by Mary Bloebaum, DCE

Take some youth and purchase annual flowers. The Saturday before Mother's Day put each one in a Dixie cup with potting soil. Have your youth pass them out Sunday morning to all the women of the congregation on their way out of worship. It is dirty, fun and gets lots of motherly winks.

4. Sweetheart Party

submitted by Mary Bloebaum, DCE

Your youth can provide this event for the “fifty plus” group in your congregation during the month of February. Decorate a room of tables and chairs with streamers, table cloths, homemade heart placemats, candy goody bags at each seat, floating candle centerpieces (*reusable ☺*), etc... Have each youth bring a homemade dessert when they arrive to assist with set-up.

As the event is getting started, youth are at the door to take coats and walk their guests to their seats. As guests are seated leave two chairs at each table for the youth to sit and join them. Begin with a game of clumps. Clumps is a game where people “clump” together at tables because of something that the clumped group has in common. (*same b-day month, favorite ice cream*). As they clump up have them share something about themselves with that particular group.

In between games offer door prizes to favorite restaurants or stores in town. Door prize winners could be: most grandchildren, longest married couple, most pennies in pocket, etc..

Under their placemats provide a sheet for “Name that Tune” (*Try to find songs from their generation*). See who can guess the most in a friendly game of “name that Tune”. Next, initiate discussion at the tables by asking questions such as: what does a typical day look like, what do you enjoy about life right now. Play a game of bingo. Again, offer fun prizes.

Prepare a skit performed by youth and encourage a youth to share a personal devotion that ties in with the skit. Desserts are served by the youth at each table while youth who play instruments or sing entertain the crowd. At the end, the youth help them with their coats and see them to their cars.

5. Food Scavenger Hunt

submitted by Curt Jungkuntz

Get a list from your local food pantry of the items most needed. Put a list together of those items with corresponding point values. Add some unique items (*like a Big Mac, caviar, or lutefisk*). Include a “most unique item category” just for fun. Put the youth into small groups with an adult driver and send them

into the community. Encourage the youth to call only on houses they know (*try not to go door-to-door*). Give them a specific time limit – no money should be spent collecting food. Gift certificates to a local restaurant are a great prize. Make sure you bag up all the food collected and take it to your food pantry as a group – this is a fine opportunity for some reflection.

6. Leaf Raking For Friends

submitted by Curt Jungkuntz

Volunteer to rake some leaves in the fall for members and friends. Get adult drivers, rakes, leaf bags and rake ‘em. Spend some time jumping in the piles before you bag ‘em. Conclude with Isaiah 40:6-8 and some reflection.

7. Halloween Hospital Visits

submitted by Jim Lohman

Turn things around and have your youth hand out treats instead of receive them. At the beginning of October, contact your local hospital to see if it will allow your group to visit the pediatric unit on Halloween. Find out what time is best for your visit.

Once your trip is confirmed, contact a local restaurant or store to get some trick-or-treat bags (*many are happy to provide them at no cost*). Then have your kids start collecting items to fill trick-or-treat bags: coloring books, crayons, stickers, games, and helium balloons work well. Be sure to check with nurses before putting candy into a child's bag. Include in each bag a note on your youth group's letterhead explaining who you are and the reason for your visit and gifts.

A few days before your visit, call the hospital to confirm how many children are in the ward and how old they are. This will ensure that you make up enough bags and that they are age-appropriate. On the day of your visit, have everyone come dressed up in costumes. Let the kids know that they should not wear scary costumes or medical garb.

After you hand out the bags and talk for a while with the children, have a special party at someone's home or a nearby restaurant. You might even want to make it a surprise!

8. Portable McDonalds

submitted by the Reverend Terry K. Dittmer

If your church or organization is located in or near a college community, here's a great way to get involved with college students. During registration or the first week of class, plan a hamburger snack for the students. Advertise by passing out flyers and posters throughout the campus. Locate the snack bar on or near campus and have plenty of people from your group to serve and mingle with the kids when they come. Asking each family in the church to bring something like a package of buns, hamburgers, potato chips, etc provides the food.

9. Smoke Alarm Ministry

submitted by Jeffrey Meinz, DCE

This service project could literally save lives. Have your youth install battery-operated smoke detectors in the homes of the elderly of your community.

First, decide how detectors and batteries will be purchased or donated. Around Christmas many department stores will sell minimum quantities at wholesale. Better yet, the local fire marshal's office usually has connections to suppliers who will donate the detectors if the group doing the installations will make a list of persons serviced.

Second, prepare a list of elderly people who might need the service. Then perform a phone survey asking if these people would welcome teens into their homes to install the smoke detectors for free. Youth could also check the batteries for smoke detectors already in place. Arrange a time — usually an entire Sunday afternoon — when the senior citizens would be home to receive the service team.

Third, find out if the fire marshal can also provide slides, films, or volunteer speakers who will meet with

the youths a week before the project to sensitize them to general fire safety practices, as well as to the specific risks facing the elderly. Because a disproportionate number of fires occur in the homes of older people, this project could mean the difference between life and death.

10. Used Bible Drive

submitted by Leon Jameson, DCE

Have you ever counted the number of Bibles you have in your home? Many families have several that are never read. Why not try a Used Bible Drive to put those extra Bibles to good use? Announce to your congregation that you'll be collecting used Bibles and other Christian reading material to be sent to people who have none. Then send the Bibles to LCMS World Mission or World Home Bible League, which collects used Bibles and distributes them to other countries where they can be used.

- *For more information about LCMS World Mission call or write 1333 S. Kirkwood Road St. Louis, Missouri 63122-7295, FAX: 314-965-0959, 1-800-433-3954.*
- *For more information about the World Home Bible League's program, write or call World Home Bible League, 16801 Van Dam Rd., South Holland, IL 60473; (708) 331-2094.*

10 Fellowship Ideas

1. Cosmic Bowling

submitted by Curt Jungkuntz

I always enjoy cosmic bowling with the youth – it allows the “jocks”, “geeks”, and “clowns” to have fun at the same event! Make sure you rotate the youth during the games to increase fellowship opportunities. Check with your local bowling alley for times and costs, bring some fun-loving chaperones and have a great time!

2. Car Ride Blitz

submitted by Mary Bloebaum, DCE

Come with a list of interesting questions for youth and adults to discuss when traveling to a retreat or event in which you will be in the car together for a longer period of time. Have youth take turns recording answers to the different questions. When you arrive at your destination come together and have the car-groups share some highlights of what they learned about each other.

3. Indoor Scavenger Hunt

submitted by Mary Bloebaum, DCE

Get your youth into groups of 6-8 people. Be sure everyone gets an opportunity to be the “runner” for his or her group. Groups should sit 10 ft away from the “caller.” The “caller” is a random person sitting on a chair in the middle of the room. The caller will call out an item that each group must find from one of their group members. Once the item is found the runner must sprint to the person in the middle and tag them. The goal is to be the first group to touch the caller. Consider the following examples to call out: lint, shoelace, watch, earring, chewed gum, one-dollar bill, license, picture of a friend, etc...

4. Progressive Sprinkler Party

submitted by Leon Jameson, DCE

For this progressive party, have everyone wear bathing suits and bring towels. Play different water games at the various homes you visit. Play sprinkler games at the first house, Slip-n'-Slide at the second house (*you can make one with a large plastic sheet*), water balloon wars at the next house, water volleyball played under a rainfall created by several sprinklers around the net, and swimming pool games or an open swim time.

You can add any number of attractions along the way if you live near a beach or near one of those giant water slides, etc. The extra dimension that this brings to traditional water events is variety. Youth love it!

