

Bus Meeting Resource 2

NE MN Synod Journey 2018

Story Kit:

Throughout our Getting Ready materials we have been using the Synod Journey Story Kit. Each Story Kit item signifies a different ritual which our youth have (hopefully) encountered several times. As you work through the bus meeting, work to encounter these story kit items as best you can. Each adult leader was gifted a story kit. Have one on site with you to use throughout the day.

- Candle:** Reminder of God's presence with us.
- Flip Flop:** Reminder of Holy Ground moments (God meets us where we are and creates a Holy moment in the ordinary moments)
- Bible:** Reminder of God's love as God speaks to us through God's word.
- Question Mark:** Reminder that asking questions and having questions is okay!
- Piece of Fabric:** Reminder of the power of prayer.
- Water Bottle:** Reminder of the importance of God's blessing on our lives.

Welcome:

Offer games, activities, perhaps outdoors, for youth to interact with one another as they are arriving. Games could include name games, sporting games such as Ga-Ga Ball or Four Square, or relay games to work as a team together. (A Google search will give you many ideas for games. Here's a cool site we found: <https://www.jubed.com/> If you scroll to the bottom it lets you filter by group size, duration, objectives, etc.)

It will be important for youth to play together, laugh together, and interact with one another. A good majority (perhaps half) of your time together should be spent interacting with one another. (That includes the adult leaders, too!)

Story Kit: *Candle*

Remind group that God is present in this moment here today.

"Where two or more gather in my name, I am present." Matthew 18:20

Light the candle in the center of gathering space.

Names and Greetings:

Not all youth and adults in attendance at this meeting were at the first bus meeting. It will be important to introduce everyone again!

Story Kit: *Flip Flop*

Introduce yourself (Bus Captain), then have everyone in group introduce themselves, including adult leaders.

Suggestions: Name, grade, city, one place they've encountered God on this Journey thus far.

Scripture Reading:

Story Kit: *Bible*

The theme verse for the Youth Gathering is Ephesians 2:8. Give everyone a copy of Ephesians 2:1-10 found at the end of this study and a marker or pencil.

The theme for the Gathering is “This Changes Everything”. The Journey will be asking “What does *THIS* mean?”

As the text is read have them follow along and highlight the word or words in scripture that they think represent the “*This*” that “changes everything”. For example is it the “God’s rich mercy,” “great love,” or “created in Christ Jesus” that changes everything? Have them write the words they highlight on the “fill in the blank” space below the reading. For example “God’s rich mercy changes everything” or “Created in Christ Jesus changes everything”.

Then go around the circle and have people share what words they had take the place of “*This*” and why they chose that word(s).

Ask: What do we mean when we say “This Changes Everything”?
How does what we filled in our blanks with really change everything?

“*This*” is what we will continue to explore on our Journey together.

Questions:

Story Kit: *Question Mark*

Pass around the question mark. At this point youth (and adults) may be getting nervous, excited, anxious, and curious about the upcoming trip. Offer a time for students to ask their questions about scripture, the Journey, or any other questions they have. It is not necessary to answer these questions at this time, but create a space for youth to think and ponder deeper. (Invite adult leaders to go deeper with big questions asked by their youth at this time)

Creating a Covenant:

At this time, work together to create a bus covenant. Conversation about what a bus covenant is, why it is important, and what things should be included. See Bus Covenant page.

What is a Covenant?

- What is the purpose of a covenant?
- Where do we get the term covenant? (*Consider Genesis 9:8-12 and Genesis 17: 1-7*)
- What other covenants have you been part of? (ex. Team expectations, job description, club agreement, cell phone policy, etc.)

Why is a Covenant important?

- What purpose does a covenant hold?
- How should a covenant be upheld?
- What happens if a covenant is broken?

What should we Covenant to?

- What do you think should be a part of our bus covenant?
 - Brainstorm ideas, although they may not all be included in the covenant. Encourage youth to share their own ideas of what should be expected of them during their time on the bus.

Write Bus Covenant.

Taking the youth's ideas into account, write down any additions/subtractions/changes to the bus covenant ideas included. (*See Bus Covenant Page*). Ask for other adult leader's input into final covenant ideas.

Covenant Together!

Read through the items you, as a bus, are going to covenant to. Have youth verbally agree to covenant to these items.

At the conclusion of the meeting, type up your official bus covenant and send out to each Primary Adult Leader on your bus. Ask each adult to have their youth sign and return this bus covenant to you. Send a copy of the covenant to Catherine Anderson.

Close in Prayer:

Take a moment and thank each of them for being there today. Remind youth of the power of prayer and the power of holding each other in prayer.

Story Kit: Cloth

Hold up the cloth, reminding people of how the woman in the crowd reached out to touch Jesus, believing that just touching His robe would heal her. Remind participants of the power of prayer and invite everyone to reach out and touch the people next to them. Pray a blessing over everyone there, asking God to be with them in the next months/weeks leading up to the Journey. Ask participants to pray for one another if comfortable.

Final Blessing:

As a closing to your time spent together, have youth bless one another.

Story Kit: Water Bottle

Standing in a circle, pass the full water bottle around. Have each participant (youth *and* adult) bless the person next to them by making the sign of the cross on their forehead. Say a simple blessing such as: "God loves you now and forever" or "By grace you have been saved, may this change everything."

Ephesians 2:1-10

2You were dead through the trespasses and sins ²in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. ³All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else.

*⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us ⁵even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. **⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—** ⁹not the result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.*

[This] _____,

Changes Everything!

Bus Covenant for Adult Leaders

The bus groups that do best on The Synod Journey are the ones in which adult leaders are on the same page for expectations and discipline. Prior to departure, please meet with at least one adult leader from every congregation that is assigned to your bus to discuss expectations, how conflicts will be handled, and how responsibilities will be shared among adult leaders.

This could be done during the first portion of the bus meeting, asking other adults to lead games and group building time with youth.

We ask that this discussion conclude in writing a Bus Covenant among adult leaders. Please send or email your Bus Covenants to Catherine Anderson.

Some topics you might cover:

- The Synod Journey Expectations and Covenant form. Which of the listed expectations will your youth struggle with the most?
 - How will you handle those situations if they occur during travel or during the work days?
- Youth you have concerns for. Youth who can be called upon as leaders.
- Quiet hours on the bus
- Movie choices
- Cell phone policy
 - What are your expectations, and how might you support the synod policy as a bus?
 - How will cell phones be handled during travel?
 - What will be community time (no phones) and time to use phones?
 - How will this be communicated to the youth?
 - What are the consequences if these expectations are not met on your bus?
- Dress code – what are your expectations, and how might you support the synod policy as a bus?
- Group gift/tip for the bus drivers
- Morning devotions
- Bus group building activities – amount and type
- Any additional bus rules/expectations you would like for your group
- How responsibilities will be shared among adult leaders
- How discipline and conflicts will be handled
- How adult leaders will support each other

At conclusion of adult leader as well as all-bus meeting, write up a final draft of bus covenant. Send to all primary adult leaders, as well as Catherine Anderson. Ask adult leaders to have youth sign covenant and return back to you.

It will be necessary for all youth and adult participants to have signed the covenant before boarding the bus on departure day.