



A service of the  
Northwest District  
of the  
Lutheran Church -  
Missouri Synod

# Youth Supports

A resource to encourage and empower youth  
leaders for the expansion of the Lord's kingdom.

November 2001 - Volume 2, Issue 11

- **Our Baptism Identity - a Source of Security**
- **List of people and resources available to you!**

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## Our Baptism Identity - a Source of Security

Youth ministry can be one of the most rewarding areas in church work. At the same time it can be one of the most challenging as well. Especially for those who work with Jr. and Sr. High School youth. Let's face it, the teen years are not the easiest time in a person's life.

Think of all the things that are going on in the lives of our youth. In addition to any of the church activities that they are involved in there is also the myriad of other things that they spend their time doing. School, sports, part-time jobs, and family obligations alone can fill their schedules to the breaking point. As if all this were not enough, our youth also have to do all this at the same time that their body chemistry is making drastic and seemingly inexplicable changes.

Our youth have little control over their schedules and even less control over their bodies. It is no wonder that so many of them seem to have questions about who they are. Identity can be a troublesome issue for anyone, but it can be especially confusing for youth. The confusion arises because our youth for the most part are given their identities by others.

They are given identities by their families, by their teachers, and especially by their peers and this can cause a lot of stress. Think about it. All at the same time our youth may be trying to shed a bad identity, live up to a good identity, or even establish an identity independent of the labels given by others.

As our youth navigate the difficult waters between childhood and adulthood, I believe that one particular area of identity can make all the difference for them — that of Baptismal identity. In baptism God calls each of our youth by name, washes them clean of sin, and recreates them as believers. In the waters of their baptism our youth encounter the living God and receive the gift of faith. In their baptisms our youth are united with Christ, the benefits of the cross are applied to them and their eternal lives are begun. In their baptisms our children become the children of God. With so much of their lives still before them, baptismal identity gives our youth something in the present to hang onto. It is an identity given them by God Himself, and it is something that they did not have to do anything to get.

In a highly transitory time in their life baptismal identity is also something that is permanent. Remember your own days as a teenager? Are you the same person that you were then? Much of who our youth are today will be left behind as they grow up. Baptismal identity on the other hand is something that can be part of their lives forever.

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Those of us who spend a great deal of time working with youth have a great opportunity to remind our youth of their baptisms and to show them who they are in God's eyes. In turning our youth back to their baptisms we also have the chance to remember our own.

- Grant Knepper, Pastor of Mount Olive Lutheran, Seattle, WA

Find past issues of Youth Supports at:  
<http://www.nowlcms.org/Youth/ysupportslist.html>

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### **Youth Ministry Consultants in Your Area**

Youth Ministry consultants help you to either fine tune your youth ministry, refresh it or get you started on a complete overhaul. Contact Dick Weniger at the district office at 503/288-8383 or email him at <[dickw@nowlcms.org](mailto:dickw@nowlcms.org)> for more information on how a Youth Ministry Consultant can help you and your congregation!

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**The Department of Youth Ministry of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod** has several Internet resources available to you.

One of the items is a monthly E-Bulletin to "provide current information on youth events, resources, updates, plus various & sundry items of interest to youth workers (and youth) of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod." To subscribe to the Youth Ministry E-Bulletin send this message: SUBSCRIBE E-BULLETIN to [MAILSERV@crf.cuis.edu](mailto:MAILSERV@crf.cuis.edu).

To unsubscribe send the message: UNSUBSCRIBE to [MAILSERV@crf.cuis.edu](mailto:MAILSERV@crf.cuis.edu).

To find out about Bible studies, song books, and other resources available from the Department of Youth Ministry, check out the DYM Web site: <http://cs.lcms.org/youth>.

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