

**THIS  
CHANGES  
EVERYTHING.**

2018 ELCA YOUTH GATHERING

# GUIDE BOOK

**#ELCAYG2018**



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

**JUNE 27–JULY 1, 2018  
HOUSTON, TX**

# MISSION

# GOALS

# EXPERIENCE THE GATHERING

The mission of the ELCA Youth Gathering is faith formation in teenagers. This is done in meaningful and unique ways through worship, service, interactive learning, Bible study and fellowship.

The Gathering strives to be a place where young people can:

- Be both affirmed and challenged in their faith.
- Experience new perspectives.
- Ponder their vocation.
- Learn about the ELCA.
- Bond with their congregational group.

## Synod Day

Fulfilling the mission of the Gathering to provide faith formation in high school age youth, Synod Day is one of the rotation program days when participants meet as a synod for worship, Bible study, learning and more.

## Service Learning

The Gathering invites participants to engage in one day of Service Learning during their time in Houston. As a faith community, the Gathering combines meaningful service, instruction and reflection with a faith lens of accompaniment to:

- Invite participants to enter into the diverse story of Houston.
- Empower our partners in Houston to further their mission.
- Join in relationships of accompaniment with our partners.
- Create opportunity for transformative experiences for Gathering participants so they return home as agents of change in their communities.

## Interactive Learning

Interactive Learning invites Gathering participants to encounter God, their vocation and God's work in the world through a variety of learning styles and sensory experiences. Partners help bring this space to life by inviting participants into engaging learning opportunities that support the mission of the Gathering and its theme, and that lift up the partner organization or group.





## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Welcome.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>In remembrance.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Daily schedule.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>MYLE and the tAble.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Synod Day.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Service Learning.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Interactive Learning.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Mass Gathering.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Community Life.....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Offering.....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Transportation and parking.....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Accessibility.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Safety and security.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Health care information and addresses.....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>First and Final 15.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>61</b>







## Welcome to the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering!

After much prayer and preparation, you have made it to Houston with your young people, and we are so eager to welcome you into this week of worship, learning, service and fellowship.

The ministry of the Gathering has the power to transform lives. This week the young people you journey with will be both affirmed and challenged in their faith. They will experience new perspectives as they explore Houston and listen to others' stories. The Gathering is a place to ponder their vocation and be in prayer and conversation about what God might be calling them to be in the world. I hope you use this week to bond your congregational group as you grow in faith together. Young people will learn about their church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and, hopefully, explore ways they can be a part of the many exciting ministries across this denomination.

As an adult leader at the Gathering, I hope that you, too, will be open to the Spirit transforming your heart, mind and soul. Thank you for caring so deeply about young people and their faith formation. You are a gift to them and to our church.

This week we will discover together how God's call, God's love, God's grace and God's hope can change everything in people's lives. Ultimately, we rest in the assurance that Jesus has changed everything because of his life, death and resurrection, and that we are saved by grace through faith.

In Christ,

Molly Beck Dean  
Gathering Director





# IN REMEMBRANCE



*The Gathering remembers beloved colleague, friend and child of God*

**Donna Marie Wiegel.**

April 14, 1952-April 21, 2018

**D**onna worked with the ELCA for over 25 years. She began with the Women of the ELCA and then worked with the Gathering, beginning in 1997. As an event planner, she was instrumental in organizing multiple Gatherings every three years, with some of the events reaching an attendance of over 40,000 youth.

When Donna began working with the Gathering, all registrations were handled on paper. Every registration came through the Postal Service. Donna coordinated the efforts to open the mail, organize registrations, enter the data from the registrations and process payments. She began the system of streamlining to the current online registration system in which congregations participating in the Gathering manage their accounts. She was a master of logistics and scheduling, performing this ministry with kindness and grace.

Donna knew many of the adult leaders with the Gathering on a first-name basis. She was not just a colleague to many of these leaders, she was also a beloved friend. Donna was well known for her compassionate heart and her embodied expressions of kindness, joy and love. She was a passionate advocate for youth and young adults.

When she wasn't working with the Gathering, Donna enjoyed the simplicities of life. She loved being in the sun, at the beach and on her bike. She reveled in spending time with her daughter, Tatiana, and her beloved granddaughters. Donna will be missed by so many. She has left a lasting legacy in her dedication to the ministry of the Gathering.

Of all the people I have known in my life, Donna Wiegel was a true warrior of fierce grace.

*- Tom Hoegel*

You may not have had the opportunity to meet Donna, but you are experiencing her work. Donna worked tirelessly to make sure every person had a place to lay their heads at night. She knew the exact number of pillows we needed to make this event possible. Rest eternal grant her, O Lord. Donna, you will be missed.

*- Tammy Jones West*

Donna remembered names and was always ready to help you figure things out, whether it was a housing situation or a logistical detail. I knew I could always count on Donna to either have the answer or know who I needed to talk to. She was not only a great detail person, she was also a loving, kind person who wanted only the best for you. Donna, you are so loved! Well done, good and faithful servant.

*- Beth Hartfiel*

In countless ways, Donna's fingerprints are present in moments of this Gathering. There is not a name she did not read or a church she did not know by name. In her ministry, she tended each and every one of us either directly or indirectly as she served our God, our church and the ministry of the Gathering. Her attention to detail allowed the rest of us to commit our energy to offering the very best experience of the Gathering possible. And on more than one occasion, Donna would remind us that this Gathering was not about those who plan it but about those who experience it. I am grateful for the reminder that for Donna, the high school student participant was always the focus. She was a passionate defender of the ministry of the Gathering and a devoted follower of Jesus in her desire to tell the story of God's love for each and every one of us.

*- Chris Marien*

Querida Donna, como te extrañamos sobre todo estando aquí en Houston, siendo testigos de tu gran obra de amor. Le doy gracias a Dios no sólo por haberte conocido, sino también por haber tenido la oportunidad de trabajar a tu lado, pudiendo así apreciar y aprender de tu cariño y dedicación a este ministerio. Recordaré siempre lo detallista que eras y como te acordabas de todos y de cada situación particular, incluso los nombres de personas e iglesias específicas. Es evidente que este evento no hubiera sido posible sin ti. Nuestros corazones están rotos sin tu presencia.

*- Andrea Martínez*



She was a sea of calm, an ocean breeze. She was a waking sunrise and a smiling moon in the dark sky. Aloha 'oe, Donna. A hui hou. Farewell to thee, until we meet again.

– Keith T. Amano

Donna was a true gift from God. In the calmest of ways, she helped everyone that she came into contact with. Donna knew what it meant to live in God's grace and always embody the text that is being used for this Gathering: "For it is by grace you have been saved, not by your own doing, but as a gift from God, not as a result of works." Donna, thank you for teaching us exactly what that means. You are an example to all! She is and will be missed by all with whom she worked, but especially by everyone associated with this Gathering. Peace be with you friend, and we will meet again in the resurrection of our Lord.

– Liz Fisher

One of the best cheerleaders in my work with the Gathering was Donna. She was readily available to listen, offer a smile and encouraging word, sigh with me, laugh and pull another report or spreadsheet. Donna's advocacy for young people and the ministry of this Gathering was inspiring. I loved her encouraging smile and gentle sigh, her love of sunshine and a great vacation, her strong conviction in being an active participant in our government by voting, and her deep commitment to God and all of humanity. She worked tirelessly for this event and as an advocate for all. Living out the gospel was her way of being. Well done, Donna, good and faithful servant.

– Kim Adams

When I think of Donna, I am reminded of her positive, optimistic and can-do attitude. I rarely heard her say "No," instead it was "Let me check on that" or "I'll look into that for you." She was such a generous person – generous in her personality, her interests, her work, her passions, her faith. She wanted nothing more than to listen and accommodate all Gathering-related folks (from hotels, people in the host city, participants, Gathering staff and leaders) as best as she could. She wanted everyone, and I mean everyone, to have the best faith-filled experience at the Gathering as possible, and she went out of her way to facilitate that in hospitality. She is dearly missed, and my hope is to honor her memory in welcoming and showing hospitality to the folks of Houston and those who have come to participate in the Gathering.

– Jennifer Schultz

Donna served as a great witness to the unconditional love of God made known in Jesus Christ. She pointed to Christ in spoken and unspoken ways that will forever serve as a model for me. Her passion and compassion for humanity, especially those who were marginalized, was a testimony to her identity as "child of God." She was an integral part of the ELCA Youth Gathering, especially as we worked together on Synod Day property logistics. On behalf of the Synod Day Team, we thank God for Donna, and for the many ways she reflected God's love, grace and hope – that changes everything.

