

Grace Partners

Summer Gathering



a ministry of the southern ohio synod
updated 06.23.09

Youth Ministry

- Cardversations 104 Questions for Youth to Deal with.** This is a wonderful tool to use if your group is having trouble opening up and talking. It provides your youth group with a host of discussion questions that deal with numerous topics that are relevant for Christian youth. The questions are printed on two decks of cards that can be used to play any number of card games. There are two decks of 52 cards each. One had questions appropriate for all youth and the other deck is geared toward older youth. A leader's guide with information and Scriptures pertaining to each of the 104 Cardversation questions is provided. Cost from Augsburg Fortress...\$16.
- Youth Ministry in Small Churches by Rick Chromey.** This book gives creative how-to tips, plus 28 involving activities. It wrestles with the special dynamics of effective youth ministry of a small church. Chromey seeks to help the reader discover what a small church can do that a big church can't as well as to approach tough questions like *Why is small church youth ministry so tough? Should I cancel a meeting if only one or two kids show up? Where can I find good no- or low-cost resources? Should we combine jr. and senior high groups? How can I find volunteers when everybody's so busy? What activities really work with small groups?*
- Unleashing God's Word in Youth Ministry by Barry Shafer.** Often times youth groups lean more towards fellowship than solid Bible study. Shafer's book is designed to help you develop a Bible study approach that engages students on a deeper level – even if you're an avid curriculum user or someone who creates all your own discipleship materials from scratch.
- Jesus centered youth ministry by Rick Lawrence.** This book draws on twelve (12) different essays by experienced youth ministers and address a good variety of topics which include: discipleship, mentoring, evangelism, small groups, engaging culture, counseling, volunteers, parents, and communication.
- DARE2SHARE** If you go to dare2share.com there are prewritten devotions that are based on current events around the nation and globe. From movies to reality TV to headlines in the paper, these are good starting off points to start discussions with teens. Be careful, though. Not all of it follows our theology / doctrine. It is, however, good stuff.
- Youth Works.** YouthWorks is committed to providing week-long, Christ-centered, life-changing youth mission trips. They invite your group to serve with them in the summer. They have 69 sites to choose from within the US, Canada and Puerto Rico. This organization is ecumenical in nature and is wonderful to work with. Contact Pastor Aaron Layne at pastorlayne@hotmail.com for more information and/or questions.
- Nooma.** Video Series. See Christian Education.

- Sarah Beard.** She is a good person who is full of resources for youth ministry. Located in the western part of Ohio, she is particularly good at helping you see what it takes to move from idea to actuality of a multi-congregational youth group. For contact information, please contact Pastor Keith Falk at pastorkeithfalk@hotmail.com.

Stewardship

- Bill McKee.** Pastor McKee is an Assistant to the Bishop for the Southern Ohio Synod and one of his areas of expertise is in matters of Stewardship. For more information, please contact the Synod office at 614-464-3532.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- Souper Bowl.** This idea originated with a woman named Shirley Ruff at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, in Lancaster, Ohio. What this congregation does to support their local LSS food pantry is to invite anyone and everyone from the community, starting two months in advance. In that time prior to the event, the congregation is divided up into two teams (which is easy for Grace because they only have two rows of pews). The congregation is instructed every week that they are not allowed to switch sides because that would be cheating. ☺ Our teams are creatively names the *Lightening Lectors* and the *Pugnacious Preachers*. One point is awarded for every food item given in each team's grocery cart at the front of the worship space. One point is awarded for every dollar given. On the day of the event, the pastor becomes the referee and holds a trivia game after the luncheon which follows the worship service. That is the last chance for teams to earn points for their team. This event is fun for the congregation and community. Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church has won the LSS Souper Bowl Challenge using this idea 2 of the last 3 years.
- Lutheran Church in Amanda
 - Roller Skating once a month (Holy Rollers), includes Hot Dogs, Bible Study, Roller Skating which cost \$20 for the entire group
- Another church acted out Bible stories from car trunks (Trunk of Treat)
- Another church began with a free meal at the end of the month when resources are low. This event grew into alternative worship once a month.
- Also open churches to other community activities (i.e., Scouting, Health Fairs)
- Prayer Ministry programs
- Lay School of Theology
- Reference was also made to look at Yahoo Small Business Solutions (\$10/month)
- Sponsor Mental Health Support Groups (i.e., military, divorce)

