

THE YOUTH MINISTRY HANDBOOK



Trinity Lutheran Church
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Youth Director: Mrs. Judy Bruschk
www.trinitylutheranvp.com

A NOTE FROM PASTOR

YOUTH MINISTRY at TRINITY

The mission of Trinity Lutheran Church is "Always Growing in Christ." The Youth Ministry at Trinity fulfills a part of that mission by helping our members in 6th through 12th grade to grow in Christ. So, everything we do is geared toward helping in that growth process. However, we do not believe that growth takes place without means. So, the purpose of youth ministry at Trinity Lutheran Church is to create, nourish and strengthen relationships between youth and God, youth and His Church, youth and the ministry staff, youth and their families and youth and their peers so that, through these relationships, they may hear the Gospel and the Gospel will nourish, strengthen and grow their faith.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

While we are not in a financial position to fully fund the entire youth ministry at Trinity, we also never want cost to be a determining factor. There are many benefactors at Trinity who are willing to help with finances so never hesitate to let Pastor or Judy know if the cost of an event is burdensome for your family. Also remember that our youth have many opportunities throughout the year to help the church earn "Youth Bucks" to help offset the costs. Watch the bulletin and the youth newsletter for how to help the group earn "Youth Bucks."

~ Pastor Rogers

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IMPORTANT INFO FOR PARENTS

Chaperones

Parents are invited to join us as chaperones, whether on a day trip, weekend retreat or a week-long servant event. This is a wonderful opportunity to build relationships with the youth and serve as a leader to them.

Consent Forms

Event Consent - Parents must submit signed consent forms prior to *any off-campus* event. This paperwork is vital in case of an emergency.

Media Consent - The media consent form must be signed at the start of each church year.

Policy and Guidelines Consent – Please read and sign the Policies and Guidelines form each year.

* Consent forms are on the Youth page on the Trinity web site.

Family Service Assignments

In order to ensure that fundraising and special events are staffed, each family is asked to serve at assigned events throughout the year. In addition to serving their community and building fellowship, youth will also help earn funds for the Community Youth Bucks Account to offset costs for trips.

If you and your children are unable to serve at the event to which you are assigned, please trade assignments with another family.

Registration Fees

It is important that Registration Fees are collected on time so that ministry events can be planned accordingly.

Deposits are due in advance of an event to secure your child's place and they often allow us to receive early discounts.

IMPORTANT NOTE: *ALL* youth are encouraged to participate in every ministry event that is planned. There are many options in place to assist any family who would experience financial strain caused by fees for youth events. Please contact Pastor or Judy to discuss any needs that arise.

Acolyte Guidelines

1. PLEASE, pay attention to the schedule*. If you must miss a service to which you have been assigned, PLEASE find your own substitute and then call the church office and let us know who will be fulfilling your obligation.
2. Arrive at least 10 minutes prior to service. Check in with pastor and go to the sacristy and get robed.
3. Read over the worship folder to determine if there are any unusual items in the service.
4. Normally your job will be to light the candles during the prelude. Give out the offering plates to the usher. Receive the offering plates back from the ushers. Assist with Holy Communion as directed. Extinguish the candles at the conclusion of the service.
5. Remember that you, like pastor, are a worship leader. Therefore you will model for the congregation an appropriate worship posture, participate in all aspects of the service and behave as though you are serving at the high altar of God (because you are). Acolyting is not a chore. It is a privilege and an honor to be one of the few people who come and go from God's high altar in the course of a worship service. Conduct yourself with great reverence and with great pride in your service to God.