– Eric Carlson

Donna was one of my biggest cheerleaders in life because she believed in the power of opportunity found within community. She found the deepest joy in serving others with a Christ-like love that is rare to find these days. For Donna, renting an accessible taxi was as important to her call to ministry as remembering the names and life stories of those whom she worked with regularly. My life, my story, my ministry is better because Donna's life, story and ministry were part of mine.

– Sarah Mayer-Flatt

I knew Donna for many years as a ministry colleague, but before that, I knew her as a Young family friend. She was the sort of professional who always made sure to reply to your emails and questions but also the sort of friend to save you a seat at a crowded restaurant or to text you out of the blue to let you know she was thinking of you. Her enthusiastic commitment to simple living and her determined efforts to seek equality and justice for all made her a woman after my own heart. Donna made me feel seen, heard and valued whenever I interacted with her, and I know that she did the same for everyone else she met too. Her heart had enough space to hold all of us as dear ones; she was the kind of everyday-Jesus I strive to be. I am so heartbroken that you're gone friend, but I am so grateful that you're getting the chance to rest in heaven. I love you, Donna.

– Vanessa Young

Donna was our dear colleague and friend. We shared cubicle walls, countless trips to the coffee machine, days and nights on the road, many frustrations and frequent laughs. She was a gifted negotiator and a thoughtful peacemaker. Whether it was reminding us of our civic duty to go vote or tending to the seemingly impossible task of housing thousands of congregational groups, Donna lived and ministered with tenacity and gentleness that should be opposite from each other yet dwelled perfectly together in this child of God.

We love you and miss you, Donna, and promise to continue to listen to the Holy Spirit as we tend this ministry of the Gathering, MYLE and the tAble that you so dearly loved and served faithfully for more than 20 years.

– Molly Beck Dean, Michael Deisting and Sierra Ronning

*The Gathering remembers beloved colleague, friend and child of God*

## Donna Marie Wiegel.

April 14, 1952-April 21, 2018



# DAILY SCHEDULE

## Sunday, June 24, to Wednesday, June 27

Multicultural Youth Leadership Event (MYLE)

The tAble

## Tuesday, June 26

**3-8 p.m.** Gathering check-in/hotel check-in

## Wednesday, June 27

Start your day – First 15

**8 a.m.-8 p.m.** Gathering check-in/hotel check-in

**1-6:30 p.m.** Community Life open in NRG Arena

**1-6:30 p.m.** Old Lutheran Store open in NRG Center

**5:30 p.m.** Pre-purchased congregational catered meal  
(*ticketed event*)

**5:45 p.m.** Accessible entrance opens at NRG Stadium

**6 p.m.** NRG Stadium doors open

**7:30 p.m.** Mass Gathering begins, concessions close  
(*even if you are in line*)

End your night – Final 15

## Thursday, June 28 / Friday, June 29 / Saturday, June 30

Start your day – First 15

Service Learning launches  
(*various sites across Houston*)

**9 a.m.** Interactive Learning opens in NRG Center

**9 a.m.-6 p.m.** Old Lutheran Store open

**11 a.m.-6:30 p.m.** Community Life open in NRG Arena

**11:30 a.m.** Synod Day doors open

**12 p.m.-3 p.m.** Synod Day

**12:45-3:30 p.m.** Celebration of Service – NRG Arena  
(*Service Learning only*)

**5 p.m.** Interactive Learning closes

**5:30 p.m.** Pre-purchased congregational catered meal  
(*ticketed event*)

**5:45 p.m.** Accessible entrance opens at NRG Stadium

**6 p.m.** NRG Stadium doors open

**7:30 p.m.** Mass Gathering begins, concessions close  
(*even if you are in line*)

End your night – Final 15

*Schedule continues on next page*



INFOLINE 888-411-3522 @ELCAGathering #ELCAYG2018





# DAILY SCHEDULE

## Sunday, July 1

*Schedule continued from previous page*

- 8:15 a.m.** Start your day – First 15
- 8:15 a.m.** Accessible entrance opens at NRG Stadium
- 8:30 a.m.** NRG Stadium doors open  
*(no concessions available)*
- 9:30-11:30 a.m.** Closing worship  
Go in peace, serve the Lord.  
End your day – Final 15

DOWNLOAD THE GATHERING APP!



<https://guidebook.com/g/elcayg2018>



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**Mission Investment Fund**  
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MYLE is a pre-event of the ELCA Youth Gathering and the largest gathering of people of color within the ELCA. The Multicultural Youth Leadership Event empowers young people of color and those whose primary language is other than English to claim their story as part of God's story in order to move toward healing and wholeness as transformational leaders in the church and in the world.

We welcome participants of the Gathering to Houston and want you to know that we would love to have you join us for the next MYLE in 2021.

**The theme for MYLE 2018 is "ONE" based in the Scripture of Ephesians:**

*"For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. So, he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God." (Ephesians 2:14-19)*

In God's eternal plan and wisdom there is a way to remove these barriers. This new humanity would no longer be many but one believer in Christ. In other words, this was God's plan for the unity of many into one new people in Christ.

Each day of MYLE, program pieces will focus around a sub-theme:

- One body, many parts (1 Corinthians 12:14-26)
- One mission, many gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-11)
- One household, many rooms (John 14:2)
- One in Christ (Ephesians 2:14-19)

**#MYLE2018**







#THETABLE2018

**“The tAble brings together youth who live with disabilities and their caregivers, to create an intentional and unique community within the ELCA that is focused around the gifts that we have been given, and find over and over again, at God’s table.”**

*– Sarah Mayer-Flatt, the tAble team leader*

The tAble (formerly the Definitely-Abled Youth Leadership Event – DAYLE) is one of the events to kick off the ELCA Youth Gathering. It gathers and empowers young people who live with a wide range of physical, cognitive and emotional disabilities so they might grow as faithful, wise and courageous witnesses. The event also gives participants the opportunity to acclimate and orient themselves to Houston and the venues in which the Gathering is being held.

### **The tAble will gather under the theme “You Belong.”**

A sense of “belonging” is not always a truth that the world and culture extend. We continuously wonder “Where do I fit in?” “Why am I different from others?” “What gifts could I possibly bring?” And yet, we are reminded in Psalm 139:14 “I am fearfully and wonderfully made.”

We are made – wonderfully – by the very God who names us and claims us as children. We belong to God!

At the tAble: We believe in the promise that we all and, therefore, YOU belong to God, at Christ’s table, within the church and within our communities.

### **The tAble at Interactive Learning**

Even though this cycle’s event has ended, you can still join us in the Interactive Learning at the NRG Center. Rather than simply raising awareness that we have friends and family who live with disabilities, we will experience disabilities, those that are visible and those that are not, through a variety of activities. We will then dream and brainstorm ways to tear down the visible and invisible barriers that prevent all of us, in one way or another, from participating fully in the family of God, using the gifts we have been given.

Come and see how “You Belong” at our area in Interactive Learning.



THE TABLE

# DIVERGE

Romans 12:2

## QUAKE

YOUTH ENCOUNTERING THE GOSPEL

Quake weekend events partner with youth leaders in local churches to encourage teens to become established in their faith, empowered for Christian living and enabled to live a life of ministry and leadership. The 2019 Quake theme is Diverge. To live a life for Christ, we need to diverge from the ordinary roads of this world to follow the extraordinary path He created for us.

GRADES  
6-12

20  
EVENTS

EVENT		REGISTRATION		
LOCATION	DATE	PROGRAM RATE		HOTEL RATE
		EARLY BIRD EXPIRES	STANDARD EXPIRES	
AZ · Phoenix	Apr 5-7	Feb 5	Mar 5	\$234
IA · Des Moines	Feb 1-3	Nov 27	Dec 18	\$213
IL · Chicago	Mar 15-17	Jan 15	Feb 12	\$228
KS · Wichita	Feb 1-3	Nov 27	Dec 18	\$270
MD · Baltimore	Jan 11-13	Nov 6	Dec 4	\$244
MI · Traverse City	Jan 25-27	Nov 20	Dec 11	\$309+
MN · Minneapolis	Feb 15-17	Dec 11	Jan 15	\$215
MO · St. Louis	Feb 15-17	Dec 11	Jan 15	\$233
MT · Kalispell	Mar 15-17	Jan 15	Feb 12	\$210
NC · Concord	Mar 15-17	Jan 15	Feb 12	\$384+
NE · Omaha	Mar 8-10	Jan 8	Feb 5	\$258
OH · Cincinnati	Jan 11-13	Nov 6	Dec 4	\$199
PA · Allentown	Feb 8-10	Dec 4	Jan 8	\$209
PA · Harrisburg	Jan 18-20	Nov 13	Dec 11	\$278
PA · Pittsburgh	Feb 1-3	Nov 27	Dec 18	\$203
TX · San Antonio	Feb 22-24	Dec 18	Jan 22	\$262
VA · Virginia Beach	Mar 1-3	Dec 18	Jan 22	\$212
WA · Centralia	Mar 8-10	Jan 8	Feb 5	\$570+
WI · Wisconsin Dells	Jan 18-20	Nov 13	Dec 11	\$430+
WI · Wisconsin Dells	Mar 29-31	Jan 29	Feb 26	\$420+

### REGISTRATION

Registration includes program and hotel rates for youth and adults. Meals are not included. Visit our website to register and book your hotel rooms.

