



# 2024 ELCA YOUTH GATHERING

## JULY 14-21, 2024

### NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

## Frequently Asked Questions

### So, you're interested in attending the 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering...

...but you've got some questions. Well, you've come to the right place! These questions and more will also be addressed when we hold our informational meeting ahead of registration, but we want you to be able to get excited now!

### BASIC INFORMATION

Here's some early basic information about the trip to whet your appetite.

#### **What are the dates of the ELCA Youth Gathering Trip including travel time?**

Including travel to and from New Orleans, Louisiana, our group will be gone from Sunday, July 14 until Sunday, July 21, 2024. We plan to have a big congregational send off following commissioning and worship on July 14.

#### **How will we get there?**

We plan to charter a bus to and from New Orleans for our group. We may share transportation with other area congregations to help with the cost. In the past we have used Crowell Motorcoach Tours out of Cincinnati.

#### **How much does it cost?**

There is an initial deposit of \$250 per student due at the time of registration. We will do group fundraising throughout the year, and there is a \$250 final payment before the trip. The total out of pocket cost is \$500 per student. If cost is an issue, please reach out to Erin Haligowski about financial assistance.

#### **What is the housing situation?**

During travel, we will likely stay at churches along the way (think sleeping bags and air mattresses and one giant slumber party!). Once we arrive in New Orleans we will stay in a hotel assigned by the Gathering. Students will be housed in groups of 3-4 taking into account the number/type of rooms assigned by the Gathering and roommate requests, which are made in the spring.

# BEFORE THE GATHERING

Answers to common questions about Gathering Prep, Fundraising, etc.

## **When will registration take place? How many are we anticipating going?**

Registration will take place from August 27 - October 1, 2023. Our Core Leadership Team has set a goal of registering 25 students for the 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering, and the more the merrier. Help us FILL THAT BUS!

## **What else is involved in the time commitment for this trip?**

In addition to the trip itself in July 2024, we will spend time throughout the program year (September-June) doing group building, leadership development, and fundraising, and diving into the *Created to Be* theme for the event.

## **Is there financial assistance available if I can't afford the deposit?**

There is! Financial assistance is available through the ELCA for up to 10 students per congregation (talk to Erin soon about this as applications are now open!), as well as through our Youth Dedicated Fund and the generosity of Epiphany members. Please don't let money be a reason for not attending the Gathering!

## **When are Gathering Prep Meetings going to be held?**

We will have Gathering Prep Meetings in October, and then monthly from December-June. They will take place on a Sunday afternoon about 12:00-2:00pm. Each meeting will include lunch, trip information, group building, and a curriculum around the *Created to Be* theme for the Gathering.

## **What is the Core Leadership Team and who is on it?**

The 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering Core Leadership Team is the phenomenal group of students and adults who will be helping to guide our planning throughout this year as we prepare for the Gathering in New Orleans. Adults on the team are: Erin Haligowski (primary leader), Sharon Culham, Ryan Pearson, and Michelle Wade. Students on the team are: Sam Culham, Kalie Hogendoorn, Kenzie Lett, and Grant Stoller. These folks can help answer your questions throughout the year!

## **What adults will be going to New Orleans?**

Our current slate of adult leaders for the 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering are those who are serving on the Core Leadership Team for the Gathering. Those adults are: Erin Haligowski (primary leader), Sharon Culham, Ryan Pearson, and Michelle Wade. If there is a need for additional adults based on registration numbers, the Core Leadership Team will recruit and appoint additional adults with input from registered students.

## **What if I don't know anyone?**

We will spend almost an entire year leading up to the trip doing group building, Epiphany's youth ministry is a place where all are welcome! You can also invite a friend to participate with you, or reach out to someone from your confirmation small group that you'd like to see be part of the trip with you. In the end, you'll end up with a whole group of church friends who will become family.

# DURING THE GATHERING

Answers to common questions about the trip itself.

## **What is the food situation going to be like?**

We will purchase food ahead of time for snacks and for breakfast in our hotel rooms (cereal, granola bars, muffins, etc.) based on requests from those going on the trip. All of our lunches and dinners will be eaten out or catered in. Many times we will try to choose locations where there are a variety of options for food to choose from. All food is included in the cost of the trip.

## **How is money handled during the Gathering?**

Each student will receive a food money envelope daily during the Gathering, which will include cash for any meals that we are eating out during that day. At the end of the day, any change will be turned in. Personal spending money beyond food is at your discretion.

