

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 leadership 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 maturity, leadership skills, responsibility, openness, creativity, a significant investment of time, faith and trust in God and sharing the Good News of God's love with others, 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 one-year LYO board terms—thirteen seats are up for election. The elected youth will choose their own officers during LYO training in June. After the gathering, the current 2023-24 LYO board will appoint 2 additional board 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 meetings/retreats, and planning/leading the Jr. and Sr. High Gathering.

Forms received by the online deadline (March 6th at Noon) will be distributed to gathering participants to aid in the election process. (Students may still fill out an application in person, due by March 8th at 10 PM) All youth who run for the LYO board will need to fill out an online application (electronic form only), which can be found on the Youth Gathering webpage – <https://swmnelca.org/event/sryg/>.

If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Christa Forsythe by email or phone: christaforsythe@gmail.com or #320-535-0641

From past LYO members: *How have you seen God at work through your service on the SW MN Synod LYO board?...*

Within the first five minutes of my first ever junior high youth gathering, I knew that I wanted to be on LYO. In particular, I saw God through the members giving their faith talks. I remember one key phrase from almost all of the faith talks I heard, and that's when I heard God through them. After giving my own, I realized that many participants felt the same way. One other way that I have seen God through LYO is how close the group is. We all support each other through anything. I love how we open our arms to the gathering participants that we don't and automatically feel so close to them. - Emma Thompson, Olivia, 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

I have seen God working through each one of the LYO members and the work that we do. Whether that work is individually, in a group, during the gatherings or outside of the gatherings, God is constantly working in and through us to make us the best that we can be. We're not just a board, but a big happy family and I wouldn't trade in my time on the LYO board for anything. - Olivia Hanson, Olivia MN

The 2024-2025 LYO board must commit to attending all of the following events:

- Training: June 9-11 , 2024 (Gustavus Adolphus College, St Peter, MN)
- Planning: September 14, 2024 (Synod Office in Redwood Falls)
- JH Gathering: November 21-24, 2024 (Willmar Convention Center)
- Training: January 17-18, 2025 (Green Lake Lutheran Bible Camp)
- SH Gathering: either March 6-9, 2025 or April 3-6, 2025 (location TBD)

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. Your commitment to LYO starts with a training to build foundational skills in leadership and create relationships of trust within the LYO community. Participation in training is essential and expected. If you miss more than one meeting, other than for illness, an emergency, a death in the family, or unavoidable school conflict like a school play – your term on the board may be ended due to scheduling conflicts.

All candidates must fill out an online application (electronic form only, found on the [Youth Gathering webpage](#)) before voting takes place on March 9, 2024. If you do not receive confirmation that your form was submitted successfully, please contact Pastor Christa Forsythe at christaforsythe@gmail.com.