### PROGRAM RATE

Early Bird - **\$95** per person  
Standard - **\$120** per person  
Late - **\$145** per person

### HOTEL RATE

Rate includes a two night stay. Rooms have two double beds, accommodating four people, unless otherwise indicated.

+ Rooms have two double beds and a pullout sofa, accommodating 5-6 people. Waterpark wristbands are complimentary with room rate.

Register at [QuakeEvent.com](http://QuakeEvent.com).

Use code **ELCA** to receive 1 free program registration for every 10 you purchase.

✉ [Quake@LifePromotions.com](mailto:Quake@LifePromotions.com)

☎ 920.738.5588





# SYNOD DAY

***Synod Day is a unique community of Christ, gathering around word, meal, music and conversation with holy moments. We belong together!***

*– Eric Carlson  
Synod Day  
team leader*

Each synod will come together in the afternoon on a designated day and location for Synod Day. Participants will dwell on three daily themes of the Gathering.

- Thursday: **“God’s Love Changes Everything”**
- Friday: **“God’s Grace Changes Everything”**
- Saturday: **“God’s Hope Changes Everything”**

Synod Day emphasizes the promise that we belong together. We will see this theme expressed through the context of worship, which provides the framework for the afternoon experience. Through the understanding that we are gathered, claimed and sent as God’s people, participants will gain a deeper sense that God has, indeed, claimed them, that they matter and they have a place to belong.

## **Arrival time**

Doors open at 11:30 a.m.

## **Where to go**

Search for your synod name in the Gathering app or in the property assignments listed on page 13 to find the property and ballroom in which your synod is assigned to meet. Your confirmation letter also contains this information. Directional signs will be posted in each property.



Please consider the time needed to get to your property when making plans if you are using your own transportation.

### Helpful tips

**Eat before arriving.** Doors open at 11:30 a.m., and we anticipate dismissal around 2:45 p.m. If you are departing from downtown or the Galleria area, please make your way to NRG Park immediately after Synod Day concludes in order to beat major rush-hour traffic.

Participants will be seated on the floor. Chairs will be provided only for those who need them for physical reasons.



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# Property assignments

Synod region + number, synod name, location (area) - ballroom

## Thursday, June 27

<b>1A</b>	<b>Alaska</b> Crowne Plaza (NRG) - Alamo
<b>1D</b>	<b>Eastern Washington-Idaho</b> Hyatt Regency (Downtown) - East
<b>1E</b>	<b>Oregon</b> Doubletree (Downtown) - LaSalle
<b>2A</b>	<b>Sierra Pacific</b> Hyatt Regency (Downtown) - West Extended
<b>2B</b>	<b>Southwest California</b> JW Marriott (Galleria) - Liberty Hall
<b>2C</b>	<b>Pacifica</b> JW Marriott (Galleria) - Liberty Hall
<b>3B</b>	<b>Eastern North Dakota</b> Westin (Galleria) - Galleria
<b>3C</b>	<b>South Dakota</b> Marriott Marquis (Downtown) - Texas
<b>3E</b>	<b>Northeastern Minnesota</b> Hilton Post Oak (Galleria) - Ballroom
<b>4D</b>	<b>Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana</b> Royal Sonesta (Galleria) - Discovery Center
<b>5A</b>	<b>Metropolitan Chicago</b> NRG Center (NRG) - 300 Series
<b>5C</b>	<b>Central/Southern Illinois</b> Hyatt Regency (Galleria) - Regency
<b>5F</b>	<b>Northeastern Iowa</b> Crowne Plaza (NRG) - Grand
<b>5K</b>	<b>South-Central Wisconsin</b> NRG Center (NRG) - 600-603, 606-609
<b>6C</b>	<b>Indiana-Kentucky</b> Westin Oaks (Galleria) - Consort
<b>6E</b>	<b>Northeastern Ohio</b> Royal Sonesta (Galleria) - Legends
<b>6F</b>	<b>Southern Ohio</b> Hilton Americas (Downtown) - Grand G-L
<b>7C</b>	<b>Metropolitan New York</b> Marriott Marquis (Downtown) - Houston I-III
<b>7E</b>	<b>Northeastern Pennsylvania</b> Marriott Marquis (Downtown) - Houston IV-VII
<b>8E</b>	<b>Upper Susquehanna</b> Crowne Plaza (NRG) - Austin
<b>9B</b>	<b>North Carolina</b> Hilton Americas (Downtown) - Grand A-F
<b>9E</b>	<b>Florida-Bahamas</b> JW Marriott (Galleria) - Grand

## Friday, June 28

<b>1F</b>	<b>Montana</b> Doubletree (Downtown) - LaSalle
<b>2D</b>	<b>Grand Canyon</b> Hyatt Regency (Galleria) - Regency
<b>3A</b>	<b>Western North Dakota</b> Royal Sonesta (Galleria) - Legends
<b>3D</b>	<b>Northwestern Minnesota</b> Hilton Americas (Downtown) - Grand G-L
<b>3G</b>	<b>Minneapolis Area</b> NRG Center (NRG) - 300 Series
<b>3H</b>	<b>Saint Paul Area</b> Royal Sonesta (Galleria) - Discovery Center
<b>3I</b>	<b>Southeastern Minnesota</b> Marriott Marquis (Downtown) - Texas
<b>4B</b>	<b>Central States</b> JW Marriott (Galleria) - Liberty Hall
<b>4F</b>	<b>Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast</b> NRG Center (NRG) - 600-603, 606-609
<b>5D</b>	<b>Southeastern Iowa</b> Hilton Americas (Downtown) - Grand A-F
<b>5G</b>	<b>Northern Great Lakes</b> Crowne Plaza (NRG) - Austin
<b>5H</b>	<b>Northwest Wisconsin</b> Crowne Plaza (NRG) - Grand
<b>6A</b>	<b>Southeast Michigan</b> Westin (Galleria) - Galleria
<b>6B</b>	<b>North/West Lower Michigan</b> Hilton Post Oak (Galleria) - Ballroom
<b>7A</b>	<b>New Jersey</b> JW Marriott (Galleria) - Grand
<b>7B</b>	<b>New England</b> Westin Oaks (Galleria) - Consort
<b>7D</b>	<b>Upstate New York</b> Marriott Marquis (Downtown) - Houston I-III
<b>8C</b>	<b>Allegheny</b> Hyatt Regency (Downtown) - East
<b>8H</b>	<b>West Virginia-Western Maryland</b> Crowne Plaza (NRG) - Alamo
<b>9A</b>	<b>Virginia</b> Hyatt Regency (Downtown) - West Extended
<b>9C</b>	<b>South Carolina</b> Marriott Marquis (Downtown) - Houston IV-VII

## Friday, June 28

<b>1B</b>	<b>Northwest Washington</b> Doubletree (Downtown) - LaSalle
<b>1C</b>	<b>Southwestern Washington</b> Crowne Plaza (NRG) - Austin
<b>2E</b>	<b>Rocky Mountain</b> JW Marriott (Galleria) - Liberty Hall
<b>3F</b>	<b>Southwestern Minnesota</b> Hilton Americas (Downtown) - Grand A-F
<b>4A</b>	<b>Nebraska</b> Hilton Americas (Downtown) - Grand G-L
<b>4C</b>	<b>Arkansas-Oklahoma</b> Hyatt Regency (Downtown) - East
<b>4E</b>	<b>Southwestern Texas</b> Royal Sonesta (Galleria) - Legends
<b>5B</b>	<b>Northern Illinois</b> Royal Sonesta (Galleria) - Discovery Center
<b>5E</b>	<b>Western Iowa</b> Hyatt Regency (Galleria) - Regency
<b>5I</b>	<b>East-Central Wisconsin</b> NRG Center (NRG) - 600-603, 606-609
<b>5J</b>	<b>Greater Milwaukee</b> Westin (Galleria) - Galleria
<b>5L</b>	<b>La Crosse Area</b> Marriott Marquis (Downtown) - Houston I-III
<b>6D</b>	<b>Northwestern Ohio</b> Crowne Plaza (NRG) - Grand
<b>7F</b>	<b>Southeastern Pennsylvania</b> Hilton Post Oak (Galleria) - Ballroom
<b>8A</b>	<b>Southwestern Pennsylvania</b> Hyatt Regency (Downtown) - West Extended
<b>8B</b>	<b>Northwestern Pennsylvania</b> Hyatt Regency (Downtown) - West Extended
<b>8D</b>	<b>Lower Susquehanna</b> NRG Center (NRG) - 300 Series
<b>8F</b>	<b>Delaware-Maryland</b> Marriott Marquis (Downtown) - Houston IV-VII
<b>8G</b>	<b>Metropolitan Washington, D.C.</b> JW Marriott (Galleria) - Grand
<b>9D</b>	<b>Southeastern</b> Westin Oaks (Galleria) - Consort
<b>9F</b>	<b>Caribbean</b> Crowne Plaza (NRG) - Alamo





