



LCMS New Jersey District ~ Youth Ministry Team
njdistrict.org/youth + youth@njdistrict.org

NJ District Youth Ministry Sunday - October 21, 2018

Real.Present.God.

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble...
Be still, and know that I am God.” ~ Psalm 46:1, 10

Thematic Bible Study & Congregational Resources

“Real. Present. God.” is the theme for the 2019 National LCMS Youth Gathering, planned for July 11-15 in Minneapolis, MN. It’s based on themes found throughout the Book of Psalms, with Psalm 46 as a particular point of focus. There are a number of Bible Study resources available on the Gathering website (lcmsgathering.com) that can be used with youth and adults in the months leading up to the Gathering.

Consider using the Introductory Bible Study as an intergenerational activity for youth and adults on Youth Ministry Sunday.

From the Gathering Website: The 2019 LCMS Youth Gathering will allow participants to dive deeper into the book of Psalms. Through the Psalms, youth and adults will discover God’s Word is living and active. It comforts and inspires, encourages and guides. Begin experiencing the value of the Psalms in your life through the Introductory Bible Study. **Link: lcmsgathering.com/biblestudy**

Use Youth Ministry Sunday as the launch date for a congregation-wide “Psalm-a-Day” reading challenge.

Make up a simple checklist and have folks check off each psalm as it’s read. Keep a running tally in the weekly bulletin or monthly newsletter to track how many people are reading the psalms each week. You could even have a small prize or participant’s gift for everyone who completes the challenge -- perhaps a devotional book based on the Psalms.

Start praying for National Youth Gathering participants and encourage men’s & women’s ministry groups to become youth prayer partners.

Ask members of your congregation to pray for the youth and adults who will be attending the Gathering. Make up prayer cards with their names and encourage people to pray for the Holy Spirit to bless their participation. Include the Gathering and your congregation’s participants in the weekly prayers during the months leading up to the event. Have your men’s & women’s groups write notes of encouragement to be given to the youth while they’re at the Gathering. Help the youth experience the love of God who is real and really present in your congregation. Bring the Gathering theme to life -- before, during, and after the Gathering itself.

Suggested Prayers

From the “Youth Worker Prayer Booklet: 2nd Edition”

Copyright © 2012 The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Office of National Mission—Youth Ministry (1333 South Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122)

For Support of the Congregation

Heavenly Father, I lift up this congregation and their partnership in ministry. Lord, You promised that “He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 1:6). I ask Your blessing on the youth ministry at this place, Lord, and for the support of the congregation for its youth, that we can work together in Your name. Please bless us with unity in both mind and spirit as we serve and support one another in ministry. In Your Name, Amen.

For Synod and District Support

Heavenly Father, You gather us into Your family, adopting us as Your sons and daughters in Holy Baptism, so that we can care for and encourage each other. You have led our congregations to “walk together,” to help and support each other in the work that You have given us to do in this world. We thank You for our church body and ask that You continue to bless us and our leaders, and that You keep us faithful to You and to Your Word. Help the leaders at the national level, as well as at the district level, to support and encourage the work and ministry that takes place in the local congregation. Help them to recognize that the young people of the church are not just the church of tomorrow, but that they are already the church today, serving You with the gifts You have given them. Help us to walk together and to work together to bring Your Word and the saving work of Jesus to others. In His Name. Amen.

To Be a Church that Cares for Young People

Lord, our teens are struggling. They feel abandoned. Study after study shows that teens are being failed by all the institutions that are supposed to support them be those family, government, schools, and even the church. Lord, make us a church that cares about children, youth and young adults. Help us to encourage and support them in Your Love. Help us show them that they are not abandoned to the wiles of the world but that our church is a haven of caring for them. These are precious gifts You have given us. Help us, Lord, to be good stewards of these students that they may grow in the faith, be nurtured in Your ways and live as Your celebrating people of God wherever their lives may take them for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

Suggestions for Involving Youth in Worship

Ask youth to serve as greeters, ushers, lectors, acolytes and crucifers.

Involve the youth of your congregation in helping with the worship service - ask them to serve as greeters, ushers, lectors, acolytes and crucifers. Make them visible to the congregation, and uphold them as valued members of your congregation.

Have youth lead a children’s message or do a skit for a sermon illustration.

Ask the youth to do a puppet show for the children, based on one of the day’s Scripture lessons. Or, have them perform a skit at the start of the sermon, assisting the pastor by providing a sermon illustration.

Invite one or two youth to share with the congregation how being involved in the youth group has helped them grow in their Christian faith. Ask one of the older or more involved students to prepare a brief personal story about how being involved with the youth group has helped them grow in faith. This could be shared during the regular time for announcements, or during the offering time. This could provide a powerful, personal testimony about how God is working through your congregation's youth.

Hymns & Spiritual Songs

Invite youth to share their favorite hymns and use them during worship on this day - including in the worship bulletin a brief explanation about why these hymns are special to them

All God's People Sing!

Choose songs from this children's hymnal that highlight God's love for children and youth

Lutheran Service Book

Choose hymns from the "Christian Home and Education" section of the hymnal