

GREETINGS FAITH FORMATION FOLKS!

“What is ‘Faith Formation’ and why are you addressing me as one of those folks?” I am glad you asked...

Faith Formation has everything to do with the first-third of life (generally 25-30 years) and the development and growth of one’s beliefs and spiritual practices in that time frame. If you are under 25 (-ish) or have offspring in that age group, you are my “faith formation folks.” I am writing this to truly introduce myself, my education and passion, and our faith community’s plans for the near-future regarding ministry with and to our under-26-year-olds.

CHILDREN’S CHURCH:

Children’s Church is for our children (obviously) in **pre-kindergarten through 3rd Grade**. It is held every Sunday (as long as we have a teacher signed up to lead), beginning September 17th. During our 9am worship – about 15 minutes in – a Children’s Hymn is sung. It is during this song that our children gather in the narthex (aka: lobby) and head off to class with their teacher. Our shared faith will be taught through Bible stories, songs, multimedia, and crafts. After about 30 minutes together, our children will rejoin us in the sanctuary in time for communion and the close of worship, allowing both parent and child to have a fulfilling faith practice experience.

4/5 CLUB:

4/5 Club is for all youth currently in **4th and 5th Grades** and will meet in the gym every **1st and 3rd Sunday from 10:30-11:30am**. Besides the normal fun and games associated with a youth group such as this, we will explore Bible stories together and find out what they mean to us today. (Our first meeting is on **Sept. 17th!**)

CONFIRMATION:

This youth group will happen **every 2nd and 4th Sunday from 10:30am-Noon** in the gym and is aimed at those in **6th, 7th, and 8th Grades** (yet is open to all youth 6th Grade and up). It is a three-year program and will serve as your Catechism. Don’t worry – I promise not to do to you what was done to me... boredom, loathing, and a waste of time. Instead, we will figure out why our grandparents’ faith matters to us and how it applies to life in our school cafeteria. Did I mention ridiculously fun games and service projects to help others? And then there is the week of Summer Camp at Lutherlyn we all do together.

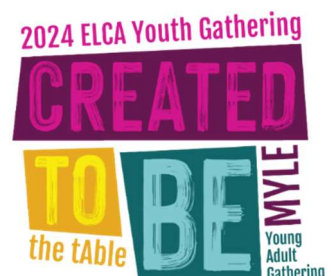
Our **first Confirmation meeting** will take place as part of the **CROP Walk on Sunday, September 24th**. Bring canned food items to donate and meet me at the Beach 1 Pavilion on Presque Isle at 1pm; we will walk and talk together. I will get you a free t-shirt if you can let me know your shirt size by **Sunday, September 10th!** And there is a prize for the student who raises the most money for CROP Walk by that day! For information on our annual [Erie CROP Walk](#), click on the link or talk to Peggy Fuhrman here at church on Sunday.

But wait, 8th Graders ... there’s more! Keep reading...

HIGH SCHOOL (9-12 GRADE):

I know you all are crazy busy. And I know you don’t want to add another thing to your schedule. So help me figure out how to give you what you want and need in terms of connection to each other and our higher power without causing you an anxiety attack. In other words, how do I help you have quality without necessarily overloading quantity?

- I would love a **youth group** time with you that is all yours. What works for you? What all is involved? YOU need to help me make this happen. Talk to me, Goose.
- **ELCA Youth Gathering – July 16-22 in New Orleans:** Open to all youth currently in 8th through 12th Grade! This will be ELCA Youth Gathering #11 for me as a leader (yes, I am that old) - #4 in New Orleans. The bonus this time around for me is that I lived in NOLA all of 2022 while I served the Marines



there as a mobilized Navy Reserve Chaplain, so I now REALLY know my way around the city, its history, and its culture. Our **first meeting will be on SUNDAY, SEPT 24 at 10:15am** (right after worship). This is our first foray into the basic information that you are going to need to know about the gathering, getting our group ready, things you might need to do, deadlines, and a lot of Q&A. Going forward, we will plan for future meetings to prepare, fundraise, etc. One thing that needs to be paid attention to immediately: Early Registration opens on September 15 and runs through November 1, before switching to Regular Registration. We should register in that early time frame, if at all possible, as that is a discounted registration rate and gives us first choice of hotel locations.

- And please, come **CROP Walk** with us that Sunday (9/24, 1pm at Beach 1). I will even bribe you with a free t-shirt for doing so (though, you too, need to let me know your shirt size by Sunday, September 10th in order to get one ordered).

YOUNG ADULT (18 – 25ISH YEARS OLD):

- I want to get together with you as a group (or individually) as you see fit, whether during Trivia Night at The Plymouth, morning coffee at The Topsy Bean, Mug Club at Erie Brewing, etc. You let me know what works best for you in your faith life and with your schedule. But wait, there's more...
- The ELCA National Youth Gathering is thrilled to partner with [ELCA Young Adult Ministries](#) to provide the first-ever **ELCA Young Adult Gathering** alongside the 2024 Gathering in New Orleans! Individuals who will be 18 to 35 at the time of the Gathering are invited to attend. We recognize that 18-35 is a wide age range and anticipate that most of our programming will be geared toward those 18 to 25 years old. All young-adult participants will be divided into cohorts based on age. Individuals interested in attending the ELCA Young Adult Gathering will need to register apart from any congregational group attending the ELCA Youth Gathering. Childcare will be available for those attending the ELCA Young Adult Gathering. Please note that children are not allowed to attend Mass Gathering programming. (I am the synod coordinator for this, so talk to me about this event! Also, the September 24th meeting is open for you.)

A LITTLE ABOUT ME:

I have been a professional youth minister since 1990. It is my undergrad degree and is still my passion all these years later. I love young peoples' courageous, raw, unedited exploration of their relationship with the Creator and the world, and want to continue to be a guide, companion, and God-bearer for them in that journey. Also, they are just a ton of fun to be around and I will always be 12 years old inside no matter how non-red my hair continues to turn.

I hope this gives you a solid starting point for what we will be doing together as a community of faith. I am here to help you fill in the blanks and continue in a faith formation experience that will shape our lives in a new way every day. Use me accordingly as we serve Christ together.



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