Social Ministries

- See **Souper Bowl** under *Community Connections*.
- Soup Kitchen/Feeding Ministry/Community Meals - Trinity, Versailles hosts a weekly meal in their basement. The meal is free, with donations accepted. The ministry originally was planned to feed 40-50 people once a month and has grown to serve ~250 meals once a week in a town of 2500, with many different community groups and congregations involved. Not only are we in a smaller town, but we are a relatively small congregation - average worship attendance of 76 in 2008. A small congregation can do mighty big ministry! If you are interested in knowing some of the pitfalls to avoid and things to make sure to do, please contact Pastor Keith Falk (937) 526-3091 or pastorkeithfalk@hotmail.com
- Juvenile Court
Most counties have a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) office, sometimes known as guardians ad litem. Pastor Keith Falk is a CASA volunteer for Darke County in Ohio. If you have any questions about the juvenile court system, feel free to contact him at (937) 526-3091 or pastorkeithfalk@hotmail.com

Worship

- Shared Pastorate/Yoked Congregation/Two-Point Parish - How do we start this process?
Step one - work with the bishop's assistant to your area! Trinity, Versailles and Friedens, Covington had shared a pastor for a number of years until the 1950's, when both congregations were large enough to support their own pastor. By 2007, circumstances led the two congregations to begin exploring the possibilities of being a two-point parish again. If you are interested in speaking with members of two congregations and/or a pastor who recently joined to share pastoral ministries, please contact Pastor Keith Falk (937) 526-3091 or pastorkeithfalk@hotmail.com

Christian Education

- Nooma** Series by Rob Bell. Nooma is a series of short films that explore our world through the teachings of Jesus. This series is wonderfully powerful and simple. Each video comes with questions to ask. It is appropriate for Jr. High through adult. Each video is about 10-15 minutes in length. To view and learn more about NOOMA, visit www.nooma.com.
- Brain Matter: 12 Sketch Comedy Parables by Happy Fun Time.** This two disc DVD set features Happy Fun Time's 12 sketch comedy parables. These sketches illustrate biblical truths in funny, weird, and through-provoking ways. The DVDs also include Bible studies designed for each sketch. This is a must have for confirmation programs and can also be used for youth, college, or small group ministry. To preview and order, visit www.happyfuntime.com.

EVANGELISM



Fellowship

- See **Souper Bowl** under *Community Connections*.

Administration

- One Call Now. The One Call Now™ phone message service delivers automated phone calls, within minutes, to any group, large or small. Schools, congregations, sports teams, businesses and municipalities throughout the country rely on them for routine reminders and emergency notifications. With One Call Now phone message service you talk, they deliver!

It is only \$99 for 1,000 calls. For a congregation that has little to no secretarial assistance, this is a dream come true for organizers. You can leave a 45 second message, and get tone responses (*press 1 if you are coming to the meeting, press 2 if you are not*). Please contact Pastor Aaron Layne for more information at pastorlayne@hotmail.com

- Dr. Rahe Corlis, M.D. psychologist who sees a LOT of clergy (though he is NOT a Christian psychologist) 614-451-3010 (He's over by Riverside Hospital); ELCA insurance pays 85% I think. THE resource for pastors struggling with depression/confusion etc. For more information, contact Pastor Marie Duquette at pmatfaith@gmail.com.

Neal Boese is a great resource person for small congregations (and large) struggling or not. One can check out his website for more info. His "Blueprint for Change" is worth looking at and so is his book on Spiritual Gifts. During the last few months you have heard about some books that I have written, especially the Blueprint for Change Manual. Check out www.nealboese.com.

On this website you will see services that Neal provides for pastors and congregations. Neal has been in the ministry for 45 years and has served in many kinds of congregational settings as you can see on the bio link. Neal has spent the last 24 years working with pastors and congregations as they struggle with parish life. He believes that he has acquired some insights that could be helpful.