* *The acolyte schedule and list of subs are both on the Youth Page of the Trinity Web Site. www.trinitylutheranvp.com*

Confirmation Guidelines

The 8 Commandments of Confirmation

1. Thou shall hand in a sermon report* each week.
2. Thou shall say thy memory work* to thy parents (verbatim) ***EVERY WEEK*** prior to coming to class.
3. Thou shall read, mark and inwardly digest the acolyte schedule* so that the pastor is not in want of you on Sunday morning.
4. Thou shall treat confirmation (and it accompanying work) as a top priority; more important than school, sports or social life. This is an opportunity to leap forward in your relationship with God, so take this time seriously.
5. Thou shall be in Sunday School, Church and Confirmation every week.** There is no point in confirming someone who is not serious about worship, study and commitment to God and his Church. If you are not serious, then perhaps the time is not right for you to be in confirmation. That's okay, just let Pastor know and we will contact you next year to see if you are ready yet.

**I realize that people do become ill from time to time and that a rare schedule conflict could cause one to miss a Sunday. Families who have circumstances that will cause the student to miss worship and/or confirmation more than 2 or 3 times in the year should speak to pastor privately if you have not already done so.
6. Thou shall complete six (6) hours of service* during the confirmation year.
7. Thou shall make an effort to come to know one another and bond as a whole class eliminating cliques and school groups.
8. Thou shall treat one another with mutual respect as we grow together in faith, neither discounting another's belief nor compromising one's own.

* *Sermon reports, a copy of the catechism for memory work, the acolyte schedule, and the church service hours record form are all available on the Youth Page of the Trinity web site. www.trinitylutheranp.com*

Policy on Overnight Stays

Adult Leaders

- Adult leaders must *21 years of age or older*.
- Anyone under the age of 21 may volunteer but must have supervision.
- Any event should normally have at least *2 adult leaders*.
- Adult leaders must sign Trinity's sexual abuse policy every year.

Sleeping Arrangements

- Ordinarily, *adults over age 18 WILL NOT share sleeping accommodations with youth*, EXCEPT for large dormitory sleeping arrangements in which more than one like-gendered adult is sleeping in the same room.
- *Rooms will not be mixed-gender*.
- Youth should be of similar age when possible.
- Like-gendered *youth may be expected to share a double (or larger) bed*.
- Youth may opt to bring a sleeping bag or air mattress to sleep on the floor.
- Parents will be notified of sleeping arrangements IN ADVANCE of trips.
- Ordinarily, adults will be housed in rooms with like-gendered adults.

Meeting Spaces

- *Any adult leader should avoid being left alone with one youth*.
- Meetings may occur in hotel rooms, under proper supervision.
- Adult leaders should act in a prudent manner if meeting one-on-one with a youth. For example:
 - The adult and youth should move to an open area where their interaction could be observed.
 - If it is necessary to meet one on one with a youth, the adult should take measures to ensure that there is an open door and another adult nearby.

Safety Guidelines

- Adult leaders are expected to set a curfew and continue supervision after 'lights out' to ensure safety of youth.
- Adult leaders must ensure that youth know where to locate them at all times.
- No youth should be allowed to leave the property without adult supervision.
- Youth participants should never be alone; use the buddy system.

Volunteers Needed!

Youth Dinners

- **Please consider signing up to provide a meal or dessert for our Youth Dinners on Wednesday nights.**
- **With your generous support, we are able to provide our youth with a meal and time to grow in faith in fellowship!**
- **Contact Judy at 630-220-6364 or jbruschuk@aol.com to learn more and to sign up.**

GLOSSARY

Key

C – College Age

HS – High School

JH – Junior High

Acolyte *JH *HS Freshman

All confirmation students will be scheduled to acolyte. We're also asking high school freshman to continue. Being an acolyte is an excellent way for the youth to serve the church and God. It's also important to Pastor Rogers to have acolytes present to assist him during worship.

The acolyte schedule is on the Youth Page of the Trinity Web Site.

Anniversary / Italian Dinner *HS, JH, C

Youth help serve at the Italian Dinner as we celebrate our congregation's anniversary. High School, you are the waiters/waitresses and dishwashers. Middle School, you are the bussers.

Big House *HS

Big House is the senior high youth ministry. Each week there is dinner, Bible Study led Pastor Rogers, and time for games, crafts, or service projects. Our High School youth are “frontline Christians” facing many challenges to God and morality head on. BIG HOUSE is what they need to fulfill their calling.