5. Scavenger Hunt

submitted by Curt Jungkuntz

This is a great time for you to hide things all over your Church grounds. Some of your youth think that they know every nook and cranny of your Church because they've been attending all their lives... Well, this is your opportunity to put this to the test. Make up a list of things for the youth to find – from the obscure (*which saints are displayed in the stained glass*) to the ridiculous (*how many door knobs in the building*). Put the youth into small groups so they're not wandering the grounds alone – put an adult into each group if you need to. Give them a time limit and prizes for the winning team.

6. Lifesaver Night

submitted by Leon Jameson, DCE

In advance arrange at least four people to be special guests at your Lifesaver Night. Be sure they represent different age groups — college, young married, the 30-to-50 age group, and 50 or older. Ask these people to talk from their hearts about a time in their lives when a Christian made their lives sweeter in some way — shared Christ with them, helped them in a time of critical need, or modeled for them a quality of Christ that they in turn adopted into their lives. If you have a time limit or want to conclude

with questions from the kids, let your guests know ahead of time.

On Lifesaver Night explain the format of the evening and introduce the speakers as they take their turns before the kids. Then close the meeting by bringing out a pack of Lifesavers. Explain that the package unit is made up of many different flavors and colors of Lifesavers, but they are all part of the same roll. Christians also come in many different flavors and colors, but we are part of the same body — Christ's body — and we all have the same purpose — to grow up to be like Christ. When we tell others about Jesus or others see Jesus in us, our particular flavor makes their lives sweeter.

Then pass around six-inch pieces of string (*one per student*) and packs of Lifesavers. The student can choose three to five of their favorite flavors and place the Lifesavers on the string. Challenge the youths to go out and be lifesavers. Each time they tell someone about Jesus or reach out to help someone in Jesus' name, they can bite a Lifesaver off the string and eat it. Tell them you trust them not to eat any of the Lifesavers unless they have met the requirements. Follow up by asking at the next meeting how long it took them to eat their whole string of Lifesavers.

7. Midnight Capture

submitted by Leon Jameson, DCE

Kids will buzz about this event for months. Just make sure you let parents in on the plans ahead of time — and swear them to secrecy.

On a predetermined Saturday morning at 3 a.m. — a night known only to your youth leaders and kids' parents — swoop down on the teen nearest your home, then map your way across town, picking up kids as you go until you reach your destination.

Rush into the teen's room and wake them up. Pull them from bed if you dare! Tell them they have only five to 10 minutes to dress—no time to shower, comb their hair, brush their teeth — got to get out quick! After you've hit a few homes, the teens you've already snatched will wake up enough to help you drag the rest of the kids from their beds.

Rush to your destination without talking or answering questions. Complete silence adds to the suspense. When you reach the party site, use the first minutes for a short devotional on the necessity of always being ready (*for you know not the time nor the season*), emphasizing Christ's soon return, the One who will come like a thief in the night. Or contrast the oppression of Christians in some countries with our freedom and the need for us to be thankful for our nation and its leaders. Allow time for discussion and questions.

Then let the party begin! After games and fellowship, award prizes for the scruffiest looking teen, the one who got out of bed and into the car the fastest, etc. Then go to a restaurant for breakfast. Or perhaps, since no one showered, you'll want breakfast catered that morning!

8. Romans and Christians

submitted by Gretchen Jameson

Here's an effective, hands-on way to give your students a little background about the difficult lives of Roman Christians who were persecuted and sometimes killed for their faith. This game works best with older students. If possible, play this at night in a large, outdoor area with lots of trees. Make sure the kids are prepared ahead of time with old clothes, enough clothes (*if it's cold*), bug spray (*if it's warm*), and so on. If you must play inside, it has to be very dark. The game can take up to two hours to complete.

Kids are Christians, and adult staff members are Romans. The Christians are on a mission to find the "light" (*a tiki torch, campfire, or candle*) that's hidden in some part of the playing area. It must be difficult for them to find. You also need to establish an area that will serve as the prison, guarded by a Roman guard.

The Romans have flashlights and use them to hunt for the Christians. If they find and "beam" the Christians, the Romans yell at the kids in a very loud voice, "Christian! Where are you, Christian?" and so

on, and the captured players are sent to prison. In order to get out of prison, the kids must witness to the jail guard (*another adult staff member*) until that guard is convinced that there's a God and lets the Christians go. To earn their freedom, the Christians cannot use simple claims like "God loves you" or sing, "Jesus Loves Me." They must recite Scripture, tell a Bible story about God's love or about Jesus, or share a personal faith story.

The goal of the game is to get as many Christians to the light (*in other words salvation or heaven*) as possible. If a Christian makes it to the light, she can either stay there or go back to help other Christians find it. Christians can also take the risk of trying to convert Roman soldiers with more Bible stories, Scripture, and so on. The witnessing must be really good for this to happen. If a Roman soldier does convert, he may now work to help the Christians get other Christians to the light hidden behind the other Romans.

After the game bring the kids together to wrap up and debrief the experience with them. Discuss how they felt and what it was like to witness to people who were after them. See if they'll tell you what the hardest part of being a Christian is today. There are a lot of similarities between the Roman era and the present day that you can use to illustrate and teach. Close with prayer, and thank God for the Christians who sacrificed their lives for our faith.

9. World's Largest Pillow Fight

submitted by Jeffrey Meinz, DCE

For this event you will need a gym or a room large enough to accommodate a lot of action and which will be easy to clean. Each kid brings a pillow from home and sits on it during preliminary activities. Music, crowd breakers, a speaker, etc., are all good at the beginning of your meeting. At the close the pillow fight takes place. Boundaries are marked on the floor, and no one out-of-bounds can participate. No furniture pillows are allowed (*big foam-type*) and check to make sure kids don't put hard items in the pillowcases. When the whistle blows everyone starts swinging pillows for one minute. When the whistle blows ending the first period, everyone must sit down on his or her pillow immediately. The last one to do so gets a penalty (*pie in the face*). Those who have had it are given the opportunity to leave the fight. The fight continues in one-minute periods until everyone is pooped-out or his or her pillow breaks. If a person's pillow breaks, he is automatically out. Of course a giant feather mess is left behind which can be cleaned up with large industrial-type vacuums. In smaller pillow fights ordinary vacuum cleaners will work.

10. Shapes, Communication, and Evangelism

submitted by Leon Jameson, DCE

Choose a volunteer. Explain that on a piece of paper you have drawn a circle, a square, and a triangle. (*These shapes can be arranged in any combination on the paper, separate, overlapping, perpendicular, etc.*) These three figures are all in a certain relationship to each other. This person is to look at the drawing and then describe it to the others, effectively, so that they can reproduce it correctly on paper. Everyone in the audience has a piece of paper and pencil and is ready to write. Then have your volunteer stand with his or her back to the audience and simply describe the figures in words.

Next, compare drawings — there will be quite a variation. Choose another volunteer to do the same thing, only this person may face the audience and use his or her hands in describing the figures. Once again, the audience writes down what the second person has described, and then compares notes. You will find that there are still many differences.

Choose a third person to do the same thing (*of course, each time the drawing is different*). This time the person may face the audience, use his or her hands, and answer questions. The audience writes down the figure and checks it again with the original. This time almost everyone has the right answer.

Communication is not just words; it also involves gestures and motions — it must be personal. Communication is a two-way process. Read Acts 1:8 and discuss its implications for witnessing, then conclude with specific application and challenge.

