

**Southwestern Minnesota Synod Senior High Youth Gathering  
March 4-5, 2016  
Courtyard by Marriott, Mankato, MN**

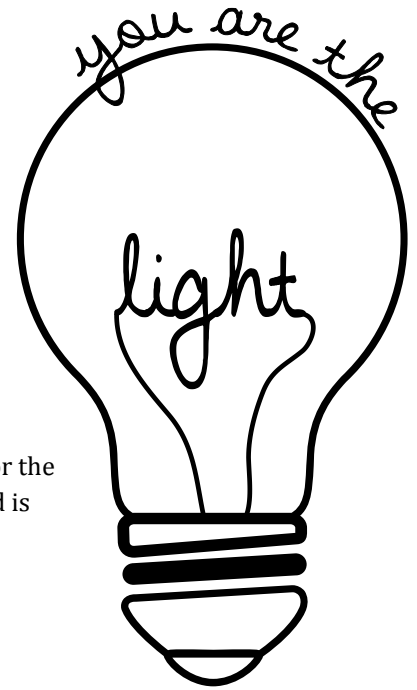
January 2015

Dear Youth Workers (Pastors, Youth Ministers and Adult Advisors),

New Year's Blessings to you! We are very happy to be sharing the registration materials for the Synod's annual Senior High Youth Gathering! This event is for students in grades 9-12 and is coordinated and planned by the SW MN Synod Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO). It will be held March 4-5, 2016 at the Courtyard by Marriott in Mankato, MN.

Our theme this year is "You are the **light** of the World."

Based on Matthew 5:14 (NIV)



We have an exceptional gathering planned:

- We are blessed to have "AGAPE" with us for this gathering!  
    **f** **AGAPE\* (Dave Scherer)** **t** **@agapedave1** Webpage: <http://www.hiphopoutreach.com/#rise-up-tour>
- About AGAPE: He combines rapping, dancing, and storytelling to communicate to young people in a way that they "get it." He performs 100 times a year for youth across the United States and has also traveled internationally with his ministry. In 2001, AGAPE helped start JUMP Ministries (Joint Urban Ministries in Praise) which helps inner-city youth discover their leadership gifts through hip hop and the arts. He recently founded AMP (All Metro Praise) a collaborative worship project connecting youth from across the Twin Cities.
- Nightlife will include an excellent variety of options
- The Spirit Garage- a place for meditation and prayer
- Intentional small groups led by peer trained youth
- The gathering will of course include mass gatherings, lively worship, dancing, singing, faith and relationship building

Gathering registration **opens at 8:00 am on January 11, and continues through February 1, 2015**. Late registration will begin February 2, and close on February 15. Registrations will be taken in the order received and space is limited. If you register participants after the February 1 deadline, you will be charged a \$10 non-refundable late fee per person. **No registrations can be taken after February 15.**

After your registration is received, you will receive an email confirming your registration. You will also receive, via email, the Registration Confirmation Packet which will include a full schedule, group covenant, what to pack list, medical releases, and a pre-gathering checklist. **Thank you** for promoting the gathering in your congregation and with your youth. We are looking forward to an exceptional Gathering!

**Questions regarding the Gathering?**

Contact: Gathering Manager Janelle Curry  
[incurry04@gmail.com](mailto:incurry04@gmail.com) or (507) 276-8340.

**Questions regarding Gathering registration?**

Contact: Registrar Shaun Luker  
[gatheringregistrar@yahoo.com](mailto:gatheringregistrar@yahoo.com) or (507) 317-8968.

See you in March!

In Christ,  
The Southwestern Minnesota Lutheran Youth Organization

## Senior High (Grades 9-12) Youth Gathering Registration Information

- COST:**           **\$95 per person** (payment due with your registration)
- Includes hotel room, programming, a Gathering t-shirt
  - Also includes Friday dinner and Saturday lunch (please bring your own breakfast)

If you have cancellations before **February 2** you will receive a \$25 refund for those registrations.

