

# YOUTH ASKED FOR IT

Quarterly Newsletter for the Youth of the Eastern Washington- Idaho Synod

## SYNOD YOUTH ASSEMBLY APRIL 24 – 26, 2015

The 2015 Youth Assembly included 16 youth from 6 congregations and 8 adults who were with them the entire time. The event was an overwhelming success. One the group from 6 churches quickly bonded and became a group acting as if they were longtime friends. Saturday's dinner, which was scheduled to be "on-your-own", ended up having nearly the entire group meet up and eat together!

### *Purpose: For youth*

- *Within the Synod to get to know one another*
- *To begin learning what our Synod is and what it does*
- *To have a chance to worship with the larger Synod assembly body*
- *To have fun together*
- *Going to the 2015 Youth Gathering to meet one another*
- *To serve the community together*

A planning team was formed: Caroline Moore, Pastor Helga Jansons, Lauren Bender and Heidi Cryer. Caroline Moore was in charge of the servant project which served the community through 2<sup>nd</sup> Harvest, sorting 8,200 pounds of produce which is 6,800 meals (feeding 566 families). A highlight for many was the youth leading the workshop: "What do Youth Want from the Church?" at the Synod Assembly. Lauren Bender represented Lutherhaven. It was a very full schedule!



My hope is that the dream to make this an annual event as part of the Synod Assembly, where our youth learn about the synod assembly and their broader church, continues to grow and becomes a reality. This was a worthwhile event. Those who attended served their synod well!

Thanks for the opportunity! Blessings!

Heidi Cryer, Associate in Ministry, Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Kennewick WA

### **The 16 Youth at Youth Assembly are already involved in their home congregations in these ways:**

- Singing – choir, worship leadership
- Puppets ministry
- "Movement choir" – liturgical dance
- Chime choir
- Lector
- Sunday school teacher/ assistant
- Acolyte, communion assistant, usher, worship assistant
- Vacation Bible School teacher / aide
- Nursery attendant
- LYO – Lutheran Youth Organization
- Coffee hour

## WHAT THE YOUTH GOT OUT OF SYNOD YOUTH ASSEMBLY

### PERSONALLY

- Learned from each other about faith and others' understanding of God
- Knowing there are other ELCA youth in the synod and discovering similarities and shared experiences
- Relationships: new friends and a connections within the wider church
- Heard how other youth are involved in their churches / realized other ideas of how to get involved
- Leadership experience - especially leading a workshop
- Getting to know people in preparation for the National Youth Gathering
- Challenged assumptions of what youth want
- Opportunities to give back – service projects

### WHAT BRINGS YOU TO / KEEPS YOU IN CHURCH

- Family, "my 2-year-old niece"
- Finding my place, community, connections with people
- Being around older people
- Feeling safe, protected, loved and cared about
- God acts through the people at church
- Experiencing "moments of heaven" in church, "God is in the little things at church"
- Food
- Church "cheers me up", "picks me up when I feel bad"
- Music, especially upbeat music
- Faith – learning about beliefs, new perspectives, reflection, to clear my mind, relating faith to current events, talking about faith with others
- Tradition, habit
- Mature conversation and in-depth discussion on topics, being able to ask questions and talk about them
- Learning about the Bible and hearing Bible stories
- Sermons
- It motivates us to be kinder
- It is a place where God's creation is appreciated

### WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO CHANGE ABOUT CHURCH.....

- Less distraction and noise by younger children – give them something to do/ a place to be
- Sharing of the peace is too long
- Play upbeat music in worship that makes you want to clap
- Worship services need to be more energetic
- Join confirmation classes with other churches to make it more interesting

- Create an Ecumenical youth group especially in smaller cities/ towns
- It hurts when churches don't want to work with other churches/criticize other churches
- More opportunities to serve
- To be able to meet with the Pastor regularly to talk about life goals and challenges
- Opportunities to share our thoughts and experiences with the church

### IDEAS & ACTIONS TO TAKE BACK TO THEIR OWN CHURCHES

- Share with the congregation about Youth Assembly
- Sunday school for High Schoolers as a discussion group
- Youth could offer a workshop similar to those at Synod Assembly in their own churches – maybe youth from different churches could be invited to help e.g "Tips for adults on how to work with youth"
- An affirmation of what their church already offers their youth – saying thank you to their church
- Write an article for the church newsletter about the Youth Assembly and what they learned
- Talk to the Christian Education committee about having Lutherhaven staff come to their church
- Encourage youth to join the adult choir
- Ecumenical youth group can be started in smaller towns
- Talk with the church council about youth needs/ programs/ need for a youth group