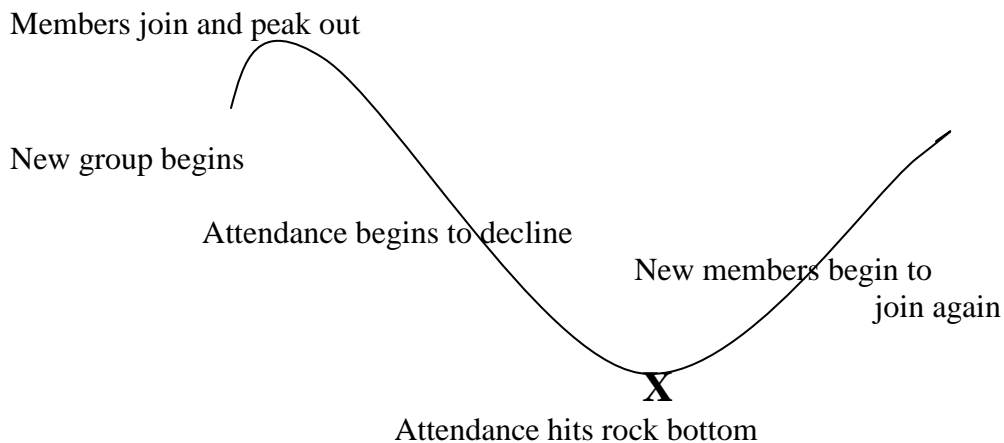


THE BIG DIP

One of the biggest frustrations of working with any group is poor attendance. No matter what the meeting is, attendance seems to taper off as the year goes by and as years come and go as well.

There is good news and bad news about this dilemma. The bad news is that attendance is going to taper off no matter who we are and what we do. The good news is that this is normal behavior for groups anywhere.

The diagram below shows the life cycle of a group. As a group begins the people are excited about getting started and are ready for business. New members join. This goes on for a while. As the year (or years) goes on attendance drops and a small group remains that is there for every meeting no matter what.



At point X, leaders start questioning their leadership abilities and many quit because they think it's their fault the group is getting smaller. Leaders need to remember this is normal group behavior. They can be the best leaders in the world and attendance is still going to go this route.

It is at point X that leaders need to continue with the core group they have. This group will start picking up new members and growth will happen again. Keep up the good work and hang in there! You are a blessing to many.

Value Statements

For Youth Ministry

Values are the things that are important to us. We put a high priority on those things. They get done and done well. What does your youth ministry value?

Below is a list of some values which youth ministries might have. Every ministry won't have all of them. Some may have only a few. No matter how many, its good to identify yours.

Here's one way to have your youth and adults identify what they feel their values are within their youth ministry:

- ❖ Make a copy of this page for everyone and make a big master list on newsprint.
- ❖ Have the participants check off up to seven values they feel their youth ministry has.
- ❖ Give each participant seven colored circle labels. Have them stick their labels next to their choices on the master newsprint.
- ❖ Discuss the results. What is your youth ministry about? What are areas you could improve in?

- ☐ We provide opportunities for spiritual and social growth.
- ☐ We rely on private and group prayer when we plan and carry out our youth ministry activities.
- ☐ We intentionally reach out to those outside the Christian faith.
- ☐ We develop loving, accepting and caring relationships within our youth ministry.
- ☐ We develop a servant-leader attitude.
- ☐ We actively participate in Word and Sacrament.
- ☐ We provide opportunities to use our time, talents and treasures.
- ☐ We care for our brothers and sisters physical and emotional needs.
- ☐ We seek cross-cultural opportunities to share Jesus.
- ☐ We actively share Jesus with our peers.
- ☐ We regularly participate in personal Bible study.
- ☐ We provide wholesome fellowship opportunities.
- ☐ We provide leadership growth opportunities for adults and youth.
- ☐ We support district, synod and worldwide mission efforts.
- ☐ We respond in Christian ways to changes in our society.
- ☐ We strengthen family relationships.
- ☐ We see and treat others and ourselves as temples of the Holy Spirit.
- ☐ We seek intergenerational opportunities.
- ☐ Other _____

Characteristics of a Healthy Youth Ministry

- ★ Focuses on Jesus Christ
- ★ Celebrates through Word and Sacrament
- ★ Develops loving/caring relationships
- ★ Grows one's faith
- ★ Reaches out to those outside the faith
- ★ Develops a servant-leader style attitude
- ★ Develops leaders
- ★ Participates in worship, study, service, outreach, and fellowship activities
- ★ Networks with other ministries in their local church, circuit, district and synod
- ★ Evaluates their ministry



GROUP EXPECTATIONS

Every group has expectations. When your youth know that you expect certain behaviors from them, they will respond. Like anything, however, they need to be taught and re-taught. What are your expectations? Are they Law and Gospel based? Are they easy to understand? The following is one way of helping everyone in a group understand that group's expectations.

INSTRUCTIONS

Have the five "Group Expectations" words on a piece of posterboard. Let the youth design the poster and pin it to a wall, ceiling, wherever people can see it. Review it regularly whenever your group meets. It is essential that you do this and follow through when someone tests it and you out. Following is an explanation of each expectation:

- ✓ **EVERYONE PARTICIPATES** ~ Everyone is to be given the opportunity to participate in the discussion/activity. This means that all are to focus on what is going on or being talked about and not on something else. In a discussion, one does not have to speak, but all are to be respectful. Do not prevent someone else from listening/participating if they wish.
- ✓ **RIGHT TO PASS** ~ Everyone has the "right to pass." When a discussion is going on and you are asked to respond to a question, you may "pass" if you don't wish to say anything. It is okay to "pass." If you would like to say something after you have passed, raise your hand and respond when you are called upon.
- ✓ **ALL OPINIONS ARE RESPECTED** ~ Whenever someone says something, you may not know whether you should laugh or cry about it. Respect what the person says. You may or may not agree with it, just honor what is said. What the person says may be very important to them.
- ✓ **MUTUAL RESPECT** ~ When someone is talking, listen to them. When you are talking, they should be expected to listen to you. Only one person has the floor at a time unless directions state otherwise.
- ✓ **CONFIDENTIALITY** ~ Whatever is said in the group stays in the group. No one is to repeat anything said in the group to anyone outside the group. If someone says something that you'd like to share outside the group, ask permission from the person who said it. If they say "yes," you have permission. If not, keep it to yourself. No questions asked. Honor and respect their wish.

NOTE: When someone breaks one of the "group expectations," stop what you are doing and ask if everyone understood the expectation broken. As leader, take the blame the first time sharing that you may not have explained the expectations well enough. Repeat the expectation and move on. If it is broken again, stop and confront the person and give them a choice of stopping the behavior or coming to sit next to you. If it happens again, have them move next to you. Make it a point to talk with that person after the meeting. Do not be afraid to stop and confront. Keep calm and do not raise your voice. But still confront the behavior.

THE SMALL YOUTH MINISTRY

Inspired by Lee Belmas

Did you know that the majority of the CID congregations would be considered small in size? So how does a smaller church or a smaller youth ministry do its ministry? Doesn't a successful youth ministry require money and lots of kids? We've only got two, three, five kids at best. What can we do?

More than you think! Remember that counting kids is not as important as making kids count. Jesus challenged His disciples to "make" disciples, not count them (Matthew 28:19). Sure, you can do large group games better with a large number of kids, but when it comes to sharing faith, it still happens one to one. And that can and needs to happen in any size group.

Here are some advantages to the small youth ministry:

LESS STRESS + You need less volunteers, less money to raise, more flexibility within events, less expenses, etc.

STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS + You get to know everyone very well. It's like your own small family. It's easier to keep track of when people miss and easier to check up to see how they are doing. It's easier to know everyone's names. Youth have a harder time falling through the cracks in a small youth ministry.