Breakfast with Santa *HS, JH, C

Our most fun fundraiser! Trinity’s very own Santa is available for visits and photos, Pastor makes his famous home-made pancakes, and church groups have tables with giveaways or activities.

Camp C.H.A.O.S. (Chocolate Holiness and Other Stuff) * JH

This is an opportunity for junior high youth to gather for fellowship time. During this time before confirmation, we a snack, games or crafts and time to just hang out with friends. It’s a prime opportunity for our youth to grow and bond together.

Catechisms *JH

Each student is given a copy of Luther’s Small Catechism as a gift when they enter confirmation.

Confirmation Class *JH

Confirmation instruction for 6th through 8th grade youth begins with the new school year and ends a few weeks before Palm Sunday. Included each week is a time for music with our Director of Music, Mary Stahlke. Pastor will confirm the 8th grade youth in their Baptismal vows in a special confirmation ceremony on Palm Sunday. The purpose of confirmation instruction is to “sew the youth into the quilt” before having their Baptismal vows confirmed by the Church.

Confirmation Day *JH

Eighth grade youth are confirmed on Palm Sunday at the late service. Be sure to arrive early and be robed and ready to process by 10:10 am.

Confirmation Retreat *JH

Camps vary from year to year – either day camps or week-end retreats. Pastor and Judy lead the youth in group building activities, bible study, and fellowship as they prepare for another year of confirmation. When going to a camp, you city kids bring your Bibles, snacks, sleeping bag, soap, towel, flashlight, bear repellent, snake bite kits, chigger, tick, leach and mosquito spray, anti venom syringes, defibrillators, emergency thoracotomy tray, etc...

Confirmation Ringers *JH

As part of the Confirmation curriculum Mary Stahlke teaches the youth to ring chimes. Please make every attempt to have your child in worship on the days they are scheduled to play.

** A copy of the schedule is on the Music Page of the Trinity web site.*

Dart Tournaments *HS, JH, C

The Men’s Dart teams do a lot to support our youth program. We like to support them by cooking and selling snacks at their annual dart tournaments, which typically occur two times a year. Youth will earn Youth Bucks for working these events.

Eighth Grade Grand Adventure *JH

This is an opportunity for the new confirmands to bond together and celebrate their accomplishment with Pastor and Judy. Where will the adventure lead? The eighth grade class brainstorms as a group where they would like to go.

Note: This event may not occur every year.

Family Service Assignments *HS, JH

In order to ensure that all of our Youth fundraising and special events are staffed, we ask each family to serve two times a year at an assigned event. If you and your children are unable to serve at the event to which you are assigned, we ask that you trade with another family.

Fifth Quarter *C

Fifth Quarter refers to all college age students and beyond who are pursuing the “fifth quarter” of their lives beyond the typical four quarters of a school setting.

Fourth of July Parade *HS, JH, C

The youth typically enter a Float into the parade. Watch for signs about the work dates to get the float ready! **Note:** This event may not occur every year.

Fundraising *HS, JH, C

Fundraising is a big part of our youth ministry. You’ll find descriptions of many of the events that we hold on a regular basis. Not only are these events a great way to earn funds, they provide opportunities for youth and families to build meaningful relationships. Lastly, our church needs our help. So – sign up to help out whenever you are able. Please.

Girls Night *HS, JH

Girls Night is an opportunity for girls to get together for some fun and Christian fellowship with one another. Food, games, activities, crafts, Bible study and other surprises are all part of this evening. Invite your friends!

Guys Night *HS, JH

Guys Night is an opportunity for the guys to get together for some fun and fellowship. It includes food, fun, Bible study and other surprises. Invite your friends!

High School Retreat *HS

This is a two night opportunity at a nearby camp to spend some intense time with Pastor and Judy, one another, and God. Faith growth is guaranteed as we spend 48 hours living together, playing together and worshipping God together. Note: this event may not occur every year.

