



A service of the
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Youth Supports

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

January 2008 - Volume 9, Issue 1

- The Charge
- **“Consider the Call” Retreat**

I loved youth group. How could I get back into it?

“Will I ever be too old to do youth work?”

The Charge

I began my membership in youth group, called Walther League back then, when I was just 7 years old. I was one of the fortunate ones to get in on an early pass, thanks to my pastor, who just happened to be my Dad and “in charge” of the youth program. Boy was it fun hanging with the “older” kids, singing Kumbaya and going to those special events (usually a circuit event). It was even more fun than looking for pop bottles to cash in at the neighborhood candy store. Although I could give you a list of reasons why being a PK (Preacher's Kid) wasn't always a good thing, being a part of the youth group for an extra 10 years wasn't one of them.

But, it wasn't long till I graduated from high school and my days in the youth group came to an end. Now what? I loved youth group. How could I get back into it? It wasn't long till God led me to become a full-time youth director, and though the fun was back, I was in charge now. At least I thought I was in charge. It didn't take long for me to find out differently. Yes, I was the one responsible, the one who got some credit when things went right, but also the one to blame when things went wrong. A discovery point: being in charge is not the goal of the youth counselor or the DCE.

The joy and the privilege of this position is being “charged” - charged by the Spirit, not being in charge. Getting people (including me) excited about Christ and energized by Him is what I was charged, called to do. Doing things not for the youth, but with the youth for Christ's sake, is the premium fuel for a leader. It is that “charging” that kept me going back to youth event after youth event, year after year. The way to do youth ministry may have changed over the years, but the “charger” has not. Christ continues to be the force, the focus, the factor needed to keep both a youth counselor and a youth group alive.

When I turned 40 I asked myself the question, “Will I ever be too old to do youth work?” Even though I had changed - let's blame that on gravity - I still had something in me - a charge to keep going! God hasn't changed and God was still in control. He is “the charge,” not I. Today's teens, as were those back in the days of Walther League, need to know that youth group is not about the youth counselor. It is about providing youth with opportunities to come face with face with Christ. “Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed - the exhilarating

May God use
you and your
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The Charge!

"Consider the
Call"
Retreat
at Concordia
University,
Portland,
Oregon

finish in and with God - he could put up with anything along the way; cross, shame, whatever." Hebrews 12:2 (*The Message*)

Your youth group may not look like anyone else's. God created us all different, so it won't. What isn't different about us should be our purpose. The old traditional proverb may lead us to that: "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make them drink." If it is easier to lead the horse to the water when it's thirsty, how are we going to increase that thirst for Christ in our youth groups? Lead them to Christ. He's The Charge; He'll take care of it!

May God use you and your group in your charge for The Charge!

The answer to my question - I am still serving Him with the youth!

-Larry Biel - Family Life Minister at Anchorage Lutheran Church

-Larry Biel, Family Life Minister, Anchorage Lutheran Church, Anchorage, AK
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Find past issues of Youth Supports at:

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

"Consider the Call" Retreat

3 p.m. 3/7/08 to 12:00 p.m. 3/9/08 at

Concordia University and Fireside Retreat Center

Are you considering a ministry career? Join us as we explore the unique Call God may be placing on your life!

CONSIDER THE CALL

Is God calling you to be... ..a Pastor? ...a Director of Christian Education (DCE)? ...a Lutheran School Teacher? ...a Missionary?

Do you have a heart for serving God's people?

Have you considered a career in church work?

If so, you are invited and encouraged to attend an incredible weekend where you'll have the opportunity to meet with Concordia faculty, staff, and students - Pastors, DCEs, Lutheran School Teachers, and those pursuing church work careers. Ask questions, learn, and explore the unique Call God has placed on your heart!

For more information or to register, contact Sarah Elliott at 503-493-6231 or selliott@cu-portland.edu.

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