MORE FLEXIBLE + It's easier getting youth involved in activities in smaller congregations. The whole group can usher at one time. Whether a group is large or small, every youth in it has at least one gift. All we need to do is help them discover that gift and plug them in. Smaller congregations with small youth ministries are often more flexible in getting youth involved in a moment's notice.

LESS BOOKKEEPING + It's much easier keeping track of five youth. It is also easier to make a phone call to five youth instead of twenty-five.

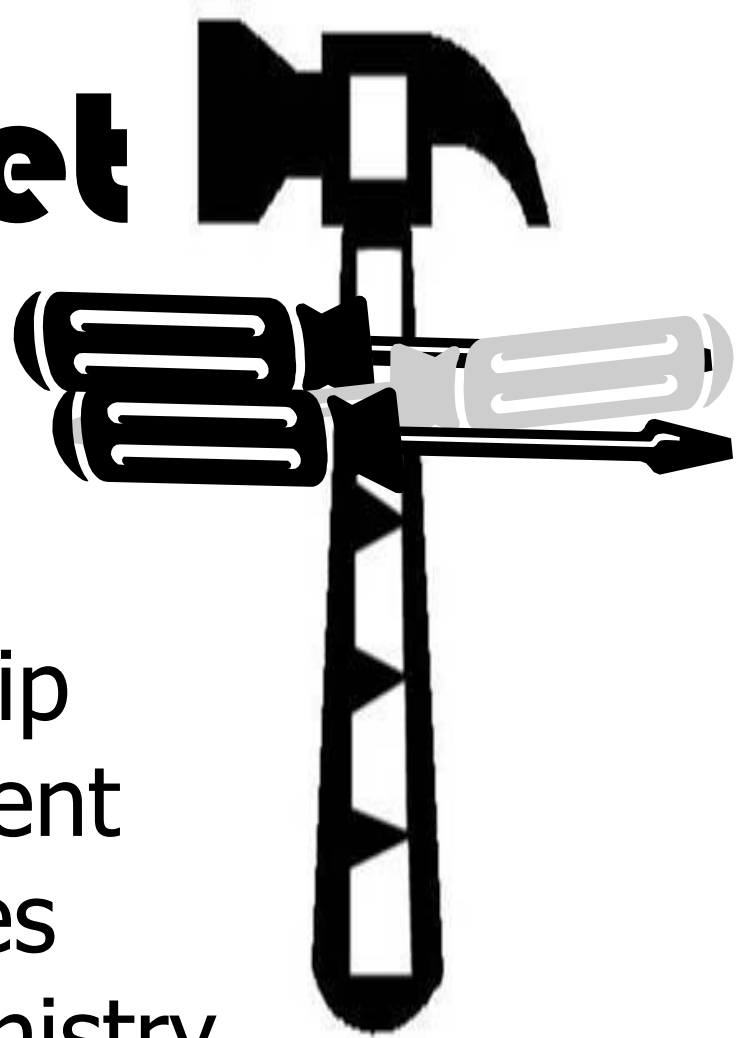
MORE INTERGENERATIONAL + Small youth ministries in small churches are more involved with all generations. It's one big (small) family!

SAME MISSION + When it is all said and done, we're still making disciples and still worshipping the same one, true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.



Toolset

#3



Leadership Development Resources for Youth Ministry

The following pages include several resources for adults and youth to use as they provide leadership within youth ministry. They may be added to or removed based on the times and the needs of your youth ministry.

Qualities of Faithful Youth Ministry Leaders

The following are qualities identified by volunteer youth leaders as important for serving with youth. Please note that a single person is not expected to possess all of these qualities at one time, nor are they expected to be present before one can serve with youth. These are simply good qualities for adults to grow in and know about as they serve with youth.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ✿ Love for God | ✿ Flexible/adaptive |
| ✿ Strong faith | ✿ Plan and carry out ideas |
| ✿ Apply God's Word to youth | ✿ Build on ideas others' have |
| ✿ Servant leader attitude | ✿ Able to relate to others |
| ✿ Communicates well | ✿ Encourages/gives affirmation |
| ✿ Well-rounded person | ✿ Discernment |
| ✿ Know facility maintenance people | ✿ Visionary |
| ✿ Organized | ✿ Humble |
| ✿ Technology-oriented | ✿ Be able to network with others |
| ✿ See the big picture | ✿ Passionate |
| ✿ Think of others/care | ✿ Courageous |
| ✿ Ask good questions | ✿ Non-political |
| ✿ Energetic/enthusiastic | ✿ Good PR skills |
| ✿ Resource person | ✿ Good listener |
| ✿ Love for youth | ✿ Provide guidance |
| ✿ Have time for youth | ✿ Be a leader |
| ✿ Be responsible | ✿ Be genuine/real/sincere |
| ✿ Delegate | ✿ Motivate |
| ✿ Create | ✿ Relate |



Adult Volunteer Youth Leader Ministry Description

You have been called by this congregation to serve as an Adult Volunteer Youth Leader. As a leader you will play a vital part in our youth ministry. You will be using the gifts and talents God has given you to serve Him. You will spend time and energy with the youth that our congregation has entrusted to you. We, as a congregation, will support you in any way we can.

As an Adult Volunteer Youth Leader for _____ Lutheran Church, you are expected to:

- ❖ Teach Lutheran Christian doctrine.
- ❖ Have a heart for and pursue the best interests of youth.
- ❖ Work with other adult leaders in carrying out youth ministry activities.
- ❖ Be at the youth activities you are responsible for.
- ❖ Let the pastor or other adult leaders know when you cannot attend an activity.
- ❖ Be willing to delegate youth ministry responsibilities to others.
- ❖ Be a Christian example to others.
- ❖ Serve for a term of _____ year (s), but not longer than _____ year(s).
- ❖ Let the church know if you need to resign, as soon as possible.
- ❖ Communicate with the pastor and other boards of responsibility.
- ❖ Pray for all who work with the youth, the youth themselves, and this congregation.

_____ Lutheran Church agrees to serve you by:

- ❖ Communicating with you on a regular basis.
- ❖ Listening to your needs and concerns.
- ❖ Providing you with necessary training to carry out your calling.
- ❖ Pay for your registration fees and travel expenses to all youth activities.
- ❖ Providing youth ministry resources to help you do your job.
- ❖ Providing a church budget line for youth ministry expenses.
- ❖ Supporting you in any way we can.
- ❖ Praying for you.

Other agreements, expectations:

Adult Volunteer Youth Leader _____ Date _____

Church President _____ Date _____

Pastor _____ Date _____

Commissioning of Adult Youth Ministry Leaders

Pastor: Dear Friends in Christ. Serving as a leader in Christ's Church is a wonderful privilege which brings great responsibility. You have been chosen and have accepted the privilege and responsibility to serve as adult leaders in our ministry with youth.

As a leader, you are called upon to reflect the kind of leadership Jesus displayed, that of servanthood. Serving our young people in Christ means that you will need to be in the study of His Word, in worship, in celebration and in play. There will be times of struggle. There will be times of joy. There will be times of counsel. Our Lord will be with you in all of these times.

Our Lord has promised to be with you, to give you guidance and help. Knowing that, in faith, I now ask you, will you accept the privilege and responsibility to serve as an adult youth ministry leader? Will you faithfully serve your duties, conforming to the Word of God, the confessions of our church, and the constitution of this congregation according to the ability God has given you? If so, then say "Yes with the help of God."

Leaders: Yes, with the help of God.

Pastor: We welcome you as adult youth ministry leaders. You are charged, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give all diligence to your work, that you be guided by God's Word and His Spirit, that your ministry may serve for the glory of God and the prospering of youth ministry in our church.