- DEADLINES:**   January 11- February 1           Regular registration  
February 2-15           Late registration - add \$10 non-refundable late fee per person  
**February 15**           **Registration closed - no late registrations on or after this date.**

**GROUPS:**       Groups must register with one adult (**21 yrs. or older – for liability reasons**) for every 7 youth.

**ROOMS:**       Rooms are assigned on the basis of 4 people to a room. Persons from different churches will be housed together in order to reduce Gathering costs. If you are uncomfortable sharing beds, please bring a sleeping bag and pillow. We do our best to honor your room requests. Both double and king rooms will be used, so a sleeping bag may be necessary.

**DETAILS:**       Once all your deposits are gathered, fill out the registration form online at [http://www.swmnelca.org/youth\\_events](http://www.swmnelca.org/youth_events) and either **pay online** (with check or credit card) or make ONE CHECK out to the “SW MN Synod” then send it to the **synod office** (this is a change from prior years).

**SW MN Synod Senior High Gathering**  
**SOUTHWESTERN MINNESOTA SYNOD**  
**PO BOX 499**  
**REDWOOD FALLS MN 56283**

**Registrations will not be confirmed until payment is made.**

**QUESTIONS about registration?** Contact Registrar Shaun Luker at (507) 317-8968 or [gatheringregistrar@yahoo.com](mailto:gatheringregistrar@yahoo.com)

### Tentative Schedule:

| <u>Friday</u> |                                     | <u>Saturday</u> |                                  |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| 5:00- 6:30 pm | Registration                        | 8:00- 8:45 am   | Breakfast (on your own)          |
| 5:00- 7:00 pm | Taco Bar ( <i>Included</i> )        | 9:00-11:30 am   | Assembly II & LYO elections      |
| 6:30- 7:00 pm | Pre-Assembly Music                  | 11:30-12:30 pm  | Lunch ( <i>Included</i> )        |
| 7:00- 8:30 pm | Assembly I                          | 12:30-2:30 pm   | Dig Deeper into the theme        |
| 8:30- 9:00 pm | Small Groups, Chaperone orientation | 3:00- 5:00 pm   | Small Groups and Closing worship |
| 9:15-11:00 pm | Nightlife, LYO Board info meeting   |                 |                                  |
| 11:00 p.m.    | Large Group Activity                |                 |                                  |
| 12:00 a.m.    | Church Family Time                  |                 |                                  |
| 1:00 a.m.     | Curfew                              |                 |                                  |



## LYO Board Elections

Your new SW MN Synod Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO) Board will be elected at the Senior High Youth Gathering. This is an amazing opportunity for youth to serve their church, synod and community while growing in faith and leadership skills. Please encourage youth from your congregation to run for this board. It is a rewarding learning and faith building experience.

**The LYO Board is responsible for planning and leading the Jr. and Sr. High Youth Gatherings and representing the voice of youth on a synod level. The LYO board is a leadership team that requires leadership skills, maturity, a significant investment of time, and a desire to grow in and share one's faith. Board members receive training to grow in their skills and accomplish their assigned tasks.**

Youth from your congregations in grades 9-11 are eligible to run for thirteen one-year LYO board terms. The 13 elected youth will choose their own officers during LYO training. After the gathering, the LYO board will choose 2 additional board-appointed members to increase diversity on the board.

Serving on the LYO board involves a time commitment of attending LYO training in the summer, 2 weekend meeting/retreats, and leading the Jr. and Sr. High Gathering. Dates for these commitments are printed on the LYO application form.

On the back of this sheet you will find an LYO application form. Forms received by **February 26** will be printed and distributed to gathering participants to aid in the election process. All youth who run for the LYO board will need to fill out a form, but **only those received by February 26 will be printed.**

If you have any questions please contact Sarah Hausken, 507-430-2273 or [sarah.hausken@swmnelca.org](mailto:sarah.hausken@swmnelca.org).