# SERVICE LEARNING

“ *When I think of the young people coming to the Gathering, I am constantly in awe of the way they choose to use their time by intentionally shaping, stretching and living out their faith in the world.* ”

– Jessica Noonan,  
Service Learning  
team leader

**Your Service Learning day is here.  
Welcome to Houston!**

You are invited to be part of the story...

... a **story** of a diverse city with the ability to reinvent itself time and time again. A story of a city **healing** from Hurricane Harvey with renewed sense of strength. A story where cultural **intersections** are part of daily life in the most diverse city in the country. A story of how putting your **faith** into action can create a partnership that will last beyond a single day of service in Houston. A story of **togetherness** as you learn to continue this work at home.

The Service Learning team invites you to **shift** your view of service. By focusing on the **stories, healing, intersections, faith and togetherness** that you will experience today, our hope is that you will serve and be served.

We are excited to welcome you to this day of listening, working and discovering the reality of life for people in Houston and the call of faith to listen to our neighbors and work for peace and justice. Houston is ready to welcome you into the story of the city; we hope it becomes part of your personal story as well.







## A SNAPSHOT OF YOUR DAY:

### Before your Service Learning day

1. Make sure you know your assigned day, launch site, arrival time and bus number. All of this information is in your congregational profile, which can be accessed through [ELCA.org/youthgathering](https://ELCA.org/youthgathering).
2. If you have not already done so, be sure to watch the Service Learning orientation video available online. There are also four short visual poems (videos) created by Folklore Films that highlight different stories of Houstonians. Visit [YouTube.com/ELCA](https://YouTube.com/ELCA) and check the ELCA Youth Gathering playlist to find these videos. Watch them again tonight as a group before you go to bed.

### On your Service Learning day

1. Eat breakfast and fill your water bottle before you depart for your Service Learning launch site; you will need extra energy today.
2. Make sure everyone in your group is wearing their orange Service Learning T-shirts, comfortable closed-toe and closed-heel shoes, shorts, sunscreen and bug spray. You are welcome to bring a backpack with an umbrella or poncho, sunscreen, bug spray, snacks and a change of clothes. Cellphones are also encouraged. You will not be going back to your hotel until after Mass Gathering that evening.
3. Boxed lunches from Jason's Deli are provided at your Service Learning site (some veggie wraps will be available). Feel free to pack snacks and bring your own lunch if you have special food needs.
4. Make your way to your launch site with a positive attitude ready to go out and serve the needs of the city. Your servant companion (young adult volunteer) is the person you will meet at your launch site, and they will stay with you the whole day.
5. Be ready for celebration at the end of your Service Learning day with Celebration of Service! When you finish your project and arrive at the NRG Arena, there will be things like a glow dance, photo opportunities, and spaces to reflect and learn about the ways to be an advocate when you go back home.

**Gather** at your launch site to meet your servant companion and then head to your bus.

**Hear** the good news of where and how you will be serving today.

**Join** in the unique story of Houston as you participate in one of the many projects throughout the city.

**Debrief** your experience with your servant companion on site.

**Celebrate** and reflect on your experience at the Celebration of Service held at the NRG Arena with 10,000 of your friends who also served.

**Share** your story with your friends, family and faith community when you return home.





Son  
Clayton  
Student

Daughter  
Mikayla  
Student

Saltines  
Sweetened Condensed Milk  
Sweetened Condensed Milk

WHOLE GRAIN BROWN RICE  
PILAF





## INTERACTIVE LEARNING

*I am so excited for the new feel of Interactive Learning as well as the new ways participants will be able to engage with partners through the tracks.*

*– Beth Hartfiel,  
Interactive Learning  
team leader*

Just like you would with the other two program days, take some time to plan how your group will engage partners during Interactive Learning.

Congregational groups will have a dedicated day for Interactive Learning on Thursday, Friday or Saturday. Groups will also be able to experience Interactive Learning any day, after Service Learning or Synod Day, during our open hours of 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

The NRG Center will serve as a holy playground, a space for participants to engage and be immersed in the life and breath of the church, the community of God. Through a variety of mediums, participants will engage in learning opportunities that support the mission of the Gathering and its theme, and that lift up the partner organization or group.

### **Rest areas**

At these rest areas, you can relax, charge your cellphone and check out the Interactive Learning map. Here you will find “tour guides” who can help you navigate your way through Interactive Learning. They can help you discover a track that interests you or fits the needs of your group. The tour guides can help you locate specific partners or activities.

## Additional notes

- Do not forget to drink **lots** of water and wear good shoes. Many activities require closed-toe shoes, so leave your flip-flops and sandals at your hotel.
- Please note: all activities are subject to change.
- Include locations and times in your plan for your group to check in with each other. Rest areas are great places to gather.
- Bring cellphones or web-enabled devices. Some activities will be enhanced through texting and internet access.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

What **partner** did you talk to today that changed everything for you?

Were there any **ministries or organizations** that you encountered today where you felt God calling you?

## Tracks

For some, the Interactive Learning can be overwhelming. Thus, we have added tracks that can help guide a participant or group through NRG Center.

**REFLECT** for those who crave thought-provoking activities.

**MOVE** for those who learn by moving.

**BOND** for those who desire to experience interactive learning as a group.

**DREAM** for those who seek to explore their calls.

**ACCOMPANY** for those who wish to journey alongside and support others.

**CONNECT** for those who aspire to engage diverse perspectives.



**SERVE** for those who want hands-on service opportunities.



Arts, food, shopping, entertainment, outdoors and more — Houston has it all!

Discover a mix of Southern charm and urban appeal in Houston. Enjoy the cultural diversity, sunny weather and an endless array of places to see and things to do while visiting Houston.

VISITHOUSTON

#MyHouston  

*The Culinary and Cultural*

**HOUSTON**

TEXAS

*Capital of the South*



# INTERACTIVE LEARNING MAP

## REFLECT

- R-1 Ball pits
- R-2 Bible in a snap. Chat for a lifetime.
- R-3 Give hope to children
- R-4 Never too old for story time
- R-5 Podcast and sandbox creating experience
- R-6 Prayer and breathing space
- R-7 Putting together God's puzzle pieces
- R-8 Think, Believe, Do.
- R-9 What I wish I'd known: Lessons on spirituality and sexuality
- R-10 Reflect, respect, retuel

## MOVE

- M-1 Bumper cars, music and your future
- M-2 Drawn in! Moving out!
- M-3 Drum circle
- M-4 Exploring God's worlds
- M-5 Grace race
- M-6 Mindfulness challenge
- M-7 Ropes
- M-8 Sports
- M-9 The college experience
- M-10 Unfair four square
- M-11 Whole in one - miniature golf

## CONNECT

- C-1 #MeToo: Hurting healing as the body of Christ
- C-2 Bracelets of fortune: Identity and intersectionality in Scripture and beyond
- C-3 "Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture"
- C-4 God addresses you!
- C-5 MYLE lounge
- C-6 Our stories, our voices
- C-7 Podcasting your faith
- C-8 Radical welcome changes everything Texas - and Louisiana!
- C-9 Living waters
- C-10 You belong - no barriers
- C-11 Restoration oasis

## ACCOMPANY

- A-1 Be the change: Means of grace, scenes of grace
- A-2 Creative expression - Road to Emmaus: A journey of accompaniment (murals)
- A-3 Finding Jesus in prison
- A-4 Generosity tools
- A-5 Global Farm Challenge
- A-6 Make your mark: What should the ELCA say about sexism?
- A-7 Peace with justice in the Holy Land
- A-8 Road trip
- A-9 The weight of water - a glimpse into rural Africa
- A-10 Why does safe, affordable housing matter?
- A-11 Your day: Your role to care for the resources
- A-12 Inspiring students in poverty

## BOND

- B-1 Are you changed: Photo mosaic
- B-2 Congregational photo booth
- B-3 LoveStruck: Race, community & God
- B-4 Peer ministry camp
- B-5 People on the move: A migrant and refugee experience
- B-6 Photo booth thank-you project
- B-7 Refugee integration obstacle course
- B-8 Untangling the bullying mess

## SERVE

- S-1 Blood drive
- S-2 Building...homes, relationships and connections
- S-3 Education in Africa
- S-4 Ending human trafficking
- S-5 Hair donation

## DREAM

- D-1 Austin art
- D-2 Give us 25 minutes - we'll give you a year
- D-3 Leading a brave new church into the future!
- D-4 Onward
- D-5 Passport to Global Mission
- D-6 Service spectacular
- D-7 Sow the Seeds
- D-8 This is where the saga begins
- D-9 What do you love?