(to the congregation)

These people have accepted the responsibility to serve with our youth. Will you serve them and our entire youth ministry through regular prayer? Will you affirm God's desire that we continue to care for and minister with the young people of our church? If so, then say "Yes, with the help of God."

PEOPLE: YES, WITH THE HELP OF GOD.

Pastor: Let us pray. Lord, our heavenly Father, we pray for these people who have been commissioned as adult youth ministry leaders. Grant them Your blessings and joy, Lord, that they many have much success in Your grace and mercy. Be with our youth, nurture them through Your Word, so that we may grow in Your grace. In Your Son's name we pray. Amen.

Involving Parents In Youth Ministry

Having parents involved in youth ministry is a great idea!

So what can you have them do? Here's a partial list. When you are done reading, add your own thoughts! And then use the following page directly with parents.

Administrative Assistance

Bible Study Leaders

Bulletin Board Caretakers

Booster Club Members

Representatives on Church Committees

Calligraphers and Artists

Camp Assistants

Retreat Coordinators

Child-care Providers for Volunteer Adult Youth Leaders

Parenting-Skills Teachers

Coaches

Prayer Club

Newsletter Publishers

Drivers

Puppet Ministry

Experts and Speakers

Secret Encouragers

Family-Picnic Organizers

Family Night Participants

Sunday School Teachers

Fund-raisers

Supply Purchasers

Hosts for Home Parties

Telephone Callers

Local Advocates for Teenagers

Transportation Coordinators

Trip Sponsors

Music Leaders

Parent Advisory Board Members

And

And

And

And

And

And

Youth Ministry ~~ Parent Involvement

(based on a tool developed by DCE Scott Wycherley of St. John Lutheran Church, Townsend, WI)

You, as your youth's parent, are still the number one influence in their life. You still have the opportunity to have a spiritual impact in your youth's faith development. We would like for you to consider how you might best serve with our church's youth ministry this school year. As part of our total ministry here at church, you are asked to make a commitment to support at least one aspect of our youth ministry for the coming school year. Following are some of the options you can choose from (*please note that participation in worship is not an option*):

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Driver to off-site events | <input type="checkbox"/> Bible Study Leader | <input type="checkbox"/> Drama Coordinator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supply Coordinator | <input type="checkbox"/> Usher Coordinator | <input type="checkbox"/> VBS Leader |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Servant Event Adult Participant | <input type="checkbox"/> Devotion Leader | <input type="checkbox"/> Fund-raising |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Leader Assistant | <input type="checkbox"/> Tutor of youth | <input type="checkbox"/> Choir Director |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Instrumental Coordinator | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Idea | |

You are also asked to write down...

- ❖ at least one way you are going to grow in your faith life this new school year.
Growing in your faith life could be something as simple as committing to daily meal time prayer, morning and/or evening prayer, reading a chapter in your Bible each day, doing a devotion daily, being regular in worship, etc.
- ❖ at least one way you can grow in becoming a servant to someone or an organization.
Growing in your servanthood skills might include visiting grandma/grandpa regularly, helping a neighbor out, volunteering at a hospital/nursing home/food bank, tutoring children, etc.

Remember that youth ministry is more than just a youth being dropped off to youth group. It is involvement in the life of the church.

PARENT YOUTH MINISTRY ACTIVITY SHEET

Name: _____

Email: _____

One parent youth ministry activity I will be involved with this year is...

One Faith Building Activity: _____

One Servanthood Activity: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Youth Ministry Opinion Page

We want to know what you think! Please share your opinion on the following by writing down your comments clearly. On the first three questions, please check a maximum of three (3) choices that summarize the comments you have written.

1. What are three main PURPOSES or reasons for which our youth ministry exists?

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Witness | <input type="checkbox"/> Meet new friends | <input type="checkbox"/> Meet needs of members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Worship | <input type="checkbox"/> Discipleship | <input type="checkbox"/> Promote Youth Mission work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fellowship | <input type="checkbox"/> Equip youth to serve | <input type="checkbox"/> Meet needs of community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide loving, caring atmosphere | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nurture, spiritual growth | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | |

2. What are three STRENGTHS of our youth ministry?

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dedicated youth | <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising | <input type="checkbox"/> Instruction, spiritual growth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caring relationships | <input type="checkbox"/> Care for others | <input type="checkbox"/> Word and Sacrament |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fellowship opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> Christ centered | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Bible study |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Servant attitudes | <input type="checkbox"/> Servant Events | <input type="checkbox"/> Share faith w/ each other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer | <input type="checkbox"/> Strengthen family relationships | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intentional outreach | <input type="checkbox"/> Support mission efforts | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cross-cultural minded | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | |

3. What are three NEEDS for improvement that you see for our youth ministry?

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> More trained leaders | <input type="checkbox"/> Service projects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Training youth to lead | <input type="checkbox"/> Fun activities | <input type="checkbox"/> More outreach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual growth | <input type="checkbox"/> Unity, harmony | <input type="checkbox"/> Forgiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tithing our funds | <input type="checkbox"/> Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> More involved youth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parents more involved | <input type="checkbox"/> Worship | <input type="checkbox"/> Bible study |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in gatherings, servant events | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fellowship, closeness | | |

4. How could these NEEDS be met?

5. Other comments you may have concerning our youth Ministry:

Youth Ministry Evaluation

DATE: _____

Help us evaluate our youth ministry. Please be honest. Your comments and suggestions are appreciated. Thanks!

Circle the number most appropriate to each item. Leave an item blank if you don't know how to answer it.

1=Not Good

2=Okay

3=Good

4=Great

5=WOW!

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| A) Our meetings accomplish what we set out to do | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| B) The leaders are prepared | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| C) The atmosphere is warm and friendly | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| D) New youth and visitors feel welcome | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| E) Youth are challenged in their faith through Bible studies | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| F) There are a wide variety of youth activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| G) Group discussion are open at any time | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| H) Youth are involved in service projects | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I) Youth are trained to share their faith with others | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| J) Worship is a part of our meetings | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

The best thing about our youth ministry is...

If we knew that we couldn't fail, our youth ministry would be doing...

Our youth ministry should...

Other comments...

NAME (*optional*): _____

Resources for Youth Ministry

The following resources have been compiled for their possible usefulness in providing information on other organizations and resources related to youth ministry. They are but just a few of the many organizations and resources available. Please review and discuss all resources and organizations with your pastor or appropriate professional church worker. The Central Illinois District Office nor the CID Youth Ministry Committee does not necessarily endorse the organizations or resources represented below and/or on the next page.



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The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
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St. Louis, MO 63122-7295
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<http://www.lcms.org/page.aspx?pid=746>

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www.cidlcms.org



**Central Illinois
District**

The purpose of the Central Illinois District, as a corporate body, is to respond to the Great Commission of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Matt. 28) which is "to make disciples of all nations."

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www.serendipityhouse.com

Youth Specialties

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El Cajon, CA 92020
619/440-2333
www.youthspecialties.com

Search Institute

The Banks Building
615 First Avenue NE, Suite 125
Minneapolis, MN 55413
800-888-7828
www.search-institute.org

The Youth & Family Institute

1401 E. 100th St.
Bloomington, MN 55425
952-698-3834
www.youthandfamilyinstitute.org

Interlinc -Christian Music Resources

5307 Leipers Creek Rd
Franklin, TN 37064
800-725-3300
www.interlinc-online.com

National Institute on**Media and the Family**

606 24th Avenue South, Suite 606
Minneapolis, MN 55454
888-672-KIDS (672-5437)
www.mediafamily.org

Focus on the Family

8605 Explorer Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80995
800-A-FAMILY (232-6459)
www.family.org

THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF A YOUTH LED WORSHIP SERVICE

by
DCE
Scott
Rauch

“Our Lord speaks and we listen. His Word bestows what it says. Faith that is born from what is heard acknowledges the gifts received with eager thankfulness and praise. Music is drawn into this thankfulness and praise, enlarging and elevating the adoration of our gracious giver God...The rhythm of our worship is from him to us, and then from us back to him...Each generation receives from those who went before and, in making that tradition of the Divine Service its own, adds what best may serve in its own day--the living heritage and something new.”

