



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.

December 2001 - Volume 2, Issue 12

- **One Weekend = One Year OR One Week = A Lifetime**
- **List of people and resources available to you!**

One Weekend = One Year OR One Week = A Lifetime (Reaching a Generation Safely)

We are going to be the most effective Youth Ministers that we can be. Nothing is going to stop our determination. Why? Because the lives of youth are at stake. Because we now know the statistics of how important it is for us to realize the faith we have in Christ at an early age if it is going to carry us through and into adulthood.

Youth ministers and youth leaders have a common goal – reaching a younger generation with the truth of Jesus Christ. Relational peer ministry is vital to the accomplishment of this goal.

As professional and volunteers in Youth Ministry we often try to pin point each generation and how they will receive or hear the truth of Jesus' death and resurrection. G.I. or Builders. Boomers. Gen Xers or Busters...and on to the Mosaics. Huh!?

There is a common ministry tool, if done correctly, which reaches each generation and is a tool for motivating peer ministry. If done consistently and with purposeful planning and goal setting to guide the program, it will become the foundation of your youth ministry. It is called Camp and Retreating.

We need to think of Camping and Retreating in a very specific way. I have three guidelines I always used in my 14 years as a Camp Program Coordinator and Camp Director that have proven to be of great value:

1. Always plan for things to happen safely – that is, kids should be safe Spiritually, Physically, Intellectually, Emotionally and Socially. Think about the other adults that come along and whether they agree to keep kids safe. Think about the need for kids to be safe someplace in this world and make it happen. It will result in incredible ministry opportunities. There needs to be a place where kids can fail, share their deepest hurts, and it needs to be a HOLY place – different than their normal world.
2. Always plan towards a Purpose – don't just do things because you did them last time and everyone had fun. You want to have a result from your retreat? Plan toward that result. Read books of ideas and youth ministry philosophy so that you can pull on those ideas when you are looking to accomplish a specific objective. Purposeful activity can be hilarious too.
3. Have a backup plan – if everything you planned for fails, how will you keep the kids safe in the 5 areas listed above? What if it rains? What if someone is being injured emotionally? What if..... What if..... What if..... Present a very positive ministry in all you do, BUT be ready for the worst things to happen so that you can use those moments for ministry.

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Camping with these three principles makes for some incredible results. And when you take a well planned weekend together it can accomplish some of the goals in your youth ministry that often take a year to accomplish in youth meetings and youth nights. If you can pull out and do organized camping for a week in the summer it can accomplish some results that could last a lifetime. If there was only space I could describe the people that have changed directions in their lives because of a well planned outdoors ministry experience.

So we are going to be the most effective Youth Ministers that we can be. Well planned and thoughtful camping and retreating will be an important part of that ministry plan and will accommodate the relational side of ministry and validates your relationship to Christ in the eyes of your youth.

- By Craig S. Oldenburg, Director of Christian Ministries at Concordia University in Portland, OR: "CU recently called me to serve as their DCM. I serve as the Program Director for students studying to be Directors of Christian Education in the church and those studying to be Lutheran School teachers. CU's commitment to raising up young adults that will take on the challenge of reaching youth with the truths of Jesus Christ is dependent on the kind of ministry all of us do in our congregations. We need to proclaim the Gospel boldly in ways that will be truly heard if we are to continue to walk into the 21st century as a healthy church, vibrant with the teachings of Christ."

Find past issues of Youth Supports at:

<http://www.nowlcms.org/Youth/ysupportslist.html>

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> for more information on how a Youth Ministry Consultant can help you and your congregation!

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.

To unsubscribe send the message: UNSUBSCRIBE to 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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