



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.

May 2002 - Volume 3, Issue 5

- **Youth Ministry is an excuse to do family ministry!**
- **Kaleidoscope!**

Youth Ministry is an excuse to do family ministry!

'What is *that*
supposed to
mean?'

...you have
the best
possible
resource for
equipping
young people
for the real
world right
under your
noses: their
families.

Greetings youth workers of the great Pacific Northwest, the coolest place (in more ways than one) in the U.S! Yes, I'm trying to flatter you so you will listen to me, since I'm only 18.

It's my job to try and tell you something important and true and applicable to your ministry in a limited number of words. I'm already at 62 so I better start.

Well, really all I have to say can be summed up in these words: Youth ministry should only be another excuse to do family ministry. You're probably thinking to yourselves, 'What is *that* supposed to mean?' besides the obvious question, 'What does *he* know about it?' Admittedly a lot less than all of you. However, as a youth, and having been part of a traveling family ministry troupe (*The Fitz Family*) for the past 8 years, I have had the opportunity to see a little bit of what works and doesn't work. And if there's one thing that I think doesn't work, it's youth programs that act as though the 13-18 year old age bracket should be isolated in a dark corner of the basement with various games for their amusement and yellow tape reading 'proceed at you own risk' stuck all over the place to warn the rest of the congregation away.

From my humble experience, we, as youth, spend too much time playing pool, drinking Mountain Dew[®], and participating in Bible studies where all we need to know is the word 'Jesus', and not enough time interacting with the rest of the world. Youth gatherings and servant events are well and good, but even the best servant event doesn't give them a taste of the mission field God put them in - their own school - or neighborhood - or workplace. I don't mean to make it seem like I think all of your youth programs are like that. I have no idea what your youth programs are like. That's just often the way it feels.

'So, Oh enlightened Isaac, how do you propose to solve this problem you've posed?' Well, honestly, I don't know the best way in detail. I do know that you have the best possible resource for equipping young people for the real world right under your noses: their families. I know it doesn't seem to make very much sense to go to the one place that is thought of as most unlike the real world, and the one you'd think they'd most like to get away from to equip them to go out into the world. But I think that is what God had in mind. Why did he invent family in the first place? So that the social system didn't have to feed voracious 14 year old boys? I don't think so.

I know from spending so much time with my own family, that, for one, it is an excellent place to learn how to deal with people of all ages. After all, once you graduate from college, is it really realistic to expect that you'll be spending all of

...from
spending so
much time
with my own
family...it is
an excellent
place to learn
how to deal
with people
of all ages.

God bless you
in your
incredibly
important
ministry!

K-scope!

**Youth with a
Calling?**

your time with people who are within 2 years of your age as you'd have done for the past 16 years of education? Not likely. And what better place to start the learning process than the church? Family nights can actually be family nights, instead of, 'Johnny, you go off with your 6-8 year old friends and watch a 6-8 year old movie. And Jane, you go spend some quality 'make-up tip exchange time' with the other girls in the youth group. Your mother and I will go visit and drink coffee with the other adults who are just as starved for quality family time as we are.' OK, I'm being a little sarcastic; all right, I'm being *very* sarcastic. But that is sometimes what family nights feel like. And I do know that you have to do age specific learning experiences much of the time. And that most families these days don't necessarily fit in that 'mom, dad, and 3 kids' bracket anymore. I just want to encourage you to use youth ministry as a good reason to get young people to interact in a meaningful way with their family instead of a reason to separate them. Because families have a hard enough time spending time together at home.

Now, that I've posed numerous unanswerable questions and succeeded in alienating myself from the entire northwest district, I have one final thing to say. God bless you in your incredibly important ministry. I admire you!

— Isaac Schoepp, member of the Fitz Family Ministry
Check out more about the Isaac and the rest of the Fitz Family at
www.fitzfamily.com

(You can learn more about family ministry by reading some past issues of Youth Supports, specifically the [September](#) and [October](#) 2001 issues with a two part article by Bob Fossum, Family Minister at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Aloha, OR.- editor)

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

Kaleidoscope

Kaleidoscope is a great week long youth event for up to 4 youth per congregation. You can read and see photos about it at

<http://www.nowlcms.org/Youth/YTalk/April00/yt0004a.html>

This year's K-Scope is scheduled for July 7-12 at the Christ Lutheran Retreat Center at Belfair, WA (Hood Canal area). Registration cost is \$140. Contact Pastor John Schmidt at Kscopenow@cs.com or (253) 584-2565 for more information!

Youth with a Calling?

Our two seminaries have scheduled special events for those considering a call into full time church work. Check out [Christ Academy 2002](#), at Concordia, Ft. Wayne from June 16-29, 2002 and [Exploring Church Careers Event \(ECCE\)](#) scheduled for Aug. 3-6, 2002 on the Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, campus.

Except as noted, all text and photographs are © Northwest District of the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod. All contents, except as noted, may be duplicated for use in local congregations as long as the source is noted. If you have any comments or responses for this publication, please contact Glenn Zander, 2142 NE McDonald Lane, McMinnville, OR 97128 <forgivn@macnet.com>