(thoughts from page 6 of Lutheran Worship)

A youth-led worship service is a unique (but not the only) opportunity for a congregation to

✚ help its young people, specifically in the 5th-12th grades, learn the traditions of worship from the past; and

✚ experience something new in worship that best may serve a congregation today.

A youth-led worship service is a unique (but not the only) opportunity for youth and adults to work together to lead all the members of the congregation in worshipping the Lord.

A youth-led worship service is a unique (but not the only) opportunity for a pastor to directly influence and guide young people in the appropriateness of worship. It is also an opportunity for a pastor to be influenced by young people to better understand how to help people worship in new ways.

And like most youth ministry oriented activities, a youth-led worship service needs to be well-organized and thought out. This is not just a spaghetti dinner to raise funds, not

just a lock-in, in order to have fun. This is leading the people of God in worship. It is the most public ministry of the church and needs to be respected as such.

“What-You-Can-Really-Use” (and “What-Has-Really-Been-Used”) Within a Youth-Led Worship Service

The service begins with **Invocation**, the announcement that we are in the presence of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. What is about to happen is because of Him. The **Benediction** ends the service, an announcement that God blesses us and sends us forth.

The Word - Bible Readings and the Message (sermon, monologue, drama, props)

The Sacraments - Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Music - Traditional and New Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs, Instrumentalists, Choirs

Prayer - Confession, Other Prayers

Service - Processional, Recessional, Creed, Offering, Installations/ Commissionings

- ✦ Remember to have GOOD INSTRUCTIONS IN THE BULLETIN.
- ✦ Have the service JOINTLY PREPARED AND LED BY YOUTH AND ADULTS.
- ✦ Help the congregation remember the theme by using BANNERS AND/OR A SMALL GIFT.

The Word

The rhythm of our worship is from Him to us

Bible readings, of course, are the most direct way God speaks to us in a worship service.

- 📖 Have 1, 2, or 3 youth read the Bible readings as lay readers might during a regular service.
- 📖 Have a youth and adult read the Bible readings in narrative fashion (i.e. with a narrator and a speaker). Many of the Gospel readings provide a great opportunity for this style.
- 📖 Take a big yellow envelope. Put the Bible reading or a small Bible into it. Seal it. Take it up front with you. Open it in front of everyone. Read the reading to the people as if it were a personal letter from God to them. The epistles can be read to the people in this fashion.
- 📖 Use Bible readings to help form the liturgy throughout the service. Use Ephesians 1:3-6, 7-10, and 11-14 with a litany-style invocation (i.e. “In the name of the Father,...Son,...Holy Spirit.”) For a benediction, use John 14:27 and 31b.
- 📖 Use hand gestures to help illustrate various parts of the reading. Deuteronomy 11:18-21, 26-28, the Old Testament reading for the 2nd Sunday after Pentecost, is full of opportunities to illustrate the message as it is read.

The Message helps the congregation understand the connection of God’s Word and the theme of the day.

- ☺ Have your pastor preach a sermon. Sometimes we’re too quick to do a drama just to do something different.
- ☺ But don’t miss out on doing a drama. Here are some ideas...
 - ❖ Do a series of dramas throughout the service, maybe each connected to a Bible reading.
 - ❖ Use props to help illustrate the message, but be aware that this is a worship service and not a play. Be appropriate and meaningful.
 - ❖ Do the drama Reader’s Theater style (i.e., “actors” have scripts which are used as props).
 - ❖ Memorize the drama only if you have enough time to properly practice it. If the drama is not memorized, make sure each participant knows their part fairly well.
 - ❖ A drama can be a simple monologue, a two-person conversation, or a big, multi-actor production.
 - ❖ Use surprise appropriately with drama. It helps catch people’s attention and draw them to the main point. Have a drama interrupt a song. Have the actors do their part out in the congregation.
 - ❖ Use microphones (if available) to help people hear the message better. Encourage actors to speak louder, but not shout.
- ☺ Make sure the message is well connected to the Bible readings. Don’t do a drama or present a message by youth just to say you’re doing a youth service. This is worship and needs to be appropriate.

The Sacraments

The Sacraments provide God's people with another direct access to Him and His loving grace and forgiveness. While both Baptism and Holy Communion are appropriate in any worship setting, both are to be properly administered by the pastor of the church. Here are some possibilities how youth can assist within the liturgy of the Sacraments.

Have a youth choir sing "You Are My Own" by Pastor Gerald Coleman, or another meaningful song as part of the Baptismal liturgy.

- ✦ Have a youth serve as a junior assistant, especially with the baptisms of infants, small children and youth. A youth could hold the pastor's hymnal or the baptismal candle, etc.
- ✦ Have a youth choir lead the congregation in a song during Holy Communion.
- ✦ Have the youth group bake bread for use during Holy Communion.
- ✦ Have a youth and an adult (maybe a user or elder) bring the elements up together to the altar as part of the liturgy.

Music

Music enlarges and elevates the adoration of our gracious God

Songs are an incredible way of communicating to God and about God. Selected songs should reflect and build on the theme of the day.

- 🎵 Mix youth group oriented songs with traditional hymns. Music helps communicate your message, whether it is an upbeat, rock-style song or a majestic, classical hymn.
- 🎵 All songs need to be well introduced to the congregation and well played as the congregation sings.
- 🎵 Use songs that can be learned quickly and sung easily. Contemporary Christian Music, while a wonderful music alternative for youth, rarely provides songs that can easily be sung by the congregation in worship. Here are four

songbook resources which provide lots of songs to choose from:

Lift Up Your Hearts; All God's People Sing; Singing Saints

(These are available from Concordia Publishing House, 1-800-325-3040)

Songs

(Order from Songs & Creations, Inc., 1-415-457-6610)

- 🎵 Don't forget to use Lutheran Worship or The Lutheran Hymnal (*and get ready for the new Lutheran Hymnal coming out soon!*).

Instrumentalists provide youth and adults a wonderful opportunity to share their musical gifts with God and the congregation.

- 🎵 Take a survey of 7-12th grade youth to find out who plays instruments and who likes to sing.
- 🎵 Have as many youth and adults as possible play their instruments at various times throughout the service.
 - ❖ Pre-Service music
 - ❖ Put together a band to assist with hymns and songs. A band could be made up of a guitarist and pianist or go even bigger with a small orchestra. Remember to practice well beforehand.
 - ❖ Music during the offering and Holy Communion.
 - ❖ Post-service music
- 🎵 Make sure instrumentalists are well prepared with good music and enough practice time.

Choirs are an incredible way of communicating to God and about God.

- 🎵 In addition to a youth choir singing during a youth service, have a joint youth-adult choir sing.
- 🎵 Have Sunday school children sing during a youth service.
- 🎵 A youth choir can help a congregation learn unfamiliar youth oriented songs. It might be helpful to sing from the front. It is also helpful to have the choir sing

the first verse of a song and then have the congregation join in.

- ☛ Any choir should be well prepared and practiced.
- ☛ A youth choir can sing difficult pieces, but they don't have to. Sing a song from a youth-oriented songbook. Remember the goal is to enhance the worship of God, not to enhance the image of the choir.

