

# **ADULT LEADER EXPECTATIONS and COVENANT**

## **For The NE MN Synod Journey to the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering**

It is the job of the adult leader to fully prepare their group for the entire Synod Journey experience. The Synod Journey Team walks with you to equip you for your responsibilities through trainings, information and personal support. The work of the adult leader is essential to making the Journey a meaningful faith experience for their young people. Adult leaders set the tone and expectations for their group, and ensure a safe and healthy environment that sets the table for an experience that will transform the lives of the youth they accompany.

To best accomplish this we must function as a team, respecting each other and the common rules of the group. With 450 youth and adults on this journey, the ripple effects of those adults not cooperating with expectations is astounding! Think of this as an ideal opportunity for you and your youth to experience true Christian community, where we occasionally sacrifice our own way of doing things for the good of the community. We thank you in advance for doing this!

### **Pre-Gathering**

- Each adult leader attending the Synod Journey is expected to **attend two training sessions** offered by the NE MN Synod Journey Team:
  - Fall 2017
  - Spring 2018
  - Dates and locations will be listed on the synod website. There are multiple dates and opportunities for each training session. Every effort should be made to attend a face to face training, but for those not able to attend any of the training dates, we offer an online webinar as a make-up session.

Adult leaders are also highly encouraged to take part in trainings offered online through the Practice Discipleship at [www.practicediscipleship.org](http://www.practicediscipleship.org).

- Adult leaders are expected to **hold monthly meetings** (at least) with their congregation group to prepare for the Synod Journey through group building, Bible studies, Gathering details, etc.
  - While we understand that illness, family emergencies and schedule conflicts will arise, all participants - youth and adults - are expected to make these meetings a priority.
- All necessary **forms and payments** will be completed in full and returned to the Synod office in a timely manner.
- The primary leader is expected to **stay current with all information sent** via email, snail mail or links to the website, and to be diligent in sharing this information with other adult leaders and youth participants.

### **Expectations for Adult Leaders During the Travel Portion of the Journey:**

- You are responsible for your youth. Know where they are (or be with them!) and how they are behaving.
- Make sure you and your youth are on time to all events (bus departures, meals, worship, activities, etc.)
- Make sure you and your youth are respectful to all staff and property we encounter (hotel, bus, servant event, Gathering, Dome, etc.). You and your church are responsible for any damages that may occur as a result of actions by you or your youth.
- Be respectful of NE MN Synod staff and appointed volunteers. Listen and follow directions, be on time for leader meetings, support synod leader decisions with your youth. Disagreements with synod leader decisions should be brought up privately or at leader meetings, not in front of youth.
- Be flexible. Last minute changes and unexpected obstacles will happen. Keep your smiles, roll with the punches and trust synod leadership to work out the details. ☺
- Be positive. You greatly influence the attitude of your group. If you are excited and enthusiastic, your youth will be excited and enthusiastic. If you are complaining, your youth will complain. Remember: The turkey sandwiches may not taste good, but they never ever taste bad. ☺

- Be a role model. All youth on this journey will be watching what you do much more than what you say. Use appropriate language and behavior. Dress appropriately. Follow the participant and your group's covenant. Consider the implications of your decisions (for example, what message do you send your youth, and how would you be supporting the teachings of the congregation and parents if you have a group meal at Hooters?). **It is also expected that no adult leader will consume alcoholic beverages or use illicit drugs of any kind during this event.**
- Spend time with your youth. This entire journey is planned to help you build relationships with your youth that will continue when you get home. Use the servant event and family time as a means to dig into deeper conversations of faith with your youth. Use the fun activities to laugh and play with them. Use the hang out time to show them you really do want to know them for who they are.
- Be firm with lights out. We have long days of active work and play, and we all need rest. Be respectful of other leaders and groups and get your youth in their rooms with lights out at the appointed time.
- Be a leader first. Youth expect this and deserve this from us. The first step to trust and friendship comes when youth know you will protect them and hold them accountable to the limits that have been set. You may be the only mature adult/youth relationship a youth might have – bless them with this gift!
- Think safety at all times. Make sure youth are in groups of at least three when they are on their own. Take responsibility at the work sites and throughout the journey to tell any youth to stop an unsafe activity.
- Support your bus captain and other adult leaders, and hold each other accountable to the expectations of this Journey.
- Ask for help! We are a team, and servants together in ministry. Ask synod staff, other adult leaders and ELCA Gathering staff for advice and encouragement when you need it.
- Pray for your youth. Pray for the servant event, the people we work with, the Gathering, the Gathering staff, our travels, the other adult leaders, health and safety.

**What you can expect from the NE MN Synod staff and appointed volunteers:**

- Training, materials and support that will equip you for your role as an adult leader.
- Leadership and decisions that promote a safe, fun and meaningful faith experience for you and your youth.
- Respect for you and your youth. We will listen to you, make appropriate changes as necessary, treat you as partners in ministry, begin and end meetings and activities on time, hold youth and leaders accountable to our expectations, spend time with you and your youth, and be role models.
- Support and encouragement for you as a leader throughout The Synod Journey and ELCA Youth Gathering.
- Prayer support for you and your group prior to and during The Synod Journey and ELCA Youth Gathering.

**We have read and understand the listed adult leader expectations for the NE MN Synod Journey to the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering. We covenant to work together as a Christian community of leaders, and to abide by the listed expectations. We understand that the staff and appointed volunteers of the NE MN Synod have the authority to hold us accountable to these expectations.**

**Church:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Adult Leader Signatures:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_