



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.

June 2004 - Volume 5, Issue 6

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- Kaleidoscope - "It's Where You Belong!"
- New *youthEsource* resource from Synod

"Hello! My
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Marilyn... I
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Marilyn is
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Hidden Treasures

It was my first day at Beautiful Savior. My wife and I had just finished a long drive up the Alaska Highway and had been in Anchorage only a few days. My clothes were wrinkled from spending five days jammed into a backpack and our iron, along with all our other belongings, were somewhere in a shipping container still down at the dock. Needless to say, I was a little frazzled, yet excited at the unknown opportunities that God had in store for Adina and me.

At the end of each worship service that day, I had my first chance to meet my new family as they filed out of church. As I shook hands and began learning names, one woman, looking a little older than my parents, approached me. "Hello! My name is Marilyn, and I work with spiritual growth and Bible studies here at Beautiful Savior, but I just want you to know that I don't work with kids. I'm really glad that God has called you here, but unfortunately we may not be working closely together since you'll be working mostly with youth. By the way, I'm known as the Doughnut Lady because I bring the doughnuts every Sunday." I smiled and told her that I was glad to meet her and she turned to go greet another worshipper.

Marilyn was a hidden treasure. As the weeks went by, I had the opportunity to get to know this fascinating woman of God. I quickly saw how strong her faith was and how eager she was to share both it and her struggles with visitors and growing Christians. I learned a lot from her during my first six months here, but her comment about not working with youth still hung in my mind. Her true gifts were hidden from us both, but God knew that they were there.

God began uncovering this hidden treasure about eight months after I arrived in Anchorage. I asked Marilyn to fill in for me one week at our senior high evening study. She agreed. The next day I checked in with her to see how things went and received a very positive response. That one night turned into a monthly commitment which later turned into leading an entire weekly study series over the course of two months. To the high school youth, Marilyn went from being the Doughnut Lady to being their friend. One young man even introduced Marilyn to a friend that he had brought to church by saying, "This is Marilyn. She's wise but she's just one of us." This treasure had been hidden for a time, but God knew about it and uncovered it just when it was needed.

Marilyn is not the only hidden treasure that God knows about. Look back at the hidden treasures that Jesus picked to be his disciples. We can all agree that the

Is God in the process of uncovering a hidden treasure in your life or congregation?

K-Scope!

youthEsource
resource!

Twelve were not the cream-of-the-crop. They definitely did not appear to be treasures at first glance. Even after three years with Jesus, Peter still was not shining when he denied knowing his Lord. Yet soon after, God revealed the treasure and used Peter and the apostles to begin growing His Church.

Is God in the process of uncovering a hidden treasure in your life or congregation? Can you see the sparkle of God's treasure in somebody at your place of ministry? Maybe there's a glimmer in your life that you don't know about. Pray that God will send His Spirit to open your eyes and recognize His treasures. Hidden treasure...God knows where it is, and He'll help you find it when His time is right.

"Yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God." — Proverbs 2:3-5 ESV

— Eric Nelson, Director of Christian Education at Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church in Anchorage, Alaska <eric@bslc.org>.

Find past issues of Youth Supports at:

http://www.nowlcms.org/educational_services/NetworkingMinistries/YouthSupports.aspx

Kaleidoscope - "It's Where You Belong!" July 11 - 16

This creative adventure in living the Christian community (Romans 12) is a six-day experience in spiritual growth for high school youth of the Northwest District. For over 30 years this program has challenged young people to grow in their understanding of the "body of Christ" and to experience the "communion of saints" that is called the "church." K-Scope participants share their faith, create and celebrate new relationships, grow in their understanding of God's love for them in Christ, and experience change — in how they view God, in how they view others, and in how they view themselves.

Kaleidoscope begins at 2 p.m. on Sunday and continues to 2 p.m. on Friday. The \$140 fee covers all expenses for the week — including meals, housing, and program materials. K-Scope is designed for confirmed high school age youth who have completed the ninth grade through those seniors just graduating. Registration materials will be sent to all district congregations this spring.

Contact Chris Miller at the district office at (888-693-5267) or e-mail her at <ChrisM@nowlcms.org> for brochures or more information.

Want Some Ideas for Your Youth Program?

The Board of Youth Ministry for the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod with a grant from Thrivent started a new electronic youth ministry resource available for free on the internet. Check out <www.youthesource.com/> The web page is not just for adults, but for youth too with a number of links to other great web sites. Pass it on to your own youth!

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