



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.

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- Resurrected Ministry
- Youth Ministry Ideas
- E-Newsletter from Synod

"Have you
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that bad
stuff before,
pastor?"

...we were
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Resurrected Ministry

You're in the middle of your weekly high school Bible study, teaching your cleverly crafted lesson on avoiding the "evils of society," when seemingly out of no where one of your students asks you a personal question: "Have *you* ever done that bad stuff before, pastor?" You know you're guilty. Quickly you begin thinking of a way out of answering - do you lie? Do you pull the fire alarm?

Maybe you have been in a similar situation. Serving as youth workers, we are expected to reach and minister to broken kids who live in a culture saturated with a media who tells them that all the wrong things are cool and normal. At the same time, congregations who employ us want us to be perfect examples to those young people by leading a "blameless" life. This double standard often puts us at odds with ourselves. How can we relate to kids in this culture, and yet not fill ourselves with it?

Satan tries hard to derail our ministry by burdening us with feelings of guilt and inadequacy. "You can't tell the kids not to do that! You hypocrite!" he tells us. Too often in youth ministry, this causes us to avoid the "edgy" or "tough" issues, and instead we focus on the "safe" topics that are easy to talk about. Because of guilt or fear of angry parents, we trade in a powerful ministry that equips youth to deal with today's culture for a ministry that is impotent and lacking.

In Ephesians 5, Paul speaks about the contrast of living in darkness and in light. Verse 8 tells us that we were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord. Jesus Christ died for our sin and has risen again, bringing our lives with Him into the light. Our lives have risen from the dead with Him. Are we letting our personal lives and our ministries be resurrected with Jesus? Verse 14 says, "Wake up O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." Have we fallen asleep in our walk with the Lord?

A resurrected life is one that has been brought up from the grave of sin and made new with the breath of life. Everything about us, even our past, is no longer

Your past is
your story. It
is a blessing
from God...

Ideas for
your youth
ministry!

Events for
your planning
calendar!

E-Newsletter
from Synod
Board of
Youth
Ministry

wasted but becomes full of purpose. We no longer have guilt and shame about the mistakes we have made, but instead those mistakes are raised to life by the work of Jesus and become useful teaching tools.

If we are living in Christ's victory as resurrected sinners, our ministries will show it. Our interaction with students will become more authentic, and our teaching more deep. If you have been trying to do youth ministry the way someone else tells you to, then you are missing out on the unique purpose God has for your life and your work with youth. Your past is your story. It is a blessing from God that makes you an individual and allows you to speak from the heart as a Christian who is not perfect - just forgiven.

-Peter Berg, Director of Christian Education, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Battle Ground, WA <west98671@gmail.com>

Find past issues of Youth Supports at:

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

Want Some Ideas for Your Youth Ministry?

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!

Some dates to mark on your calendar for future planning:

Kaleidoscope at Belfair, WA, July 6-11, 2008

Kaleidoscope at Meier Lake Conference Center, Wasilla, AK July 20-25

District Middle School Gathering, Antelope, OR October 3-5, 2008

District Senior High Youth Gathering, Seaside, OR October 2-4, 2009

E-Newsletter from Synod Board of Youth Ministry

The Board of Youth Ministry for the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has a monthly e-bulletin with youth ministry information. To subscribe to it, go to <http://www.lcms.org/eneews/> and follow the directions.

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