



TIPS & TRICKS FOR 1ST TIME LEADERS IN THIS YEAR OF PLANNING, PREPARATION & PRAYER

(This resource could also be titled *“Things I Wish I Knew the First Time I Was an Adult Leader on The Synod Journey”*)

TIPS AND TRICKS:

This is not an exhaustive list! Please add great ideas, tip and tricks you have on our NE MN Synod Journey 2018 Adult Leaders Facebook Group!

- Set clear expectations for your youth and parents. Set them high, and hold them accountable. Find room for grace, but if you are wishy washy about the expectations like meeting monthly, you are guaranteed they will find better things to do.
- Don't neglect going over the covenant. The first time to explain to parents they are financially responsible for buying a plane ticket home shouldn't be while you're driving their child to the airport.
- Become friends with your treasurer/bookkeeper. Buy them candy. Give them the timeline of when payments are due this fall.
- Delegate. Involve parents. Involve other adults in the congregation. They don't have to be going on the Journey to help out!
- Put all deadlines and meeting dates on your calendar now.
- Make all deadlines for youth at least two weeks before you actually need items.
- Make all deadlines for YOU at least two weeks before the synod needs something!
- Set days on your calendar to work on the Synod Journey (collecting forms, payments, group meeting prep, fundraisers, etc.)
- If you are able, take July 3 off from work. You will return home exhilarated, but exhausted.
- Include offering conversations as part of your monthly meetings. There will be opportunities to give both in Galveston and Houston. How can you involve the congregation?
- Have youth give temple talks on what they are learning in the monthly meetings, so the congregation can meet the youth and hear about the Journey.
- Delegate.
- Send Christmas picture cards with your group pictures on it to congregation members.
- Include an update with pictures in every newsletter, including online.

(Over)

- Many congregations bring small “giveaways” to pass out while they are standing in line or walking through the streets in Houston. Things like pins, friendship bracelets, items that represent their hometown (Lake Superior rocks, iron ore pellets...), etc. This is not required, but is a fun way to meet lots of people.
- Delegate.
- Use group texting apps (like Remind.com) to remind youth and parents of upcoming meetings, deadlines, etc.
- Take lots of pictures of everything you are doing.
- Get trained and certified in First Aid/CPR.
- If you are not on the church staff, set 4-5 meetings over the year with your pastor to update her/him on what your group is doing. Do the same with the secretary, council president and other key leaders. These people are the story sharers in the congregation – help them share the story of your youth!
- Open a Demand Investment Youth Account with the Mission Investment Fund. It’s a great way to keep fundraising money separate from the budget, it earns great interest, and MIF is at the Gathering serving as a bank for you to access the exact dollar amounts you want for giving youth meal money each day. www.mif.ELCA.org/youthministry
- Start a group journal that youth and adults write in at each monthly meeting, and continue to write in on the Journey. It’s fun to look back on, but it also is a great tool to remember what you did when it comes time to share the Synod Journey with the congregation.

AND THE BIGGEST TIP OF ALL...

MEETING MONTHLY CHANGES EVERYTHING (BUT REALLY, IT DOES!):

Meeting with your group on a regular basis makes a huge difference in the experience that you and your youth will have on the Synod Journey. Knowing one another, establishing “groupness,” covenanting together, reflecting on the Bible stories and social justice issues that are laid out for Adult Leaders in the Synod Journey & ELCA Getting ready materials, and praying together helps to prepare groups to be fully engaged in this experience.

The template on what a group meeting should look like will guide you through the various ways you and your congregational group might meet – be it monthly, or in more of a retreat-style several times a year. It also has a template for what each meeting ought to include, along with a breakdown of timing for each part of your time together.