Old Lutheran's retail store will be open Wednesday from 1-6:30 p.m. and Thursday-Saturday from 9 a.m.-6 pm.



# REFLECT

FOR THOSE WHO CRAVE  
THOUGHT-PROVOKING ACTIVITIES

## Ball pits

Climb into a ball pit with a stranger and make a new friend. Meet up at the ball pit to ask daily questions as a way of getting to know others at the Gathering. Your new best friend might be waiting to meet you in a ball pit.

## Bible in a snap. Chat for a lifetime.

The Bible changes us. When we open it, we taste fresh bread; we touch Jesus' robe; we walk with friends on dusty roads; we hear God's powerful voice inside a mysterious bush; we feel confused and broken and yet completely loved because Jesus changes everything; God's CALL changes everything!

**Book of Faith** - All are invited to open Scripture and join the conversation. Our vision - that the whole church become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered and sent by the word for the sake of the world.

## Give hope to children

Children in Houston have been dramatically affected by Hurricane Harvey. Come and see how Camp Hope helped families get through this devastating time. Find out how you can be part of giving hope and how this could change everything for children in your neighborhood.

**Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod - Camp Hope** - Camp Hope Ministries is a youth-led and adult-mentored day camp where children and staff grow in their faith, teenagers and young adults grow as servant leaders and the congregation expands its influence in the neighborhood. This ministry will change everything in how your congregation does youth ministry.

## Never too old for story time

God must have had fun creating such different creatures as hippos and flamingos. We can only imagine how much joy and laughter went into creating you too. Co-create with us using crayons, carpet time, puppets and more, as we engage God's story with yours.

**Children's Ministry of the ELCA** - The Children's Ministry of the ELCA seeks to focus on intergenerational, lifelong faith formation of Christian communities found in households, congregations and children-centered ministry settings.

## Podcast and sandbox creating experience

Come create things in our sandboxes and then join us on the show, becoming a podcast superstar in an interactive podcast experience. We will produce shows every day in which participants can share their thoughts with the Gathering community. We will have daily prize drawings as well as awards for the best sandbox creations.

**Sandbox Cooperative** - The Sandbox Cooperative Podcast is building a virtual community in a contentious society, knocking down walls of division with curiosity and conversation. We share bimonthly conversations with thought leaders, authors and general ruckus makers, exploring topics that people are talking about through a lens of spirituality, humor and discovery.

## Prayer and breathing space

A space for individual and group prayer, various prayer activities, breathing space for those who need a break, a prayer labyrinth and crisis ministry for individuals and groups.

**Renewal/Prayer/Revival Team** - The ELCA Renewal/Prayer/Revival Team is a ministry of ELCA Domestic Mission that promotes renewal in the church through revival services, prayer events and workshops.

## Prayer changes everything

If God knows everything, then God knows what we need. So why do we need to pray? Prayer is so much more than words floating up to God. Explore this experiential prayer chapel and gain an understanding of the life-changing power of prayer. Prayer changes everything.

**Florida-Bahamas Synod** - As people of God, we seek to boldly share Christ, passionately make disciples and faithfully do justice in our communities.

## Putting together God's puzzle pieces

You are a perfectly created puzzle piece in God's big world! Come discover what your piece looks like through spiritual gift and personality tests. Ask questions of our discernment advocates about how you fit together. Take a group picture with our giant puzzle and relax while working a puzzle together.

**Southeastern Synod** - The Southeastern Synod youth ministry equips youth and adults to share God's love and grace in the world.

## Think. Believe. Do.

In this experiential space, spend time reflecting on what your faith means to you today, discussing what you think and want your faith to be in the future and taking away a fun reminder of what you are going to do when you return home.

**Sparkhouse** - Sparkhouse creates groundbreaking Christian resources through imagination and collaboration. With our curricula, take a unique and innovative approach to engage kids while helping your leaders focus on what's important - building faith formation practices that last a lifetime.

## What I wish I'd known: Lessons on spirituality and sexuality

Take a break in a relaxing space and ask anonymous questions about sexuality. Participate in learning activities on consent, healthy relationships, birth-control methods, anatomy, boundaries, sexuality and spirituality. We are not teaching a particular values system about sexuality. Rather, this is answering questions with medically accurate information and helping youth determine how they form their values regarding sexuality.

**HFASS Denver** - House for All Sinners and Saints (HFASS) is a group of folks figuring out how to be a liturgical, Christocentric, social justice-oriented, queer inclusive, incarnational, contemplative, irreverent, ancient-future church with a progressive but deeply rooted theological imagination. We are here to explore healthy and life-giving connections between spirituality and sexuality and answer teens' questions about sexuality.





**Bumper cars, music and your future**

Race the bumper cars, take a group picture in a zero-gravity space simulation, challenge your friends in the video gaming area and relax on park benches. Visit with representatives from ELCA colleges and universities about the value of Lutheran higher education and how you can keep your faith growing in college.

**Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities** - The ELCA churchwide organization and the 27 colleges and universities affiliated with the ELCA collaborate as the Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities. The network represents and undergirds the common mission and shared identity of Lutheran higher education.

**Drawn in! Moving out!**

How do you participate in worship? Come and test your skills in our Acolyte Olympiad, try on some worship fashion in our Vestment Photo Booth and make music with professional church musicians!

**Worship Team of the ELCA** - As part of the Office of the Presiding Bishop, the ELCA Worship Office offers support for planning and coordinating worship at the churchwide level as well as developing resources and teaching tools for synodical and congregational worship ministries.

**Lutheran Summer Music (LSM)** is a residential performance and training program for young musicians grades 8-12. As an itinerate academy, we are hosted on different Lutheran college and university campuses each summer. Join the more than 25 faculty artists and a team of dedicated counselors in our supportive, musical community.

**The Association of Lutheran Church Musicians (ALCM)** is a nonprofit service and professional membership association dedicated to nurturing and equipping musicians to serve and lead the church's song. By connecting servant leaders to one another and by cultivating their musical gifts, ALCM supports worshipping communities in the proclamation of the gospel.

**Drum circle**

Find time to release tension as you elevate to new rhythmic dimensions and reflect on how *this changes everything*. No experience is necessary.

**One River Mission Retreat Center** - We are a retreat and wellness center located in the mountains along the Delaware River, right outside of New York City. Come visit us for an experience that will change everything. Experience wellness activities while participating in mission work.

**Exploring God's worlds**

Hold pieces of other worlds, engage in interactive computer simulations of space and view God's worlds with 3D glasses. Plus, engage in interactive play with science toys, and take selfies with the Mars Pathfinder lander as an astronaut on the Moon.

**Lutheran Alliance for Faith, Science and Technology** - How do faith and science relate positively? What about technology? Organized in 1989, the Lutheran Alliance for Faith, Science and Technology is a community of scientists, engineers, science teachers, pastors, deacons and laypeople interested in conversations about science, technology, and Christian faith and life.

**Grace race**

Start your engines! Propel a giant tricycle around Portico's Wholeness Wheel race course. In a series of pit-stop challenges, discover how small wellness steps can lead to powerful change.

**Portico Benefit Services** - Portico Benefit Services supports the mission and vitality of the ELCA by partnering with leaders and their employers to promote physical, financial and emotional well-being for the sake of Christ's mission in the world.



# MOVE FOR THOSE WHO LEARN BY MOVING

## Mindfulness challenge

Can your group master two mindfulness challenges? You'll need to be fully present in the moment, have effective communication and draw on the strengths of your team. Failure is part of mastery in these activities. Mindfulness skills gained here transfer to stressful situations in real life.

**Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch** - Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch is a residential treatment and educational center for youth ages 10-18 and their families. We provide best-in-class psychiatric therapy and trauma-informed care, educational services and spiritual life. Participants find a structured and safe environment to live, learn and heal. We help them find their value and true identity in the world and in Christ.