Lay Assistant *HS, C

High school and college-age students have the opportunity to serve during our Sunday morning services. As a lay assistant, they would perform a reading and assist in serving communion. Please see Pastor if you are interested in this service opportunity for our Lord!

Memory Work *JH

Each week confirmation students will have a portion of Luther's Small Catechism to memorize. *A link to the Catechism is on the Youth Page on the Trinity web site.*

Mentors

Mentors are a vital part of youth ministry at Trinity. We have a strong team of mentors comprised of high school, young adults, and adults who donate their time to build relationships with the members of our youth groups. Pastor Rogers periodically holds mentor classes to train the high school and college age how to impact the lives of the upcoming generation.

Moren Chelsi Lampas

Moren is a girl from Indonesia whom the youth group has sponsored since 2013 through Compassion International. We have committed to sending her \$38 as a group each month to provide her with health care, education, and other needs. Youth are asked to consider giving a donation toward Moren.

NYG 2025 (National Youth Gathering) in New Orleans *HS, C

Held every 3 years since 1980, the LCMS Youth Gathering provides thousands of youth and adults the opportunity to come together as a community of God's people to learn more about Jesus Christ, the Christian faith and their Lutheran identity. During the five days of the Gathering, youth spend time together in God's word, worship, service, and fellowship with others from across the synod. The 2025 Gathering will take place in New Orleans, LA. Check out the gathering Facebook page: LCMS Youth Gathering *or* their web site: lcmsgathering.com

Parent Dinner Meeting *ALL Parents of Youth

Youth and their families are the Youth Board's guests for dinner. This is kick-off night for the fall program. After dinner we talk about youth ministry plans, confirmation class plans, sign-up to help at events, and get every possible question will answered. It's a great opportunity to meet other families and get to know our youth ministry staff and volunteers.

The Projects NEW! *JH *HS

The Projects is a NEW after-school ministry for junior high youth. Volunteer mentors lead a variety of meaningful projects, teaching life skills and giving them something significant to do with their time in a structured setting. The Projects meet on Tuesdays in 4 week sessions throughout the year. High school youth are invited to serve as mentors for The Projects.

Senior / Graduate Recognition *HS

We recognize our high school graduates each summer, with a gift from the church. Please be sure to attend!

Sermon Reports *JH

As a part of their confirmation commitment, Pastor requires that youth submit a sermon report to him each week. Also known as Homilitical Explications, these reports ask youth to summarize and interpret what they heard in Pastor's sermon. They should be turned into Pastor or Judy.

**Sermon report forms are on the Youth page of the Trinity web site.*

Servant Event *HS

High school youth have opportunities to serve on a week-long servant event somewhere in the United States. In the past we have traveled to Ohio, Indiana, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Seattle, and Iowa. This is an incredible week of faith growth, meeting new friends from around the country and helping people who have are struggling in various ways.

Simple Suppers during Advent / Soup Suppers during Lent *HS, JH, C

Here is a great opportunity to earn some Youth bucks by helping to set up, serve and clean up soup suppers during Lent and Advent.

Summer Trip Days *HS, JH

During the summer (June – August), Judy has designated Thursdays as Trip Days. The summer trip days are a great chance to build friendships and have fun together. Included are variety of things, such as service projects, activities at Trinity, and adventures around the Chicago area. Watch for sign up notices for information on each specific activity.

Sunday Morning High School Bible Study *HS

High school students meet during Christian Education hour on Sundays from 9:15-10:15.

Sunday School *JH

Sunday mornings from 9:15-10:15.

Trivia Night *HS, JH, C

Another one of our successful fundraisers, Trivia Night is typically held in the winter months. We set up tables, provide an emcee with trivia questions and prizes. Teams provide their own refreshments.

Ushers *HS, C

Youth who are interested in serving during Sunday morning services can volunteer as ushers. You will work in a team of ushers to hand out bulletins and collect offerings. Please see Pastor Rogers if you are interested in this opportunity.

