



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.

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There's
something we
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from time to
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People vs. Paper

This is something that we all struggle with from time to time. In ministry there are so many things for us to do, and it seems that everyone has a different opinion of what those things should be. We write Bible studies, plan activities, publish newsletters, organize service activities, and the list goes on, and no matter how much we do there seems to always something else we should be doing. It is easy to get bogged down by the paper side of ministry. When we're constantly doing these things it is easy to lose sight of why we're in ministry and what is really important. We can write the most engaging Bible studies and plan the coolest events, but if we don't have a relationship with the youth we are providing those things for, then we've missed the boat.

In ministry we are called to be in relationships. At the heart of the Christian faith is a relationship, a relationship that began before you were even conceived. God had you in mind from the beginning of time, and before you were born He chose you because He wanted to have a relationship with you. That relationship was so important to Him that He gave up His only son for it. That relationship is the reason I get out of bed every day and come to work. Because of the relationship that I have with God, I want to share it with other people so that they can be in a similar relationship.

When we take the time to focus on the people in our ministry and build a relationship with them we can share the love of God in more tangible way. I am not saying that the paper things we do are not important, but when we place more emphasis on doing those things than we do on being in relationship with those youth we are trying to reach those things aren't going to have a lasting impact. It is not our responsibility to bring youth to faith. The Holy Spirit will do that. If we

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Free ideas
for youth
ministry!

E-
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focus on connecting with youth and sharing our time and God's love with them, God will work through us to bring them into a relationship with Him.

Teenagers, although they won't always admit it, long to have a relationship with an adult who genuinely cares for them. We may be the only adult in a teen's life who can provide that for them. Going to a football game or choir concert might not seem like a big deal to us, but to a teenager that shouts love and concern to them. Three weeks from now a teen might not remember what our Sunday school lesson was about, but he will remember that I showed up to his game to cheer him on. This is easier said than done of course, and I know for me it takes a conscious effort. It's a lot easier to stay in my office and get work done, but if I am truly going to connect youth to Jesus, I need to meet them where they are and share my time with them. So as you dive in to this new school year and all the activities you have going on, remember the people in your ministry and push the paper aside for a while.

— Lorien Petersen, Director of Christian Education, Trinity Lutheran Church, Bend, OR (lorien.petersen@saints.org)

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.youthsource.com/> The web page is not just for adults, but for youth too with a number of links to other great web sites.

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/enews/> and follow the directions.

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