## Ropes

Test your limits of trust, fear and safety. Climb to heights unknown on a vertical cargo net, go sailing on a giant swing or zoom down the zip line. The line can be long so make sure you sign up for a PriorityPass in the Gathering app ahead of time.

## Sports

The sports area will have something for every sports person. Whether you love to chase a soccer ball or prefer a calmer game of life-size checkers, you will find many ways to release some energy in this space. The sports area will have 10 spaces set aside for basketball, volleyball, soccer, ultimate Frisbee, dodgeball, kickball, table tennis, four square, floor hockey and life-size checkers.

## The college experience

Spend time as a college student while visiting the College Experience booth. While you're there, grab a photo with your friends, get charged up about your future and get your college questions answered!

**Thrivent Student Resources** - Thrivent Student Resources helps students learn to be wise with their money, especially as they plan their journey to college. We believe when we're more financially secure, we're free to live generously and empower our community to thrive.

## Unfair four square

It's schoolyard four square with a twist, or two, or three. Is life fair? Well, this four square game is not fair; but it's a heckuva lotta fun. It'll make you think: What should Jesus-followers do when rules, systems and structures are not fair?

**Minneapolis Area Synod** - A gaggle of more than 140 congregations on the Minneapolis side of the Twin Cities that work hard so all experience gracious invitation into life-giving Christian communities and in just and healthy neighborhoods.

## Whole in one - miniature golf

Bring your whole self and engage in a lively round of miniature golf. Share your stories as you putt through the course. God calls each of us to use our gifts to act kindly, live authentically and engage fully. Fun prizes, hospitality and good times are guaranteed.

**The seminaries of the ELCA** - The seminaries of the ELCA identify, prepare, and support faithful, wise and courageous leaders for faith communities throughout the world. We have a long history of training leaders to share the good news of Jesus Christ and equip members to participate in God's work in the world.



ACTSOFWISDOM

## Education Changes Everything



*Acts of Wisdom is a non-profit charity organization dedicated to assist those in rural Africa in their quest to obtain quality, relevant education.*

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**Are you changed: Photo mosaic**

Take a group photo, silly or serious, and add it to a 30-foot-by-6-foot mosaic. Picture Mosaic technology will print your picture, one copy to keep and one copy to stick to one of 6,000 assigned spots on the wall. Watch as individual photos transform the canvas to a final, changed image.

**Mission Investment Fund** - Mission Investment Fund (MIF) provides loans to ELCA ministries for capital projects and investments to ELCA congregations and their members and ELCA-related ministries. MIF uses the investments to fund loans.

**Congregational photo booth**

Is someone always left out of the group photo because that person has to take the picture? Well, you are in luck! Stand back, smile and let our professionals capture your entire group!

**Mission Investment Fund** - Mission Investment Fund (MIF) provides loans to ELCA ministries for capital projects and investments to ELCA congregations and their members and ELCA-related ministries. MIF uses the investments to fund loans.

**LoveStruck: Race, community & God**

Come explore, write, draw, talk, dream and pray about race, racism, diversity, community and God in your community, school, church and the world. LoveStruck not only gives you an opportunity to talk and dream with others about these topics, it will train you to lead these activities back home.

**New Jersey Synod** - LoveStruck is made up of teens, young adults and adults from seven urban congregations around the New Jersey Synod. We come from diverse cultural backgrounds (including seven countries of origin) and bring a richness of important life experiences relating to race, justice, hope and our lovestruck God.

**Peer ministry camp**

Experience a "taste" of peer ministry camp in the beautiful Black Hills of South Dakota at Outlaw Ranch. We will also have a photo booth available with props for you to remember your time at the Gathering.

**South Dakota Synod** - South Dakota is not just fly-over country. Come and experience a taste of South Dakota and the opportunities we have for youth with our amazing outdoor ministry partners.

**People on the move: A migrant and refugee experience**

What would you take if you were threatened with death and had to leave your home forever in 10 minutes? Will you survive the journey? What is it like to live in a refugee camp? What is it like to make a new life for yourself? How fast can you learn a language? Come and experience a modern Exodus journey, and see if you have what it takes to survive and thrive! Learn how you can accompany refugees and migrants in your community and seek justice.

**AMMPARO, LDR Domestic and International, LIRS** and the **ELCA Global Mission Global Migration Initiative** - This experience is cooperatively provided by AMMPARO, LDR (Lutheran Disaster Response) Domestic and International, LIRS (Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service) and the ELCA Global Mission Global Migration Initiative. AMMPARO is the ELCA strategy to Accompany Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities.

**Photo booth thank-you project**

Share your photo immediately on social media, and email it to your congregation as a thank you to all those who sponsored you to attend the Gathering. In addition, come and learn about stewardship and how it's an important part of your faith life.

**Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA** - Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA is a five-year, \$198 million campaign that empowers our church to grow our communities of faith, form new leaders, welcome our neighbors, overcome malaria, confront hunger and poverty, accompany our global churches and so much more!

**Refugee integration obstacle course**

Participate with five to seven new or old friends in an obstacle course reflecting the experiences of Rohingya refugees resettling in the United States. Each stage not only requires physical activity but also collaborative engagement and critical thinking regarding the integration process.

**Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service** - Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service stands with and advocates for migrants and refugees, transforming communities through ministries of service and justice. Its work is accomplished through the core values of protection, stabilization, integration and the long welcome.

**Talent stage**

Head to this space to grab some food and check out some great artists. You can catch the afternoon Bible study as it is being livestreamed at one of the talent stages if you are not able to make it to the NRG Arena (Community Life) each day.

**Untangling the bullying mess**

Have you or someone you know been a target of bullying? Do you wish there was something you could do about the bullying in your community? Come try a fun activity that shows you how to get untangled, literally, and how to get out of harmful situations.

**Quake** - Quake is a weekend faith formation conference for middle school and high school church youth groups. Quake was started by Lutheran Youth Encounter and continues through Life Promotions. Life Promotions is also the home of Dignity Revolution, which empowers youth to stand up for the value of every person.



# DREAM FOR THOSE WHO SEEK TO EXPLORE THEIR CALLS

## Austin art

Have a hands-on experience with Austin's art culture and discover your part in God's plan to change the world. Come leave your mark and learn how God wants to use you to change everything.

**Concordia University Texas** - Concordia University Texas is a regionally accredited institution of higher education with the mission of developing Christian leaders. Its core purpose is to cultivate goodness, truth and beauty. This is accomplished within our community through Christ-centered values, caring for people, vocation, lifelong learning, courage and trust.

## Give us 25 minutes - we'll give you a year

Take the Gathering and make it a catalyst to strengthen your ministry with young people after you get home. This fast-paced, 25-minute adult training for adults who work with youth will help shape your whole next year of youth ministry.

**Youth Ministry Network** - The ELCA Youth Ministry Network's mission is to strengthen and empower adult children, youth and family ministry leaders in service to Christ

## Leading a brave new church into the future!

As the world changes and technology evolves, how can the gospel still be relevant? Meet Christian revolutionaries of generations past who recognized the need for the church's evolution and bravely moved the church forward - and learn how you can shape a brave new church for today's brave new world.

**Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod** - The Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod's mission is to equip the saints and congregations of southeastern Pennsylvania for the work of ministry. As a part of this work, Brave New Church is committed to helping leaders and congregations be pioneers and leaders of a bold, new kind of church - for a rapidly changing world.

## Passport to Global Mission

Have you ever wondered what a Lutheran missionary does? What does it mean to be a Lutheran today? Where in the world are there other Lutherans? Want to win big prizes for your youth group? Come visit us under the globe! Grab your Global Mission passport, play giant Jenga and learn about ELCA projects all over the world.

**ELCA Global Mission** - The Global Mission unit of the ELCA is the bridge between our global companions and ELCA congregations. Global Mission is a unit of relationships seeking to build and strengthen the worldwide Lutheran community.



## Service spectacular

Community, justice, sustainability and spirituality! Do you enjoy mission trips, service work or camp? Engage in those passions after high school, joining thousands of young adults who have done service in the United States and around the world. Interactive activities include: Giant Jenga, words of service and images of God graffiti.

**LIFE in Service** - LIFE in Service is a network of the five ELCA-affiliated yearlong service programs. These Lutheran Immersion and Formation Experiences (LIFE) include: ALT Year, Border Servant Corps, Lutheran Volunteer Corps, Urban Servant Corps and Young Adults in Global Mission. All LIFE in Service programs share a commitment to supporting their participants' journey of self-reflection, cultivating authentic community, serving justly in the world and nurturing sustainable relationships with their partner organizations. Together, they have more than 200 volunteers serving annually within the United States and around the world and over 3,500 alumni continuing to live out the value of service in the world.