Prayer **...and then from us back to Him**

The Invocation always points us to who we worship. Here are two samples.

L: We begin our worship in the name of God our Father, Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, and in the Holy Spirit, our Joygiver in life.

C: GOD, WE ARE GLAD YOU ARE HERE WITH US. WE ASK YOU TO BLESS OUR WORSHIP, TO GIVE US STRENGTH AND JOY SO THAT WE MAY PRAISE AND SERVE YOU AS BEST AS WE CAN. WE COME BEFORE YOU IN HUMBLENESS, YET ALSO IN CELEBRATION, BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU HAVE DONE FOR US SIMPLY OUT OF LOVE. THANK YOU, LORD. AMEN.

ⲁ ⲁ ⲁ

L: We worship in the name of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

C: WHO COMES WITH POWER, WHOSE ARM RULES FOR HIM, WHO IS THE CREATOR OF THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.

L: Who is our Good Shepherd, who gathers us, carries us, and gently leads us in the way of life.

C: WHO GIVES AND RENEWS OUR STRENGTH IN THE LORD, WHO NEVER TIRES OR GROWS WEARY. ALL PRAISE BE TO OUR EVERLASTING GOD, THE CREATOR OF THE ENDS OF THE EARTH, OUR SAVIOR AND

REDEEMER, AND OUR COMFORTER. AMEN.

The Confession of Sins gives everyone the opportunity to confess their sin and sinful lives and receive the forgiveness of sins. Here is one example.

(Note: The confession should be written in the first person (I/me) for we cannot confess for another person.)

P: Let us confess our sins to God our Father.

Youth: *(stands up within the congregation and points at pastor)* I don't need God or you to tell me what to do in life; I have my own mind. I know what's best for me.

C: FORGIVE ME, O LORD, FOR THINKING THAT I KNOW MORE THAN YOU, FOR THINKING THAT I CAN INSTRUCT YOU, FOR REJECTING YOUR GOOD WORD FOR MY LIFE.

Y: *(stands up within the congregation, holding hands out)* I'm not sure that God is up to date anymore. His thinking doesn't seem to make sense in this day and age.

C: FORGIVE ME, JESUS, FOR COMPARING YOU TO THE WISDOM OF THIS WORLD INSTEAD OF LISTENING TO YOUR WORD OF LIFE.

Y: *(stands up within the congregation, hands on hips)* I just don't see God caring for me. Where is He? I bet He just doesn't know where I am, or that I even exist.

C: FORGIVE ME, GOD, FOR COMPLAINING ABOUT YOU AND NOT PAYING ATTENTION TO YOU.

Y: *(stands up, speaks hurriedly, moves anxiously)* I don't have enough time right now to help out anyone. When my schedule eases up, I'll help them.

C: I AM LIKE THE GRASS, LORD. I WITHER AND FADE UNDER YOUR ALMIGHTY PRESENCE. I HUMBLY BEG YOUR FORGIVENESS AND MERCY. I AM UNWORTHY TO BE IN YOUR PRESENCE. FORGIVE ME FOR JESUS CHRIST'S SAKE.

P: The Lord says to each of us, "I am the everlasting God. Be comforted, My people. Forgiveness is yours through My Son's sacrifice on the cross for you. Go, your strength is renewed, your sins have been paid for."

**C: PRAISE TO THE HOLY ONE!
AMEN!**

The Benediction pronounces God's blessing on all as they go out to serve. Here are two ways you could do it.

L: We know that He who raised the Lord Jesus will also raise us with Jesus and bring us to live with Him.

C: WE THANK AND GLORIFY YOU, O GOD!

L: You who believe, go and speak.

C: WE GO TO SERVE THE GOD WHO HAS SAVED US.

L: We go with the blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ!

C: AMEN AND AMEN!

✠ ✠ ✠

L: May the peace of God, which goes beyond everything we can understand, bless us and keep us safe as we go to serve our Lord Jesus Christ.

ALL: WE GO TO SERVE WITH THE BLESSING OF OUR GOD! AMEN.

Other Prayers are done throughout the service. There are collects and prayers of the day. There is the Lord's Prayer. There are prayers led by one leader up front and litany prayers between a leader and the congregation. Here are a couple of ideas you could use with the various prayer times throughout the service.

✠ Have 5-6th or 7-8th grade youth each write a prayer using a general format. Each youth should pick an item from a bag, think about what the object represents in this world and how God is involved with it. Objects might include a spoon, shoe, nail, cup, rock, Bible, etc. The prayer could go like this:

"I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have given us (object). (Object)

helps me remember that (to) (and youth would fill in the rest)."

✠ A Prayer for the Day could be sung by a soloist.

✠ A Psalm can serve as a prayer. Have two readers read alternating verses from two sides up front.

✠ Have youth write and read prayers based on specific prayer requests or statements. Make sure to include prayers for those who have specific needs in the congregation or community.

All prayers led by youth or adults should be done facing the altar. It is important that the congregation know we're talking with God, not just to each other. Since youth may not always project their voices well, a microphone is pretty essential. It might be good to have younger youth accompanied by older youth in leading prayer.

SERVICE

Faith that is born from what is heard acknowledges the gifts received with eager thankfulness and praise.

Processionals and Recessionals are excellent opportunities for youth to serve who may not enjoy speaking or singing parts. Carrying the crucifix, candles, and banners provide a majestic and festive atmosphere for worship.

Have the youth group make a unique banner for the theme of the day. Or make a banner for a National Youth Gathering year or a Servant Event banner.

Have your adult and youth ministry leaders process in and sit together. Maybe it will be just one person or it might be ten. It doesn't matter. See if the pastor will sit with them on this Sunday.

The Creed is each person's opportunity to state publicly what he/she believes about God. While it is important for the three main creeds of the Church to be mainly used, here are a couple of possible ideas.

✠ Use a Trinity song or hymn.

✋ Have the youth group write a creed.
Make sure you allow your pastor to review it.

The Offering, of course, is to allow the people of God to give of their material gifts to the Lord. But here are some additional ideas to enhance a financial offering.

- 🕯 Have everyone write down on a piece of paper one way they can serve God and one way they can serve another person this week.
- 🕯 Have everyone bring their offering up to the front instead of passing a plate around.

Installations and Commissionings for all types of youth ministry related groups or events can be especially meaningful as part of a youth worship service.

Install your adult youth leader(s) and youth officers every year.

Commission National Youth Gathering groups and Servant Event teams.

Always find a way to involve the congregation in the installation or commissioning.

Tightening Down Those Loose Nuts and Bolts

It is very important to remember that a youth-led worship service is but one very special way in which youth can serve in helping the people of God worship Jesus. A youth-led worship service is a very good type of service to use as part of the church year. It is a good way for a congregation to remember that God is the one who gives us eternal strength and life, a life that is always growing in grace and joy.

It is also important to remember that a youth-led service is developed out of love and devotion to our Lord, not to show off the youth group or to prove a point. It should always be worked on and presented to the best of our abilities, no matter what those abilities may be. It can be done in all churches. There is no required number of youth to lead a meaningful worship service.

It just takes creativity and the knowledge that God only cares that His people worship Him in truth and love through faith in Jesus Christ.

Lutheran Youth Fellowship. . .

Lutheran Youth Fellowship (LYF) is the youth organization of The Lutheran—Church Missouri Synod. LYF's Purpose is that youth and adults be empowered to use their gifts and energies in service to God and His people as they celebrate their faith in Jesus Christ!

LYF...

