



## NT-NL Youth Annual Report to the Synod Assembly 2018

*“Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.” –Philippians 4: 9*

As the world changes the youth leaders, children’s ministers, pastors, camp leaders, and congregational volunteers in the NT-NL continue to show the love of Jesus to the children, youth, and their families in our area. The ELCA youth gathering coming up this summer has been a dominate force in the life of our ministry together. Preparations, learning, and fundraising to participate in this once every three year, gathering keep everyone busy and looking ahead.

At this time, the NT-NL currently has 25 congregations registered to attend the gathering. We also have a Bishop’s Group that comprises youth from 9 different congregations. Our total registration stands at 342 participants. We gathered together in Merkel, TX (outside of Abilene) just a few weekends ago to meet each other, do group building, and learn more about what the gathering will look like this summer. The ELCA Gathering will be a great event. I am interested to see what energy, ideas, and discovered passions those who are going to it will bring back with them after it is over.

We continued our tradition of hosting an annual gathering for both Junior High and High School, though each one looked different this year. Our High School youth were invited for a single day of service as an opportunity to connect with each other and work in the community. This allowed the cost to be reasonable for those who are planning on going to the summer gathering. Our Junior High Gathering had the opportunity to participate in some group building at Group Dynamix as a major part of their time together. We also did a special project putting together and providing bags of commonly needed supplies to those who are facing homelessness. We also had increased participation from varying congregations in our Peer Ministry retreat. We want to continue to expand and encourage all congregations to identify and send High School youth with leadership skills, especially in caring, welcoming, and affirming, to this annual retreat. Those who lead it see the value of having youth who are equipped with these skills present in congregations, sports teams, arts groups, and schools.

As we move forward, there is opportunity for new things to happen. As we continue to reflect on the things that we do together and how we do it, there is room for change. New ideas keep us connected and thinking towards the future. We are always looking for new folks to join in on the process of planning and working to keep the youth in our congregations connected. Let us know how we can support your ministry at the congregational level.

Blessings as you continue to engage in the challenge and joy of serving children, youth, and families.

Respectfully Submitted,

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