## Sow the Seeds

Whom do you know who should become a pastor someday? Want to tell someone you could see them as a deacon? Want to find out what a deacon even is? Come to Sow the Seeds to create and share an invitation with people who could one day serve the church.

**Nebraska Synod** - The Nebraska Synod is made up of almost 100,000 people in nearly 250 worshiping communities across the state. As Nebraskans who understand what it takes to make things grow, they launched Sow the Seeds so the church can reap a harvest of well-trained, Spirit-led pastoral leaders for the future.

## This is where the saga begins

Through Christ we are set on a course - our saga as God's hands and feet in the world. Discover how the Spirit is working through your unique gifts as a force for good. Encounter the faces of leadership and service in the church. This is where your saga begins.

**Called to Lead** - The Called to Lead Team is a collaboration between ELCA Fund for Leaders and the ELCA Leadership and Behavioral Interview teams. The ELCA Behavioral Interview Team helps people discern God's call for leadership in the church. The ELCA Leadership Team facilitates the candidacy process. Fund for Leaders helps raise up and financially support students studying at ELCA seminaries who have demonstrated outstanding leadership potential and exceptional gifts for ministry.

## What do you love?

Who God is and how God's love is bigger than anyone can imagine - this is your chance to creatively express how you see God in the things you love. Together, we will build a community and have a fuller picture of God.

**Mission Year** - Mission Year is an entry point into a lifestyle of faith, community, service and justice for 18- to 30-year-old Christians (single and married) in Chicago, Houston and Philadelphia for one year. You will come alongside what God is doing in the city by partnering with congregations, nonprofits, leaders, activists and neighbors who are transforming their communities.





FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO JOURNEY  
ALONGSIDE AND SUPPORT OTHERS

# ACCOMPANY

## Be the change: Means of grace, scenes of grace

Enter into a space set apart to connect with God's good creation. Through the sounds, scents and scenes of natural beauty, you will be reminded of our connection to these blessings of creation. Engage in fun and profound ways that faith is nurtured in nature. You will leave transformed, prepared to be the change.

**ELCA Advocacy** - *ELCA Advocacy works for change in public policy based on Lutheran social teaching and the experience of Lutheran ministries globally and in communities across the United States.*

**Lutheran Outdoor Ministries** - *Lutheran Outdoor Ministries is a professional organization for camp and retreat-center leaders that encourages, educates, equips and empowers bold and faithful outdoor ministry leaders for service in the church and the world.*

## Creative expression - Road to Emmaus: A journey of accompaniment (murals)

We will have an altar space accessible to all Gathering participants to contribute. You are invited to offer a material item from home, an item created during the Gathering, as well as a written or spoken prayer petition. This is an invitation to be a greater participant in the creative expressions space and we thank you for your commitment to this holy playground.

## Finding Jesus in prison

Who's that guy in prison? Is that Jesus beside him? Step into the cell and consider if you are bringing Jesus to the one in prison or if Jesus is already there, ready to love you both - in equal measure.

**Prison Congregations of America** - *Prison Congregations of America plants denominationally sponsored congregations in prisons around the country. Inmates are the members, served by a pastor from the outside and supported and visited by congregations on the outside.*

## Generosity tools

Who taught you about being generous? A parent, relative or friend? How do you respond when there is an opportunity to help someone? Giving to ministries of the church from a mobile app is easier than ever. Your choices make a difference.

**Stewardship: Tithe.ly** - *Tithe.ly believes giving to your congregation should be meaningful, simple and fast. That's why we built a comprehensive suite of digital giving tools for your congregation. When you use Tithe.ly, you get a free mobile giving app, text-to-give, online giving, "admin gift entry" and much more - all in one solution.*

# Where is God leading you?

## ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission

*A journey of faith and  
global formation*

ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission is a yearlong opportunity to serve and be transformed by the global church through one of 11 country programs.



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

Learn more by visiting  
**ELCA.org/YAGM**

or by stopping by the Global Mission  
or Spectacular Service booths  
at the Interactive Learning Center.

**800-638-3522 | [globalserve@elca.org](mailto:globalserve@elca.org)**

# ACCOMPANY

FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO JOURNEY  
ALONGSIDE AND SUPPORT OTHERS

## Global Farm Challenge

Nearly 80 percent of the world's food comes from small family farms. Yet droughts, floods, poverty and violence can make it difficult for farming families to feed themselves. Explore how communities around the world are working together to end hunger.

**ELCA World Hunger** - *ELCA World Hunger creatively and courageously works toward a world of justice in which all are fed. Working with companions and partners in the United States and in more than 60 countries, ELCA World Hunger supports innovative solutions that get at the root causes of hunger.*

## Make your mark: What should the ELCA say about sexism?

In this era of #MeToo, how is God calling us to respond? The ELCA has released a draft of a social statement on women and justice and wants your feedback on how to make it stronger. Come check out the draft and share what gender justice issues are important to you.

**Women and Justice Social Statement** - *The Women and Justice: One in Christ Task Force is a diverse group of ELCA members tasked with developing a social statement to guide church policy and to help ELCA members think through issues of gender justice. Based on public feedback, the draft will be revised before the 2019 Churchwide Assembly.*

## Peace with justice in the Holy Land

What does life under military occupation look like? What is peace with justice? Hear from Palestinian youth from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, learn about the conflict in Israel and Palestine, and learn how you can help make a change happen.

**Peace Not Walls** - *Through accompaniment, advocacy and awareness-raising, Peace Not Walls connects ELCA members to our companions and promotes dignity, full respect for human rights, healing and reconciliation. With our Palestinian Lutheran companions, we also accompany Palestinians and Israelis, Jews, Christians and Muslims working together for peace with justice.*

## Road trip

Come on a road trip to learn about living out your faith through discovering the "intersections" between purpose, witness and community.

**ELCA Young Adult Ministry, Strategy on HIV and AIDS and Advocacy** - *The ELCA's Young Adult Ministry, Strategy on HIV and AIDS, and Advocacy are ministries of the ELCA churchwide organization offering opportunities and resources to individuals between the ages of 18 and 30, shaping the work of the church within the larger local and global response to HIV and AIDS, and advocating for just state, federal and international policy.*

## The weight of water - a glimpse into rural Africa

Think you could carry a 50-pound jug of water for four to five hours each day? Lucky for you, we'll only make you walk a few meters. See if you can carry a filled jerry can and get a small glimpse into the daily long walk for water that is the reality for millions worldwide and in rural Africa.

**Water to Thrive** - *Water to Thrive transforms lives in rural Africa by bringing the blessing of clean water to communities in need, by building wells through generous donors and our partners in Africa. Our vision is of a world where we share our abundance to provide health, hope and water to all.*

## Why does safe, affordable housing matter?

Did you know that where you live determines your friends, your health, how you do in school and countless other things that allow you to thrive? Join Habitat for Humanity International and learn how you can help families here and around the world build strength and resiliency through housing.

**Habitat for Humanity International** - *Habitat for Humanity International is an organization that:*

- *Works to empower families to live in simple, decent and affordable homes.*
- *Engages communities in addressing their housing needs with sustainable solutions.*
- *Provides opportunities for people to put their faith and love into action.*
- *Accomplishes its worldwide mission primarily through volunteers.*

## Your day: Your role to care for the resources

Eat, work, play, pray, rest: How do daily choices express love for God and neighbors (near/far, human/other)? Walk through the path of your day to see the impact you have in the world. Collaborate in artwork and make tools to use in prayer. Practice experiencing God's grace!

**Stewardship: Lutherans Restoring Creation** - *Lutherans Restoring Creation informs, encourages and uplifts the discipleship practice of caring for the environment throughout the ELCA. This is accomplished by cultivating a network of dedicated stewards of earth and neighbor who proclaim God's promise of hope and healing for all.*

## Inspiring students in poverty

Inspire Mexican students in Ensenada to stay in school by painting designs and inspirational Spanish phrases on school benches. Education gives opportunities to students that will change their lives and the generations that follow.

**Lantern Hill Mexico** - *Lantern Hill Mexico is an education and nutrition program for impoverished children. This ministry seeks to break the cycle of poverty by ensuring children stay in school instead of dropping out and working in fields or factories at young ages like many others in rural Mexico.*





### #MeToo: Hurting healing as the body of Christ

Where is the good news in the midst of the #MeToo movement? How do we support each other as the body of Christ as we hurt and heal together? Turn it into art. Using various creative expressions, transform your thoughts and ideas into an interactive art piece with us.