### "ADVICE" TO ADULTS

- A reliable and consistent adult presence in youth groups builds relationships and trust
- Adults have the power – share it with the youth so they can lead and use their gifts/ ideas
- Youth ministry is not about numbers
- Know the names of youth/ children and use their names
- Come to our events at school, sports, graduations, other activities. Walk alongside us during formational times in our lives
- Involve youth in leadership and interview processes
- Don't patronize youth – when you ask them how they are, really listen to the answer
- Don't dumb things down for youth
- Don't make assumptions about what youth think or want; ask
- Youth enjoy thought provoking conversations
- Please offer variety, vitality, and energy in worship church

## SYNOD – WHAT'S NEXT FOR OUR YOUTH:

- Youth synod newsletter every 3-4 months, and to be emailed **DIRECTLY** to youth & churches
- Let's have a Youth assembly in Boise, 2016!
- Link for Youth events on the synod website
- Facebook page
- The Lutheran insert article on Synod Youth Assembly
- Shoshone Base camp or another place for a 3-day retreat
- 2-day big youth event somewhere in the synod



## 2015 ELCA YOUTH GATHERING - What's coming up

Thirty thousand high school age youth will gather in Detroit, Michigan, July 15-19, for the ELCA Youth Gathering. ELCA Youth Gathering happens every three years. The one in New Orleans in 2012 was a large success.

It is a five-day event that begins on Wednesday evening and ends with a service of communion on Sunday morning. Participants will rotate through a variety of service and learning experiences in the surrounding community. In addition to the Proclaim Story Day (Synod Day), there will be a day for community service (Proclaim Justice) and a day to explore the many and various ways the ELCA is proclaiming community all across the world (Proclaim Community).

### Proclaim Justice Day:

Living on a block with an abandoned home or two is common for Detroiters, and the city has precious few resources for dealing with such a widespread problem. Neighborhood blight is a health and safety risk to residents, attracts crime, and depresses property values. Youth will participate in Detroit's neighborhood revitalization efforts. The areas of service include:

- **Care in Communities:** Visit nursing homes and talk to the residents.
- **Culture Arts/Immersion:** Build a platform for dancing in a local park in order to create a community gathering space.
- **Food For Justice:** Build lunches for the next day's workers.
- **Schools:** Cleanup the playgrounds and paint the schools.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Plant a community garden on a vacant lot. There are several. 3,300 homes are being torn down each week.
- **Housing:** Board up vacant houses.
- **Arts and Scraps:** Recycle donated items into works of art.
- **Cass Community:** Recycle old tires into welcome mats and flip flops.
- **Soup Kitchen:** Provide meals for local residents.

### Proclaim Community Day:

Proclaim Community is designed to give participants an opportunity to experience God's world within a diverse community of youth from around the country. The Proclaim Community Space includes a huge sports arena, high ropes course, mini golf, bumper cars, a congregation photo booth, games, talent stages, inflatables, and a charging station for cell phones. There will be stations set up to donate blood (you must be 16 year old or older), donate hair to *Children With Hair Loss*, or participate in framing four houses with Campus Ministry. For those who would like to experience proclaim community in a quieter way, there will be space set aside for a labyrinth, prayer rooms, and yoga.

To learn more about the 2015 ELCA Youth Gathering, log on to their website: <http://www.elca.org/YouthGathering>.

## SYNOD ASSEMBLY VOTE FOR YOUTH LEADERS



**Jackson Bewick**

**Synod Youth Council Representative:** Jackson Bewick was voted in as Youth Representative on Synod Council for a 2 year term. He is a Sophomore at Lewis and Clark High School, Spokane and attends St Mark's Lutheran Church in Spokane. He had taught Sunday School and VBS. He is an usher, acolyte and an active leader in the Sr. High youth group.