- is a vehicle for maintaining youth visibility in the Synod
- is youth groups and more
- provides support and encouragement for a holistic approach to youth ministry
- gives teens the opportunity to express their dreams, visions, and concerns to the church
- empowers teens to define their mission in the church
- enables teens to discover their leadership gifts and to use those gifts in service to God and His people.

All LCMS congregational youth ministry programs are considered members of Lutheran Youth Fellowship.

The LYF Council of Representatives takes on a greater role in leadership development, communications, networking and needs assessment, especially through a leadership event held in St. Louis, Missouri each spring.

Every three years at the National LCMS Youth Gathering, Lutheran Youth Fellowship elects its new Executive Board at a Delegate Assembly made up of representatives of the congregations participating at the Gathering. The Executive Board helps guide the vision of LYF, participates in the development of teen leadership program and materials and serves as the "official" representatives of teens in the church.

LYF has a new logo, developed in conjunction with the 20th Anniversary year of the organization. The new logo is a stylized cross made from the intersecting design of the organization's initials. The cross is key to what LYF is, emphasizing that the cross and work of Jesus Christ is the central focus of all that we do in youth ministry. The "y"s in the four sets of initials with their circle "heads" represent the youth of the church, their "arms" uplifted in celebration and youthful enthusiasm. Their "arms" touch/clasp emphasizing the fellowship and community aspects of youth ministry, inherent in the group's name and serve as a reminder that a key element in youth ministry in the new century is building relationships - with Christ and with each other.

The Central Illinois District presently has two LYF Representatives, but the CID Youth Committee is interested in seeing this number grow. If you would like to apply to be a LYF Representative for the CID, please fill out the application on the next page and return it to:



Glenn Goeres
Central Illinois District - LCMS
1850 N. Grand Avenue West
Springfield, IL 62702

Application & Commitment Form

Please fill out the front and back of this form completely. The CID Lutheran Youth Fellowship (LYF) Representative position is a renewable one-year commitment for high school youth. High school youth may serve in this position until they graduate. Please type or print neatly.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone Number () _____ Birthday _____

Email Address _____

Parent/Guardian (s)'s Name (s) _____

School/Year in School _____

Church/City _____

Pastor's Name _____

Please write your thoughts on the following questions.

- Briefly describe two of your strengths:

- Briefly describe one of your weaknesses:

- Describe what it means to you to serve Jesus Christ:

(Please continue on next page)

- Describe what it means for you to be a part of your church:

- Share what other commitments/activities you will be involved with in this coming year:

If you are selected to be a CID LYF Representative you will be expected to...

- Represent yourself, family and church as a growing disciple of Jesus Christ
- Attend the Council of LYF Representatives Leadership Training in St. Louis annually in March (this is usually a Thursday-Sunday event - all expenses are paid)
- Work with fellow CID LYF Reps to develop and present leadership workshops for high school youth in the Central Illinois District
- Attend and participate with the CID Youth Ministry Committee which officially meets three times annually at the CID Office in Springfield, IL

If you are willing to serve as a CID LYF Representative please sign/date below.
Return this form to the adult who contacted you about serving.

Youth Applicant's Signature

Date

For Parent/Guardian

Please read through the following paragraph and sign/date below.

I understand the commitment my child is willing to make by applying to serve as a CID LYF Representative. I support my child in this application and if he/she is chosen to serve I will support my child with prayer and interest as they serve. I look forward to my child continuing to grow as Jesus' disciple as he/she faithfully serves in Christ's Church.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

If you have any questions please discuss them with the adult recruiting you/your child or contact Glenn Goeres District Executive, at the CID Office in Springfield, IL, (217) 793-1802.

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM & SEMINARIES FINANCIAL AID OFFICES

ANN ARBOR Concordia University
4090 Geddes Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
734-995-7300

PORTLAND Concordia University
2811 NE Holman Street
Portland, OR 97211
503-288-9371

AUSTIN Concordia University
3400 N. Interstate 35
Austin, TX 78705-2799
512-452-7661

RIVER FOREST Concordia University
7400 Augusta Street
River Forest, IL 60305-1499
708-771-8300

BRONXVILLE Concordia College
171 White Plains Road
Bronxville, NY 10708-3101
914-337-9300

ST. LOUIS Concordia Seminary
801 DeMun Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63105
314-505-7000

FORT WAYNE Concordia Theological Sem.
6600 N. Clinton Street
Ft. Wayne, IN 46825-4996
219-452-2100

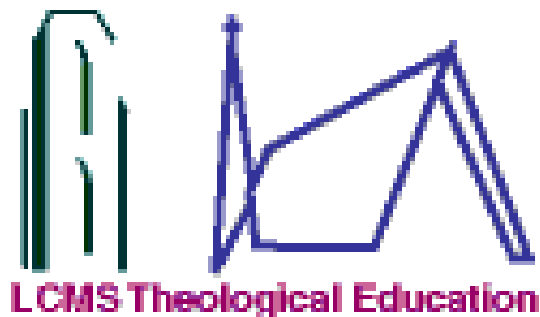
ST. PAUL Concordia University
275 N. Syndicate Street
St. Paul, MN 55104-5494
651-641-8278

IRVINE Concordia University
1530 Concordia West
Irvine, CA 92612-3299
949-854-8002

SELMA Concordia College
1804 Green Street
Selma, AL 36701
334-874-5700

MEQUON Concordia University
12800 N. Lakeshore Drive
Mequon, WI 53092-2402
262-243-9371

SEWARD Concordia University
800 N. Columbia Avenue
Seward, NE 68434
402-643-3651



Servant Event Ministry

District and Congregational Services
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
1333 S Kirkwood Road
St. Louis, MO 63122-7295

Phone - 800-248-1930
Fax - 314-996-1124
Website – “dcs.lcms.org/?s=youth”

Servant Events equip God's people to grow in their faith through serving, sharing Christ and developing relationships. . . be a servant for Jesus' sake!

Since 1981, LCMS Youth Ministry has promoted servant opportunities for youth. Through the years, thousands of young people and adults have participated in these Servant Events. LCMS Districts, congregations, schools, universities, camps and Lutheran social service agencies have joined the Youth Ministry office as partners in Servant Event ministry. We give thanks to God for richly blessing this ministry!

A Servant Event is an experience that takes people out of their daily routine, encourages them to practice Christ's unconditional love, serves people in ways that enrich their lives and share their faith in practical ways. We pray your service for our Lord will be truly a blessed experience as you provide for the needs of God's people.

Scripture tells us that believers are the body of Christ...His continuing presence in the world. Through us, Christ continues to extend love, comfort, care and forgiveness to those in need. Because Christ lives in you, you are able to make a difference. You are His eyes, His ears, His hands, His feet here on earth!

"This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people, but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God."

2 Corinthians 9:12

Servant Events are . . .

- Opportunities for serving and being served in the way that Christ served us!
- Opportunities for Christian service by young people and adults.
- A great way to grow in understanding of God's call to service through worship, Bible study, work, reflection, and community building.
- A way to relate experiences of service to daily life and faith.
- A unique opportunity for people to experience new places, new people and a new culture.
- A way to take people out of their daily routines, encourage them to practice Christ's unconditional love, serve people in ways that enrich their lives, and share their faith in practical ways.



Why Take Part in Servant Events?

- Living out your life in response to God's love is the "way of life" called Christianity.
- Taking part in service activities and Servant Events provide people with an opportunity to live what they believe.
- God wants us to meet the needs of hurting people, but he also knows service has the power to change us at our core! Service gets our eyes off ourselves and into the world.
- Service in the name and power of Jesus Christ does transform people and transformed people can change the world . . . one person at a time.

At a Servant Event, you have the satisfaction of doing something significant for others, all in the name of Jesus!