



Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Fellow Youth Workers and Pastors,

The Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod's 2016 Senior High Youth Gathering will take place February 19-21 at the Crowne Plaza in King of Prussia. **Please pass this letter on to the youth ministry leaders in your congregation.** A poster is available at www.sepayouth.org for you to download and distribute to your youth or hang in your church. The Senior High Youth Gathering is open to youth in grades 9-12 and their adult leaders.

Our theme is **iChurch: Engaging the Intersection of Faith & Technology** with speaker Pastor Keith Anderson. This year's focus will be on the Great Commission of Christ and his final words to us as disciples, "*Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age*" (Matthew 28:19-20). Through large and small group activities, hands-on engagement, worship, prayer and service projects we will learn how we can be the church in new ways in these new times in which we live. Most importantly, we will focus on how we can "*Go out*" as Christ's disciples into the world and take the lessons we learn from this weekend back home into our schools, communities, families, and congregations.



Registration is now live and the registration link is posted on www.sepayouth.org. A \$50 non-refundable deposit is due at the time of registration. Payment will be made by sending a check to the synod office after you register. There will be no online/credit card payments this year. The balance is due at or before check-in at SHYG. You will receive an acknowledgement email upon completing your registration, but be sure to check your junk mail folder if you don't receive it.

Registration closes on Sunday, January 24th.

To help you in the registration process, you will need the following information when you register:

- names of participants
- congregational name and address
- gender
- shirt size
- email addresses (adult participants only)
- rooming preferences
- if adults are willing to be small group leaders
- special housing arrangements
- special needs/dietary restrictions/allergies

Save money and register early! We are offering an Early Bird discount. The cost of the gathering is **\$190 if you register on or before January 10, 2015. After January 10, the price will be \$210.** Scholarships are available. You can download the scholarship application form at www.sepayouth.org on the resources page. Email your completed scholarship application to youthministry@sepa.org. The deadline to apply for a scholarship is Monday, January 4th.

All participants must also complete and return a medical release form with a front and back photocopy of their medical insurance card and a gathering covenant which is available online and will be emailed to you in your registration confirmation packet. **Please mail, scan and then email, or fax your release forms, copies of the insurance cards and covenants to (youthministry@sepa.org or fax 267.323.3777) by January 31st.** Emailing is preferred.

According to Synod Safety Policies: Adults are required to submit a national background, child abuse clearance, and FBI Criminal Background Check for all overnight youth events. If your congregation is unable to provide this, please contact the Youth Ministry Coordinator at djackson@sepa.org for details on how to obtain one. All three of these Background Checks **MUST** be submitted electronically via scanned PDF document to djackson@sepa.org **NO LATER THAN February 7, 2016.**

Gathering youth participants will be housed three or four to room with two double beds. Gathering adult participants are housed two or three in a room. The registration fees listed above are assuming those housing arrangements. Due to suggestions on past years' evaluations, we are offering an additional housing option. If members of your group (particularly adults) desire to be housed with fewer roommates that may be done for an additional charge. For two people in a room there is an additional charge of \$150 per person. If someone desires their own room, that is an additional charge of \$250. Please email youthministry@sepa.org with special housing arrangement requests. The additional fees will be added to your balance due.

The cost of the gathering includes your housing and program expenses. **Please note that meals are on your own.** Congregations are able to bring in food for their individual groups, however we as a gathering cannot bring in food from the outside. There is free time for lunch and dinner on Saturday. The Crowne Plaza is across the street from the King of Prussia Mall so there are dinner options there as well as many delivery places in the area.

The annual **SEPA Lutheran Youth Organization Convention** will occur during SHYG at which time youth will be elected to the SEPA Lutheran Youth Organization Board and Synod Council. This group of high school students and adults work beside the Assistant to the Bishop in tending the vision for youth ministry in our synod. The convention will be on Sunday, February 22nd, at the hotel starting at 8:00 a.m. **Even if your congregation is not attending the gathering, you can still send two delegates to the convention at no charge.** If this is the case, please contact youthministry@sepa.org to register your delegates for the convention. Youth are also able to bring ideas and questions to the convention. **PLEASE encourage young leaders in your congregation to think about running for this leadership team! WE NEED YOUR VISION AND LEADERSHIP TO SHAPE YOUTH MINISTRY IN THIS SYNOD! ☺**

Please be sure to reach out to us with any questions at youthministry@sepa.org or (267) 323-3752. May God bless you in your important work! We hope to see you there!



Rev. Bradley R. Burke

Assistant to the Bishop for Youth, Young Adult Ministry & Spiritual Formation