



Children, Youth and Family Ministry News

July 2012

Vol. 7, Issue 6

Dear Friends,

July is going to be a wild month for youth ministry in this synod. First, there is the week before the Gathering which will be consumed with last minute details and bizarre complications. Then, there will be the Gathering itself, plus all the travel. Then, there will be a week of WIYLDE. Last, there will be unpacking and many loads of laundry. At the end of July the youth will be exhausted and want a break from church or full of the Spirit and anxious to start planning for an amazing year of living and teaching God's grace? This is mostly depending on their attitude. Their attitude will in many ways depend on your attitude. Your attitude will depend on prayer and rest. Things are going to get busy this month so please take some days off and take some time every day for prayer and Scripture.

Keep in touch,
Pr. Mark

News You Should Know

David & Elayne Werges (you can find them both on Facebook) met with the chaplain from the State Boy's School in Eldora. They are excited about the possibilities for partnerships in ministry with them. During the visit they learned that the school is in need of fishing equipment: poles, reels, line, bobbers, hooks, and those wiggly things. This is an ongoing need. They also welcome things that can be used for gifts for birthday parties and Christmas. The thing that the Werges' got excited about....and what no one is doing is giving each boy as they leave a blanket. Either the tied kind or a quilt. The challenge would be that there would be 250 blankets needed per year. What do you think....can we as the synod come up with 250 blankets a year to tell a bunch of unloved kids that someone cares about them? Let Elayne know what you think and better yet if you are interested.

During both the ELCA Youth Gathering and WIYLDE the synod office will be striving to keep the Synod Facebook and Twitter pages updated several times a day with pictures of our youth, links to streaming, and lots of other Synod Specific news. Please direct the parents and congregation to

<http://www.facebook.com/neiasynod> or @NEIowaSynodELCA on Twitter.com to keep up with all the amazing things the NE Iowa Synod Youth are up to.

LYO: Networking High School Youth in Discipleship

Mission: To Network Youth and Youth Groups to Each other and the Larger Church.

2012-2013 Goals:

- 1) Create a leadership team of about 10 youth and 3 adults
- 2) Sponsor synod wide events including learning, service, and fellowship

2012-2013 Plan:

- To hold several single day events in the synod for Sr. High Youth in place of a two day LYO Assembly
- To continue to co-sponsor the Middle School Lock-In
- To support adult leaders by encouraging participation in the training events, webinars, and the extravaganza
- To support youth engagement in our companion synod relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary
- To encourage youth in the fight against malaria by supporting the ELCA Malaria Campaign
- To encourage and support youth attending WIYLDE
- To support youth groups by encouraging WIYLDE youth

**Applications for the 2012-2013 Board are available on the synod's website.

The June 2012 issue of Consumer Reports (pages 24-31) is on Facebook security. The article reminds us that "Facebook and other social networks collect enormous amounts of highly sensitive information and distribute it more quickly and widely than consumer data-gathering firms ever could." How? Well almost 13 million users of Facebook have never set their privacy controls. So it is no surprise that 11% of households on Facebook reported having problems last year including being harassed, threatened or someone posting in their name. It is also true that in the last few years all the rules of social engagement have been changed by social media. The Consumer Reports list a few things you should do to keep yourself safe:

- 1) Think before you type - even if you delete the account whatever you post is available for 90 days
- 2) Once a month check how your Facebook page looks to others and review your privacy settings
- 3) Be very careful of the setting "share with friends of friends"
- 4) Remember that your name and profile picture are available to anyone with a computer
- 5) "Unpublic" your wall and set all wall posts for "just friends"

- 6) Turn off Tag Suggest so Facebook will not automatically recognize you in photos
- 7) Block apps and sites that snoop and share your personal information by using the controls to block what apps can see

Remember, employers, the IRS, health insurance companies, youth, parents and pastors can and do check your Facebook page.

My daughter said to me "I like the way the garage smells, it smells like monopoly." No, that didn't make any sense to me either until I remembered that we have an army trunk from the Korean war. My mother-by-law had stored clothes in it years ago with a few mothballs. The smell is still so strong we don't keep anything in there that we might wear but it now serves as the place family games are kept - including monopoly. So the games smell like mothballs and so does the garage. The smell of mothballs makes me think of unhappy memories of being taken by my parents to see elderly relatives in smelly houses. That same scent conjures up for my daughter's happy memories of Sunday afternoons on the living room floor eating snacks and playing board games with her parents.

Churches have a scent too. It is the smell of snuffed candles, hot dishes, Christmas trees, Easter lilies, and always of coffee. What kinds of memories will church smells elicit from our youth? Will it make them remember the feeling of being safe and surrounded by loving people, of good food, great music and peaceful fellowship? Will they perhaps remember mission trips and the joy of doing good deeds and raising money for ministries around the world? Will they remember a place where grace abounds and love is unconditional? Or will the smells of church be associated with memories of tedium in confirmation, struggling to memorize words they don't understand, will they think of a place they were required to attend but not welcomed when they arrived?

Grace or Judgment; welcoming or foreboding; inclusive or cliquish? Maybe it is less important what our youth & family ministries teach and more the memories our ministries create.

Upcoming Events

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| July 18-22 | ELCA Youth Gathering
New Orleans, LA |
| July 27-Aug 1 | WIYLDE
Luther College, Decorah |

August 9

Youth Worker Network Meeting
Salem Lutheran, Lake Mills

August 27

Safeguarding God's Children Workshop
Decorah Lutheran, Decorah

Oct 12-13

UNI Middle School Lock-In
UNI, Cedar Falls

Jan 24-28, 2013

ELCA Youth Ministry Network Extravaganza
Anaheim, CA

Pastor Mark Anderson
Northeastern Iowa Synod

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