

## **Youth Ministry**

### **Bible Passages:**

Philippians 1:9-11 “And this is my prayer; that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.”

I Timothy 4:12 “Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.”

### **Objective:**

To encourage and provide means for the youth in our family of believers to remain active in their personal church life, Bible study, fellowship, and Christian service.

### **Rationale:**

St. John’s congregation has a number (ca. 50-70) of young adults, many of whom have lost a meaningful connection to their Savior. Because young adults are a major portion of the future of God's church, and because God has entrusted them to us, serious work needs to be done in the area of youth ministry. The ministry to teens has two components: getting them involved in Christian secondary education, and involving them in the ministry of and through their congregation. Outside of a handful of students attending St. Croix Lutheran High School, the majority of high school students are attending a public high school. For those attending a public high school, their only opportunities for spiritual growth are at worship services or at Young People’s Society (YPS), and if they don’t worship regularly<sup>1</sup>, their opportunities to hear and study God’s Word are even less.

### **During the next 7 years:**

1. We envision a youth program that is lead by a dedicated, committed Youth Ministry Coordinator.

### **To make this vision a reality:**

- a. The Church Council will develop a Youth Ministry Board that oversees youth involvement in worship, Bible study, recreation, fellowship, and Christian service. (The board will be under the direction of the Youth Ministry Coordinator.)
- b. The Youth Ministry Coordinator will investigate the youth programs of other Red Wing churches to gather information and collect ideas.
- c. We recommend looking into the possibility of a Youth Ministry Coordinator position to be shared with other Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod churches in the area.

2. We envision continued support of St. Croix Lutheran High School, Luther Preparatory School, and other WELS schools, and planned, measurable encouragement of students to attend a Lutheran High School.
  - a. The Committee of Christian Education will establish a Lutheran School tuition assistance fund based on need. (We encourage examining the possibility of consolidating this fund with the Student Assistance fund.)
  - b. The Principal will organize annual visits by the seventh and eighth graders (including public school students, Lutheran Elementary School students, and any others who show interest) to the Lutheran Preparatory School and its classes, and to St. Croix Lutheran High School.
  
3. We envision the expansion of youth involvement in worship, Bible study, and as many committees and groups of the church as is possible or practical.
  - a. The Committee of Christian Education will provide a Bible study specifically for teenagers, such as, on line Bible study and email devotions.
  - b. The Worship Committee will occasionally use selected youth to participate as readers and special speakers.
  - c. The Worship Committee will invite teens that are musically inclined to perform before, during, or after services as the situation dictates.
  - d. The Head Usher will use more teens as ushers.
  - e. The Outreach Team will use more teens as greeters.
  - f. The Council President will occasionally invite sons of Councilmen to attend council meetings.
  - g. The committee chairmen will occasionally involve youth in the work or the education, finance, property, and cemetery committees.
  
4. We envision strengthening relationships among teens within our congregation.
  - a. The Youth Ministry Coordinator will provide the opportunities to attend youth orientated retreats and seminars – the content of which will connect with high school youth.
  - b. The Youth Ministry Coordinator will plan for our youth to regularly attend the WELS International Youth Rallies, and other regional rallies when possible or practical.
  - c. We recommend providing an appropriate facility for youth gatherings. (Cf. Appendix 1)

5. We envision a Youth Ministry that engages in Christian service, having gained an understanding of serving Christ through serving others.
  - a. The pastors, teachers, Youth Ministry Coordinator, and parents will help our youth develop talents for service at St. John's both as individuals and as a group.
  - b. The pastors, teachers, Youth Ministry Coordinator, and parents will help our youth to develop an active involvement in the life of the community.
  - c. The Outreach Team will involve youth in regularly scheduled canvassing events in the community and abroad.
  - d. The Outreach Team will involve youth in the planning and running of Vacation Bible School.

\* In this document the youth we are referring to are in the seventh, eighth, and high school grade levels. Seventh and eighth grade students were included in this group because of their intense study of God's Word in confirmation class, which places them a notch above the other elementary school students. By combining the seventh and eighth with the high school students in some of their activities, the transition from eighth grade to high school would be more gradual. College students would not necessarily fall under this grouping.

---

<sup>i</sup> According to the congregational survey taken in August 2000, less than 11% of our children (ages 1-19) worshipped more than once a month.

<sup>ii</sup> We suggest that in October of 2002 and 2005 the Church Council should conduct another worship attendance survey.