### **How have you seen God at work through your service on the SW MN Synod LYO board?**

*Thoughts from past and current LYO members . . .*

I've seen God through the entire LYO experience. This new family that has been given to me has changed my life immensely. The work we do through the board is truly a blessing to all those involved. God has blessed each of us to have a unique and truly wonderful experience through this board. God is absolutely everywhere and LYO has opened my eyes to be able to see that.

- Cole Woltjer, Willmar, MN

I have seen God at work through my LYO service especially when at the Jr. High Gathering, seeing the people high-fiving and saying "God loves you!" and then watching it spread throughout the place. And at school on that following Monday there was someone who had gone to the gathering who was giving high fives and saying "God loves you." It was cool. I told him so too.

- Oliver Thul, Balaton, MN

I see God in every aspect of LYO! I know it sounds cliché but I see the light of God shine through everyone so brightly. One of my favorite parts is seeing the way God works through us. It's so reassuring knowing that we are all there for the same reason. We are one team, one body, one big family. It's the best relationship I have ever had. God is working through each and every one of us and I am incredibly blessed that I am a part of this amazing organization.

- Tori Raths, Willmar, MN

I see God work every gathering we do, I love seeing the smiles on the youths face when they arrive at the gathering and during, it is awesome to see how appreciative they are, and because I know that the people on the LYO are there to support me through whatever, and whenever!

- Harper Groves, Buffalo Lake, MN

**Application Form**  
**Candidates for Southwestern Minnesota**  
**Lutheran Youth Organization**

The LYO Board is responsible for planning and leading the Jr. and Sr. High Youth Gatherings and representing the voice of youth on a synod level. The LYO is a leadership team that requires leadership skills, a significant investment of time, and a desire to grow in and share one's faith. Board members receive training to grow in their skills and serve in this ministry.

Following are the meeting dates the 2015-2016 LYO board is committed to attending and serving. If you know you will be unable to attend more than one meeting or will not make your participation in the LYO board a priority, please consider letting someone who is able to make the commitment and be present for more meetings have the chance to serve on the LYO Board. Thank you.

LYO Training June 12-14?, 2016, September 10, 2016; November 17-20, 2016; January 20-21, 2017; March 3-4?, 2017

\*\*\*You may fill out and mail or email this form or submit it online at /www.swmnelca.org/youth\_family\*\*\*

*Online applications are preferred.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Gender \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Do you check it? \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Do you text? \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Home Congregation and Town/Location \_\_\_\_\_

1. In 30 words or less, please state why you are interested in serving on the LYO Board. (What motivated you to apply? What do you hope to accomplish for youth in the Southwestern Minnesota Synod by serving on the LYO Board?)

2. In 30 words or less, please state some strengths, gifts, abilities or perspectives you would bring to the LYO Board.

3. In 30 words or less, please state any activities have you been involved with at school, church and in your community that may give you experience that would help you serve on the LYO Board.

Written applications to be printed for the Gathering will only be received until **February 25, 2016**.

All candidates must fill out an application before voting takes place on March 6, 2015.

**Please submit online or send to:** LYO Secretary Chloe Halvorson, 208 SW Robbins Avenue, Willmar, MN  
[16halvoch@willmar.org](mailto:16halvoch@willmar.org) 320-220-1364. Chloe will contact you via email or text to let you know she has received your application.

If you do not hear from her, please contact her to make sure she received it.

## Small Group Leaders

Small groups are a super-mega-important part of the Senior High Youth Gathering, and are awesome for creating friendships between youth from all over the Synod. It makes the whole gathering much more epic for the youth.

We are asking you as an adult leader to seek out 10-12<sup>th</sup> grade youth that you believe would absolutely ROCK at leading a small group. We are looking for 30 youth who can own this kind of leadership role. Past experience in leading a small group is helpful but not required. We trust your judgment to ask youth who would be gifted in this way.