Youth Board

The youth board is a committed group of volunteers who run our youth ministry from behind the scenes. Their purpose is to oversee the finances and scheduling of the youth program, while supporting Judy in ministry needs. We are ALWAYS looking for volunteers, especially parents, to join us in our important endeavor to serve as the backbone of our program!

Youth Bucks *HS, JH

The proceeds from fundraisers are put into our Community Youth Bucks account, which is separate from the church budget. The funds are available for use by the youth families to offset the cost of events such as retreats, the Youth Gathering, and servant events. By participating in fundraisers you are ensuring the future security of the Youth Bucks account.

Youth Dinner *HS, JH

The high school youth join the middle school youth for dinner at 6:00. Moms, Dads, Grandmas and Grandpas are needed to take turns providing dinner for the kids. This has become a much looked forward to part of the week for many of our youth as we sit down together around the tables and talk over dinner.

Youth Quake *HS, JH

Quake events are weekend retreats created specifically for youth in grades 6-12. Since 1966, Quake events have taken place at hotels across the country. This weekend will be filled with music, Bible study, and the opportunity to meet and mingle with other Christian youth from all around the mid west. In addition it gives our group the opportunity to grow together as we live together for a weekend. See www.quakeevent.com for more info.

WinterXtreme *HS, JH

This is a fun winter weekend retreat at Camp Timber-lee in Wisconsin! In addition to bands, worship, and Bible study, youth get the opportunity to toboggan, sled, cross-country ski, and even play in a broomball tournament! There's yummy food, lots of hot chocolate, and great friendship building.

WHO'S WHO IN YOUTH MINISTRY

Pastor Rob Rogers

We are incredibly blessed at Trinity to have a Pastor who is deeply invested in our youth and their ministry. Pastor teaches confirmation class every week, attends Youth Nights, teaches bible study at Big House, and provides ministry while chaperoning every event and retreat we attend.

Judy Bruschuk – Youth Director

Judy has served as the Youth Director at Trinity since 2002, after serving as a volunteer for 8 years. As the Director, Judy is a staff member at Trinity and she coordinates and facilitates every aspect of Youth Ministry. From planning what the youth do at Camp C.H.A.O.S. every week, to organizing fantastic NYG fundraisers, to filling out paperwork for every event, Judy is devoted to our youth.

Paul Varno – Youth Board Director

Paul is the youngest youth board member, joining the board as a senior in high school and has now grown into the role of director. He's also on the usher team and serves as a volunteer mentor for youth events and The Projects.

Kate Ilcken – Youth Board Member

Kate joined the youth board in 2022. She graduated from the youth program at Trinity, is now a lay leader, uses her beautiful voice to sing in worship, and has been on staff at Trinity Christian Nursery School and now has joined the Youth Board.

Chris Gore – Youth Board Member

Chris is a graduate of the youth group at Trinity. In addition to being a youth board member he has served as a Confirmation mentor, chaperone for many youth events, and was the lead on the 2016 NYG.

Frank Ilcken – Youth Board Member

Frank is one of the newest Youth Board members, joining in 2022. He's getting some experience with the youth before his 2 sons are old enough to participate.

Gloria Marchewka – Youth Board Member

Gloria has served at Trinity in many capacities over the years and is now using her gifts as a member of the youth board.

YOUTH NIGHTS

EVERY WEDNESDAY during the school year

4:00 pm	Confirmation Class	Junior High
6:00 pm	Dinner	ALL YOUTH
6:30 pm	Big House	High School

The 411

Pastor	630-439-6176	pastor@trinityvp.com
Judy	630-220-6364	Jbruschuk@aol.com
Paul	630-779-7414	lorivarno@gmail.com
Mary Stahlke, Music	708-552-1271	mary@trinityvp.com
Margaret Cotterill, Church Secretary	630-834-3440	margaret@trinityvp.com

Trinity Web site: www.trinitylutheranvp.com

Youth Facebook Page: Trinity Youth of Villa Park

The Projects Facebook Page: The Projects at Trinity