**Katie Wee**

**Churchwide Assembly Youth voting member:** Katie Wee was voted as the youth representative to attend the Churchwide Assembly in New Orleans August 8-13, 2016. Katie is a member of St. Luke, Spokane. She is a Pacific Lutheran University sophomore with a double major in Religion and Theater. She was the 2013 Churchwide Youth Representative and has been a VBS teacher, pre-school helper and a Lutherhaven junior counselor.

### GREETINGS FROM YOUR PROCLAIM STORY (SYNOD DAY) DIRECTOR!

By Pastor Dave Haven

It is so exciting that around 200 youth and adults from the EWA-ID Synod will travel to Detroit for the 2015 ELCA Youth Gathering. The "Getting Ready" materials have provided excellent resources as preparation for this important faith journey.

We have a "Synod Day" all to ourselves in the COBO Convention Center, on **Saturday, July 18th**. A dedicated team, including several youth from across our Synod, have been diligently planning this exciting day!! From **12:30-4:00pm** we will be engaged in an interactive curriculum designed to tap into God's story, our neighbor's story, and our own personal story. The day will conclude with a dynamic worship service with Bishop Martin Wells preaching.

A live band, made up of youth and adults from Celebration Lutheran, East Wenatchee, and Grace Lutheran, Wenatchee, will provide music throughout the afternoon. Much of the music has been pre-selected by the Gathering Music Team. Since this music may be new to many of you, I encourage you to listen to YouTube renditions of the following songs:

Can't wait to see those of you who are going to Detroit!

- "Beautiful Things (Gungor)
- "All the Poor and Powerless" (All the Sons & Daughters)
- "Must Be" (Lost & Found) – go to their website: [www.speedwood.com](http://www.speedwood.com)
- "Rise Up" (Lost & Found)
- "Rise Up, We'll Walk Together" (Rachel Kurtz)
- "My Own Two Hands" (Jack Johnson, Ben Harper)
- "We are Not Overcome" (Bifrost Arts, Isaac Wardell)
- "I Am Free" (Jon Egan)
- "Everlasting God" (Brown/Riley)

Pastor Dave Haven, Proclaim Story Director  
Celebration Lutheran Church, East Wenatchee, WA

## OUTDOOR MINISTRIES

### Luther Heights

Summer has broken through the snow in the amazing Sawtooth Mountains of central Idaho. Yet, you will still be able to find snow at higher elevations if you come for a week of **Backpacking** July 26 -31!

If you prefer a lower elevation experience join us for a week working with the **Boise Rescue Mission** helping the homeless and those in need in the Treasure Valley. At the end of the week you'll spend 2 nights in the mountains at Luther Heights and can go on a day hike, rafting trip or horseback ride.



Our **High Adventure Camp** for Senior High youth, July 5-10, includes inspiring worships, engaging Bible Studies, time for an overnight, and activities like rafting, horseback riding, canoeing, swimming, folk dancing, hiking, biking.....You'll have an awesome week at Camp and still be able to make it to the National Youth Gathering later in the summer! Join us this summer and Climb Higher, Dig Deeper & Grow Closer at Luther Heights Bible Camp! Visit us online at [www.lutherheights](http://www.lutherheights)



### Lutherhaven Ministries

Heading for Detroit this summer for Rise Up? All of us at Lutherhaven pray you have a terrific time in the Motor City at the ELCA Youth Gathering, and hope to see you next summer at camp, either by yourself, with your youth group, or as a leader on our staff team!

Did you know? Each summer over 500 high schoolers from around the country come to one of our Idaho Servant Adventures to serve in our communities, learn and grow with new friends, and join in some awesome outdoor adventure?

Our Adventurer High School camps are always a hit, and Junior Staff come for one to three weeks to serve in every area of camp life! Can't wait to see you here! Have a fabulous summer!

### Shoshone Mountain Retreat

Shoshone Mountain Retreat is a true mountain retreat at the western edge of the ruggedly famous Bitterroot Mountains at the confluence of Shoshone Creek and the North Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River.

Dormitory lodging provides ideal facilities for large youth group gatherings. Three large guest houses provide private, family-style accommodations for families and smaller groups up to 60.

Wilderness adventure abounds literally out our back door: mountain hikes, nationally-renowned "best in the west" Rails-to-Trails biking, inner-tubing down the river, world class fly fishing, rock climbing, and plenty more all take place from the comfort of a well-maintained and home-style camp environment.



[www.lutherhaven.com](http://www.lutherhaven.com)

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