

ELCA YOUTH GATHERING

Minneapolis, Minnesota

July 24 – July 28, 2022

Summer 2022 promises to be amazing! Tens of thousands of Youth from around this great nation will gather together in Minneapolis, MN in Jesus' name. Trinity Youth will be among them. Preparations are being made and registration for the 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering will soon be upon us.

Every three years, 30,000 + high school youth and their adult leaders from across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gather for a week of faith formation known as the ELCA Youth Gathering. Through days spent in interactive learning, worship, Bible study, service and fellowship, young people grow in faith and are challenged and inspired to live their faith in their daily lives.

The theme for the 2022 Gathering is “Boundless. God beyond measure.”

Our primary scripture will be Ephesians 3:19 CEV

“I want you to know all about Christ’s love, although it is too wonderful to be measured. Then your lives will be filled with all that God is.”

Love is a foundational piece of our Lutheran faith. This gift changes lives and perspectives as people realize they are loved without boundaries. As humans we are bound by our limits, judgements and brokenness, so our love is not boundless. God’s love is limitless. God’s love is great. God’s love is for all of humanity. God’s love is for you.

We look forward to diving deeply into this theme with you in the months to come!

Please prayerfully consider this faith shaping, memory making experience for your high schooler.

Need to hear more? Here are a few words from some of Trinity’s 2018 Gathering attendees:

Day 4: “Our first morning in Houston we woke up early and headed to NASA. We left at 7:30, too early to pick up our registration packet for the Gathering, as that started at 8:00. Jessa, Abby and Kyra were at Starbuck’s (in the mall connected to our hotel) and met a man who worked for the Gathering that was willing to get us our registration stuff early. It was an act of God and totally answered Kirstie’s prayers. NASA was a good learning experience and cool to tour.

The first night of the Gathering was UNBELIEVABLE for us first timers! There was so much energy in the whole stadium. There were many influential speakers who talked about how God came into their lives. The musicians were also very upbeat and great to listen to. Goodnight Houston!” ~J.A./A.K.

Service Day: “On Day 6 of our trip, we had our Gathering Service Day. It all started at 7:00 a.m. We were told that our project was beautification of an elementary school. I, for one, was happy to hear that it had nothing to do with picking up trash. (I had a bad experience in Detroit 3 years ago). We learned about the school from some parents and the principal. It was nice to hear how invested they are in

trying to make the school enjoyable for learning. They have spent years in trying to preserve the school and in just a few hours we were able to help make a huge difference. It was great! We definitely saw God today in our work...the small things we do for others can go a long way. We also saw God in the parents and principal. They care for and love their children/ students and do all that they can to provide for their needs just as God does for His children." ~K.P./K.P.

A God Encounter: "I was sitting at worship between my friends and some kids from another group and Jesus Loves Me comes on. We stand, put our arms around each other and start swaying. I invited the girl next to me from the other group to join us and she did (along with her group). After the song was over and awhile had passed, she handed me her phone open to a note that she wanted me to read. It said a lot of things but mostly it said "Thank you" and that I had helped her feel welcome and a part of the event and that she doesn't feel welcome and included very often. She said that I helped her to feel hope. I was so stunned and all I could muster was a "You're welcome. Anytime". She took her phone back from me and she left. This encounter with this girl has really opened my eyes. There are so many choices in life. I made a small but impactful choice to invite this shy girl to be a part of my experience that night. I made a choice to say yes to the way that God wanted to use me in that moment. God aligned all of the pieces of the puzzle for this to happen in just the way it did that night. It wasn't by chance that I was sitting at the end of our group, in that row, next to that girl. It wasn't an accident that I invited her to stand with us. It was God, asking me to do what He had prepared me for. And it has changed me for the better!" ~J.W.

Synod Day: "Our bishop dressed in a gorilla costume and then gave an awesome sermon. He is so relatable and cares about our opinions. The day was pretty much like church...we had communion and sang songs. Worship tonight was even more powerful than the first. We knew what to expect and it was very impactful." ~B.S

About the experience overall : "Houston has changed me. Before this trip, full of enlightening experiences, great stories and songs, and fun, I really hadn't seen some of the great things God has done. My faith has matured so much over this last week that I feel totally different about God. God really is with me everywhere and will always be even when I can't see it. This was the best experience I could have asked for and I wouldn't have wanted to have it any other way." ~L.F.

Some of the Details:

Registration paperwork and a \$250 deposit are due on or before 5:00 p.m. September 15, 2021.

Total Cost: \$1600 (includes travel, lodging and meals for the entirety of the trip)

Spiritual Prep Time: We will have GOD Squad starting in October. On Gathering years GOD Squad is Gathering spiritual prep time. We build our knowledge about and our faith in God. We learn a lot about ourselves and each other as we grow as a youth family. We learn about our host city and prepare our hearts and minds for the work that we will be doing during our mission trip. Spiritual Prep is essential for our young people to get the most from this amazing experience. A commitment to attending GOD Squad is a must. We understand that schedules are busy and that life happens, but **this needs to be a priority in the schedule**. GOD Squad time will be determined in September by the youth attending the Gathering. This is what one young person had to say about his GOD Squad/ Spiritual Prep Time experience:

"GOD Squad to me is like a second family. You can talk about all of your problems. From small friend problems to GOD problems. GOD Squad really matured my faith. You really go in depth on a lot of topics and you get to know the people in the room very well. It also can get pretty emotional, judging by the fact that Kirstie cries at least once almost every time. All in all, GOD Squad is a safe place to learn about GOD and Jesus." ~J.

Fundraising: We have some fundraisers already planned and are working on others to keep out of pocket expenses reasonable. We understand fundraising can be exhausting but attending fundraisers is also important for growth and team building. We are trying very hard to find a balance between enough fundraisers to keep costs down and not so many that we feel like that is all we have done for 9 months. We will be doing a few Emma Rosie catering events, pancake breakfasts and making Lefse (Thanksgiving and Easter). We will also be working the circus. (Dates to be determined. You will be notified ASAP).

Payment Plan: Payments can start being made as soon as you wish. A \$250 non-refundable deposit is due with registration by September 15 (because we need to make deposit payments for the Gathering). By the end of January, each youth is expected to have at least \$800 (including the deposit) in his/her account from a combination of fundraising and payments. By June 1, each account is expected to be fully funded; again, by a combo of fundraisers and payments. If money is an issue, **PLEASE, PLEASE** reach out to me or Pastor Kristi. We will figure something out. We never want funds to be the reason that someone does not get to have this incredible experience. And, as always, all financial information is kept confidential.

Info: There will be monthly activity and update emails. There will also be at least 3 parent meetings in October, January and June. Ideally, we would have a Parent Meeting in September to give information and to answer any questions, but The Gathering is asking for registration much earlier this year than in previous years. For any questions or concerns please call/text the youth phone **(701) 659-1226** or email **youthtjnd@gmail.com** . We're happy to answer any questions that you may have during any portion of this process.

Blessings,

Pr. Susan