



A service of the
Northwest District
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Missouri Synod

Youth Supports

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

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- Time for a Spiritual Check-up?
- List of people and resources available to you!

Time for a Spiritual Check-up?

Three little words that struck harshly into this youth leader's heart. I should have expected them, yet it didn't take any of the sting away. It was a crazy year: a new baby, transitioning back to work, and a quarter of the congregation had left to start the new mission including a large number of the congregational leaders and not to mention a few good friends. Uncertainty and even some grief related anger ran as themes throughout the congregation. I am aware of God's hand in it all. Still, "Your attitude stinks" was what I heard from some forthright speaking senior high students. Add another phrase "I'm not growing spiritually" and I spun into deep reflection on what God could possibly be doing with me here.

The first was true, I was struggling big time with wanting to be here, the closest family members live more than 18 hours drive away. There were very few places that I felt comfortable 'being real', and even fewer that seemed to take me with no 'professional' or 'emotional' expectations attached.

The second phrase can only be determined between God and His child. Yet are there indicators of growth? As a youth leader and DCE, my whole calling is based on the response. Yes, we do have ways to increase growth and yes, we do see signs of 'fruit' developing. "Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:4-6 (NIV) These familiar words highlight the most important thing in leading youth - our own Spiritual walk. So I prayerfully encourage you in your own 'Spiritual Check-up'. Below are some insights God renewed to me recently.

- 1. Get real.** Go ahead, look in the mirror of God's word, (no matter who is holding it up). Confess, forgive and forget. Find a prayer partner or circle, mentor or friend who will help you.
- 2. Affirm and Rejoice** What all of us, struggling youth leaders, struggling youth and parents need to hear is what God can and has been doing through us. There is not one thing that can take away how God truly delights in us, His own molded work of art. Write or speak to the youth to affirm them, ask for their encouragement and prayer, bring back the memories of everything God has already brought you through each year, month and even week.
- 3. Let the Holy Spirit at our hearts** HE CAN change us and remove the roadblocks when we spend time where it counts. Being in the Word,

"Your
attitude
stinks...
I'm not
growing
spiritually."

Get real.

Affirm and
rejoice

Let the Holy Spirit at our hearts.

Wait on God!

Sacraments, prayer, fasting, sharing our faith with others in word and action provide fertile ground for His fruits.

4. Finally as Sinner-Saints we keep these concepts in tension: seize the moment, **wait on God**. Realize there is nothing that you can do without Jesus — and everything He has in mind with you! God's light shines in you!

— *Katrina Barnes, Youth Minister, DCE at Memorial Lutheran, Vancouver, WA.*

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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