Small groups will be made up of approximately seven youth from different congregations (both male and female), in the same grade.

We ask that each small group leader come to a required training on Friday March 4<sup>th</sup>, during registration/check in time, at the Courtyard Marriott. Exact time and room location will be emailed closer to the gathering. If he/she cannot make the training during that time, please contact Maddy Thorpe to make other arrangements.

This is an awesome opportunity to give youth a chance to serve at the Senior High Youth Gathering and use the skills God has given them. If you have any questions about small group leaders, training, etc., please contact Maddy Thorpe at 320-295-8131, [maddyathorpe@hotmail.com](mailto:maddyathorpe@hotmail.com) or find her on facebook.

Please ask your youth to fill out the following form. Please mail or email the form to Maddy Thorpe, [maddyathorpe@hotmail.com](mailto:maddyathorpe@hotmail.com) or PO Box 213 Pennock, MN 56279 by February 28<sup>th</sup>. This form is also available to fill out online at [www.swmnelca.org](http://www.swmnelca.org). Youth Events page.



### Small Group Leader Questionnaire

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Gender \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_ Do you check it? \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation and Town \_\_\_\_\_

Leader Name \_\_\_\_\_ Youth Leader phone \_\_\_\_\_

What gifts would you bring to being a Small Group Leader?

What experiences have you had that would help you with this role?

## SW MN Synod 2016 Senior High Gathering Covenant

*Please have every youth and adult sign this form and bring it with you to the Gathering*

We, the undersigned, agree to covenant the following behaviors for the duration of the SW MN Synod Senior High Youth Gathering, March 4-5, 2016.

We do this in order to receive maximum benefits from our time together.

In keeping with our witness as a Christian Community, we will:

1. Refrain from using any substance that will alter our state of mind or being, including drugs, alcohol, or tobacco in any shape or form.
2. Follow Jesus' example by putting other people before ourselves, so that all people – LYO board, speakers, musicians, security, hotel staff, other guests and all other participants - will be respected. This includes listening, participating, our language and gestures, and the observing of Quiet Hours.
3. Treat facilities with care.
4. Not leave the designated hotels or other locations without the permission of our adult leader.
5. Actively participate in all gathering event, including being fully present.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Medical Release/Medical Information/Photo Release Form  
SW MN Synod Senior High Youth Gathering**

*Please reproduce this form – one form for every youth and adult.*

GATHERING COPY

Name of gathering registrant: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any medical conditions or allergies that we should know about?  
\_\_\_\_\_

If parent/guardian is unavailable, please contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Company name \_\_\_\_\_ Policy # \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby grant my permission for my child to attend the SW MN Synod Senior High Youth Gathering, to be held at the Courtyard by Marriott, Mankato, MN from March 4-5, 2016. I also grant my permission, in case of an emergency, for medical attention to be sought by the chaperones for my child's group and/or the persons in charge of the Gathering. I understand that all efforts will be made to notify me immediately of any such happenings.

Signed: (parent/guardian) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**I also give permission for the use of photographs, video and electronic images including my child in Youth Gathering materials, the synod website and social media.**

Signed: (parent/guardian) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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CONGREGATION COPY

Name of gathering registrant: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any medical conditions or allergies that we should know about?  
\_\_\_\_\_

If parent/guardian is unavailable, please contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Company name \_\_\_\_\_ Policy # \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby grant my permission for my child to attend the SW MN Synod Senior High Youth Gathering, to be held at the Courtyard by Marriott, Mankato, MN from March 4-5, 2016. I also grant my permission, in case of an emergency, for medical attention to be sought by the chaperones for my child's group and/or the persons in charge of the Gathering. I understand that all efforts will be made to notify me immediately of any such happenings.

Signed: (parent/guardian) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**I also give permission for the use of photographs, video and electronic images including my child in Youth Gathering materials, the synod website and social media.**

Signed: (parent/guardian) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_