



Northeastern Iowa Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Children, Youth and Family Ministry Newsletter

October 2014
Vol. 9, Issue 6

In this Issue:

- Reformation Sunday #Amightyfortress
- An Opportunity for the Gathering
- National Youth Gathering Updates
- Lutheran Youth Organization Network
- Upcoming Events



Reformation Sunday October 26, 2014 #Amightyfortress

This Reformation Sunday we are inviting congregations in our synod to reflect on what it means to sing "A Mighty Fortress." The hymn, based on Psalm 46 was written by Martin Luther to interpret the psalm and help believers apply it to the struggles of their own lives. This Reformation we are inviting synod members to reflect again on this great hymn and its relevance to our lives today.

In order to bring us all together in this theme, throughout the month of October we are encouraging members and congregations to use social media with the hashtag #Amightyfortress as we reflect on what this hymn means for us today. Each week we will reflect on a different theme from the hymn, "A Mighty Fortress is Our God". You are invited to post a thought, quote, essay, poem, art or photo that reflects your understanding of that theme on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. Be sure to use the hashtag #Amightyfortress, or the hashtag for that theme, or both if you have room.

Week 1 October 1-8: What does God as a mighty fortress in your life look like? #Amightyfortress

Week 2 October 9-15: What does it mean today to say that God breaks the cruel oppressor's rod in the world today? #breaktherod

Week 3 October 16-23: What are the weapons of the Spirit you see God using to fight for you? #weaponsofspirit

Week 4 October 24-31: Post your favorite YouTube version of A Mighty Fortress or a video of you or your choir singing the hymn with the hashtag

#Amightyfortress

Sunday, October 26

Tell all your friends on Social media you are at church on Reformation Sunday. Tweet the sermon. Take a selfie of you singing A Mighty Fortress. Or a picture from the hymnal or bulletin. Remember to use #Amightyfortress and if there is room also use #ELCA to let the rest of the church know what we are doing.

*Why is a (#) hashtag important? Whatever you put a # in front of on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram becomes a clickable link that allows people to find all the posts with that hashtag. It helps bring us all together in our celebration of the good news of God's grace and love embracing us as A Mighty Fortress.

We will share all your photos and posts with the hashtag #Amightyfortress on the synod Facebook and retweet your #Amightyfortress tweets.

Our friends in our Companion Synod of Hungary are planning to join us. Watch for more news about that in our E-Letters, Facebook and Twitter.

An Opportunity During the 2015 Gathering

The Northeastern Iowa Synod is sponsoring two youth from Namibia to come and spend two weeks with the youth of our synod and then attend the ELCA Youth Gathering next summer in 2015.

If you are going to the Youth Gathering and would be interested in hosting the students, contact [Pastor Joelle](#) by October 27. We also are looking for congregations/youth groups who might be willing to host a lock in for synod youth while the Namibian students are here to give them an opportunity to meet more of our youth (as well as experience that uniquely American event "the lock in").

Also if it is your custom to tithe part of your fundraising for the youth gathering, we are asking that you consider using all or part of your tithe to help with the cost of sponsoring the students. We have a goal of raising \$3000 for this opportunity.

For more information contact [Pastor Joelle Colville-Hanson](#).

National Youth Gathering Update

Just a reminder: If you are sharing a bus with other churches, it is important to register together so you are all at the same hotel!!



****Introducing the ELCA Mission Investment**

Fund: Have you started saving for your congregation's youth to attend the ELCA's Youth Gathering next summer in Detroit?

The Mission Investment Fund, the financial ministry of the ELCA, offers a special Demand Investment Youth Ministry account. With this account, you earn interest on your fundraising dollars-and have the flexibility and convenience of writing checks as expenses occur. In fact, the Mission Investment Fund Service Center onsite at the Gathering will allow authorized account holders to cash checks at the event. Visit mif.elca.org/youthministry for more information and to download a Demand Investment Youth Ministry account application.

****Free parking, anyone?** Are you bringing or renting your own ground transportation in Detroit? If so, the Gathering team wants to know. Why? The Gathering team wants to negotiate for complimentary parking to make our 2015 event as cost-effective as possible. When you register online, please indicate your plans.

2015 Gathering participants will be staying and serving in Detroit, as well as its nearby suburbs. Transportation and parking are necessary. Help us keep your costs low by planning early for your needs and communicating those plans with us when you register.

Have questions or want to know what others are doing? Check out [Gathering Leaks](#).

Registration soft opening (where you can access the online registration site to enter information) begins on September 15th. You can officially register for the Gathering on October 15th. We would recommend that you have your own congregational registration deadline in September so you have time to enter information before October. You will need your congregation's ID number to register.

Lutheran Youth Organization Network

The LYO is no longer an event planning board. It is now named the Lutheran Youth Organization Network (LYON). This has been a network since our synod

went with this structure, we are just changing the strategy this year. It will focus on teaching leadership skills to those youth interested in being part of this network. We will continue to have monthly meetings. Each meeting will have three components: Bible study, conversations around their own personal life and ministry, and teaching on leadership skills.

The leadership skills and topics will include: How to invite others, what is personal stewardship, how to use social media, what does a personal devotional life look like, how to write and lead a Bible study, how to plan an event, how to lead prayer and pray in public, how to pray for someone, encouraging others, connecting church to the community, how to plan a service project and more.

All youth in grades 9-12 (starting in the 2014-2015 school year) are eligible to be part of this network. We've had our first meeting, but youth are still invited to sign up. Our next meeting is on the 13th during the Synod Meeting day at Redeemer Lutheran Church. You can find the forms on the synod website [here](#).

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Deb Bachman.

Upcoming Events

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| October 9 | Webinar: Framing the Vision |
| October 10 | Middle School Lock In at UNI, Cedar Falls |
| October 19 | LYON Meeting 2pm at Synod Office in Waverly |
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| November 6 | Youth Worker Network Meeting at St. Petri, Story City |
| November 13 | Webinar: Framing the Path |
| November 23 | LYON Meeting 2pm at Synod Office in Waverly |
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| December 4 | Youth Worker Network Meeting at St John, Charles City |
| December 14 | LYON Meeting 2pm at Synod Office in Waverly |
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| January 8 | Youth Worker Network Meeting at St Timothy's, Hudson |
| January 18 | LYON Meeting 2pm at Synod Office in Waverly |
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| Jan 29-Feb.2 | ELCA Youth Ministry Network Extranvaganza, Detroit |
| February 15 | LYON Meeting 2pm at Synod Office in Waverly |

March 5 Youth Worker Network Meeting at Holy Trinity, Dubuque
March 8 LYON Meeting 2pm at Synod Office in Waverly

April 9 Youth Worker Network Meeting at Zion St John, Sheffield
April 12 LYON Meeting 2pm at Synod Office in Waverly

May 7 Youth Worker Network Meeting in Decorah

June 4 Youth Worker Network Meeting at Synod Office, Waverly

July 15-19 ELCA National Youth Gathering in Detroit, Michigan

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