## **What is adult supervision like during the Gathering?**

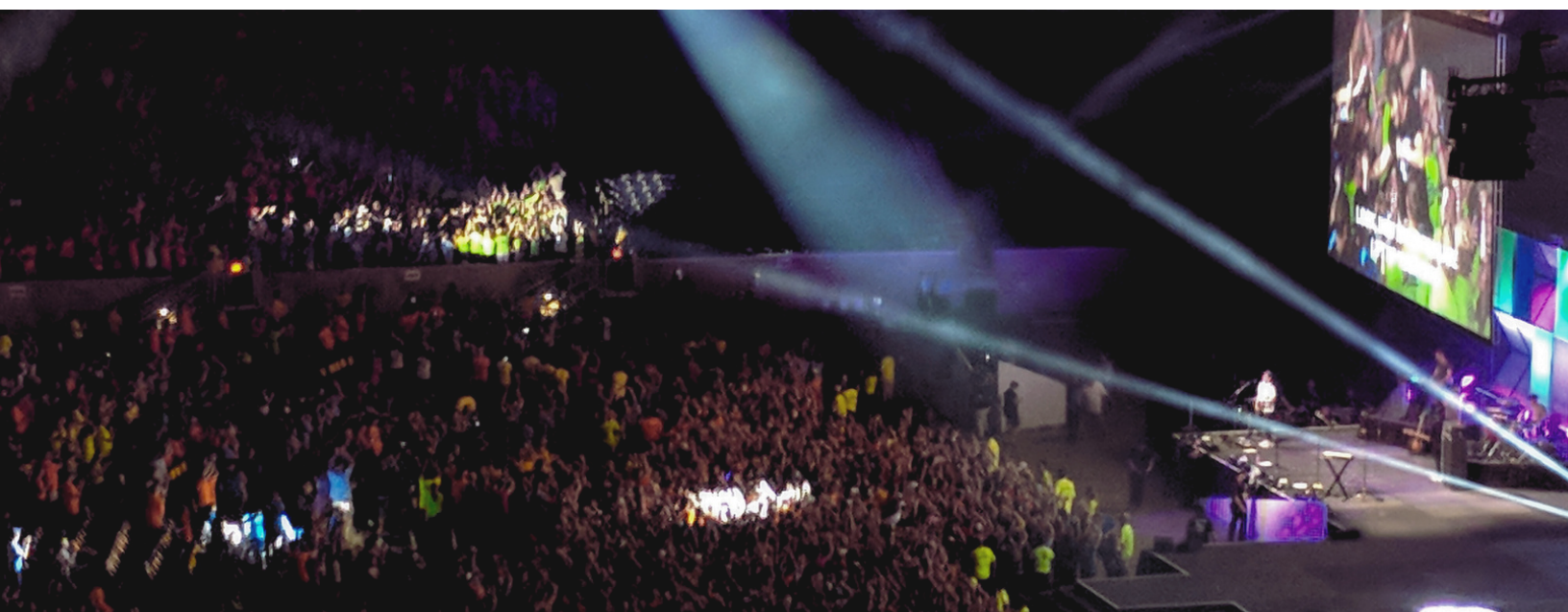
During our time leading up to the Gathering, students will be placed in family groups, which will each have 2 adult leaders and approximately 8 students. Students are accountable to the adults from their family groups. While we are traveling and throughout the Gathering, students do not travel anywhere without adult supervision. While the Gathering recommends a 1:7 adult to student ratio, we always target closer to a 1:4, making sure we have plenty of opportunities for every student to meaningfully connect with at least one adult during the course of the experience.

## **How are family groups chosen?**

The Core Leadership Team prayerfully considers all registered participants when putting together family groups, taking into account current friendships and relationships as well as potential meaningful connections based on shared interests, personality traits, etc.

# Additional Questions?

If you have questions about the ELCA Youth Gathering that are not covered in this document, please reach out to Erin Haligowski or any other member of the Core Leadership Team.



# Sample Trip Schedule

## Sunday - July 14

### Travel Day

Worship with Commissioning at Epiphany  
Congregational Send-Off w/Lunch  
Dinner on the Road  
Arrive at Host Church (Location TBD)  
Evening Devotions/Family Time/Prayer Partners

## Monday - July 15

### Sight Seeing & Group Building

Sight-seeing (Location TBD)  
Return to Host Church  
Evening Devotions/Family Time/Prayer Partners

## Tuesday - July 16

### Travel Day & Gathering Opening

Morning Sightseeing TBD  
Check-in at Gathering Hotel  
Dinner  
Mass Gathering  
Community Life  
Evening Devotions/Family Time/Prayer Partners

## Wednesday/Thursday/Friday - July 17-19

### Synod Day

Synod Day Worship  
Lunch  
Sight Seeing in New Orleans  
Dinner  
Mass Gathering  
Community Life  
Evening Devotions/Family Time/Prayer Partners

### Interactive Learning Day

Interactive Learning Center (Morning)  
Lunch  
Afternoon Sight Seeing  
Dinner  
Mass Gathering  
Community Life  
Evening Devotions/Family Time/Prayer Partners

### Accompaniment Day

Accompaniment Day Launch  
Lunch  
Community Life Options  
Dinner  
Mass Gathering  
Community Life  
Evening Devotions/Family Time/Prayer Partners

A detailed itinerary will be provided ahead of the trip, but this gives a basic idea of what our days look like.

## Saturday - July 20

### Closing Worship & Travel

Closing Worship  
Lunch  
Departure  
Arrive at Host Church TBD  
Evening Devotions/Family Time/Prayer Partners

## Sunday - July 21

### Travel & Return Home

Departure for Home  
Return Home Time TBD