**Justice for Women Program** - *The ELCA's Justice for Women Program uses Lutheran theology to encourage men and women to work together to address sexism and other gender-justice issues in social and religious ideas and structures. Empowered by God's grace, we seek to love those gender-marginalized as our neighbors by tending to their holistic needs.*

### Bracelets of fortune: Identity and intersectionality in Scripture and beyond

Scripture talks about how personal characteristics precious to us (e.g. gender, age, race, dis/ability) are often despised by others. What's more, some of these characteristics overlap, making us even more beautiful and vulnerable. Explore the lives of Bible characters and find how these crisscrossing identities impact us and those around us.

**#decolonizeLutheranism** - *We are a group of Lutherans across the spectrum of race and ethnicities, ages, gender expressions, sexualities and abilities who have been moved by the Holy Spirit to make our communities more welcoming of the diversity in them - be those communities individual congregations or neighborhoods, cities and nations.*

### "Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture"

Utilizing the ELCA's social statement, "Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture," we explore issues of race, ethnic identity, culture and justice. This space includes compelling photographs, storyboards and cultural objects that relate to both church and society.

**Racial Justice Ministries** - *The Racial Justice Ministries of the ELCA are catalysts and bridge-builders committed to the work of equipping leaders, training, building alliances and supporting ecumenical networks so that together, throughout the church in public witness, programs and policies advance racial justice - locally and globally.*

### God adores you!

Come and be part of sharing the news that God adores you just the way you are! Join in the affirmation and celebration of the diversity of people. Learn how to extend welcome and inclusion to LGBTQIA+ people in your congregation!

**ReconcilingWorks** - *An independent Lutheran nonprofit that works for the full welcome, inclusion and celebration of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQIA+) people in the Lutheran church. It is our vision that the church is a place where LGBTQ people and their families can worship and thrive, bringing all their God-given gifts to mission and ministry for the world.*

### MYLE lounge

Come learn more about MYLE (Multicultural Youth Leadership Event) by catching some highlights from this year's event as well as participate in the community service project MYLE participants were engaged in. There will be a photo opportunity to celebrate God's plan for the unity of many into one new people in Christ. This is also a place for MYLE participants to gather throughout the Gathering to reconnect.

**MYLE** - *MYLE is a pre-event of the ELCA Youth Gathering and the largest gathering of people of color within the ELCA. MYLE empowers young people of color and those whose primary language is other than English to claim their story as part of God's story in order to move toward healing and wholeness as transformational leaders in the church and in the world.*

### Our stories, our voices

Often women's voices are silenced, particularly among women of color, because their experiences are seen as less important or valuable. Hear from this group in their own words, gain a more complete story of the ministry of rostered women and join the church in its work of breaking the silence by celebrating the ministries of rostered women of color. Join us to begin the important practice of telling your story in your own voice.

**Rostered Women of Color Clergy Project** - *The RWoC (Rostered Women of Color) is a project of the ELCA for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation that promotes the global voices of RWoC. We have collected and published more than 40 stories of rostered women of color in their own words.*

### Podcasting your faith

Learn about podcasting and record your own audio (questions, stories, testimonies and more) to be featured in upcoming episodes of the podcast.

**To hell with the hotdish!** - *These podcast pastors have been rocking the internet and challenging the church to be more than a cliché culture that gathers for potlucks. Disciples who follow Jesus should be more and truly change everything.*

### Radical welcome changes everything

Everyone should feel welcomed and valued. For people with disabilities, that is not always true. Often churches and other communities are unwelcoming to people with disabilities, causing hurt and resentment. Join Mosaic to break down barriers that keep people with disabilities from participating in faith, worship and the world.

**Mosaic** - *Embracing God's call to serve in the world, Mosaic provides support to people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities. Programs in 10 states offer a variety of services, tailored to individual need, for more than 3,700 people, along with an outreach to Tanzania.*

### Things are poppin' in the heart of Texas - and Louisiana!

Do you think you know Texas? Do you think you know about Lutherans in Texas? We'll help you find out how much you really do know with our pop quiz about the ELCA Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod. Win fabulous poppin' prizes and find out why you'll wish you lived here too!

**Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod** - *The synod is 106 congregations serving "in mission together" and proclaiming God's love. We are a diverse synod; each week worship is held in six languages.*

### You belong - no barriers

Challenge your physical and mental limits as you encounter barriers that impact the lives of those who live with disabilities. Everything changes as we begin to see the true healing needed doesn't come in body, mind or spirit but instead in belonging together in Christ.

**The tAble** - *The tAble (formerly the Definitely-abled Youth Leadership Event or DAYLE) is a pre-event to the Gathering that blesses and empowers young people who live with a wide range of physical, cognitive and emotional disabilities so they might grow as faithful, wise and courageous witnesses. The event also gives participants the opportunity to acclimate and orient themselves to Houston and the venues in which the Gathering is being held.*

# SERVE FOR THOSE WHO WANT HANDS-ON SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

## Blood drive

For those who are able to donate blood, you must be in good general health, feeling well the day you donate, eat a well-balanced meal and drink plenty of fluids before donating. Donors need to be at least 16 years old and weigh at least 110 pounds (122 pounds for 16-18-year-olds). All blood that is donated will help replenish the Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center, which provides blood for the Houston Medical Center.

## Building...homes, relationships and connections

The hurricane damage to Houston exposed the ongoing problem of housing for low-income families. During the Gathering, we will frame sections of walls for two houses. When we all leave Houston, the walls will remain to provide housing for families in need.

**LuMin: Lutheran Campus Ministry Network** in partnership with **Lutheran Disaster Response** - Lutheran Campus Ministry offers pastoral care, word and sacrament ministry, and student programs at over 225 campuses across the ELCA. We are a network of workers and supporters, seeking to make the college years the wonderful and life-changing event they ought to be.

## Education in Africa

Help make backpacks and classroom teaching aids for children in rural Ethiopia. While here, see the advantages and struggles of going to school in rural Africa.

**Acts of Wisdom** - Acts of Wisdom seeks to provide quality education to children in rural Africa, specifically in Ethiopia through supplying schoolbooks, teaching supplies, quality buildings and sponsorships. By focusing on education, we hope to change students' futures.

## Ending human trafficking

Human trafficking is the third-largest criminal industry in the world and victimizes more than 12 million people worldwide through forced labor and sexual exploitation. Assemble hygiene bags for six local organizations fighting human trafficking, be equipped as a leader for your community and learn how you can advocate for victims worldwide.

**Women of the ELCA** - Lutheran women from over 7,000 congregations in the United States and the Caribbean gather for service, study, advocacy, fellowship and more. Women of the ELCA embraces all kinds of ministries that support our mission of mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

## Hair donation

Youth and adults will have the opportunity to donate their hair to Children With Hair Loss. This organization gives free, quality wigs to children who have medically related hair loss and can't afford a wig. By offering free wigs, these children are empowered with self-confidence, helping them to face the world with renewed self-esteem.

- Hair should be at least 8 inches long.
- Hair must be clean and dry, ponytailed and/or braided.
- Nonchemically treated hair is preferred, but any hair in good condition will be accepted.
- Gray hair is accepted.



# LOST AND FOUND presents LUTHER 500

## The Reformation Continues

June 16-22, 2019

Wittenberg, Eisleben, Eisenach,  
Berlin, Leipzig, Torgau, Erfurt

The best way to bring your youth group,  
your congregation, or your family to Germany.

Walk in the steps Martin Luther and learn  
that Church history can be a whole lot of fun!



Save your space now at [www.luther500festival.com](http://www.luther500festival.com).





# MASS GATHERING

“ ***The Mass Gathering events at NRG Stadium offer a time of excitement, celebration, learning, challenge and reflection. Our hope is that each participant hears the story of God’s love for them. A reminder that Jesus’ love for us truly changes everything.*** ”

*– Chris Marien,  
Mass Gathering  
team leader*

At the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering, the Mass Gathering sessions will provide opportunity for participants to interact. There is something incredibly unique about 31,000 participants gathering to sing, dance, pray, learn and journey together with Jesus.

A reminder for all participants that access to seating on the floor will once again be regulated by the venue. Wristbands will be handed out each night at the stair access points to the floor on a first-come, first-served basis.

# MEET YOUR EMCEES



## Joy Emeneoyo

My name is Joy. I'm a senior in high school and my family is from Nigeria. After graduation, I hope to become a pediatrician and change lives and make the world around me a better place.

I attended the 2015 Gathering in Detroit and was so deeply moved and inspired by the experience that I couldn't help but want to do it all over again. I see genuine value in this kind of gathering that I don't think you can get anywhere else. Super excited to be part of this Gathering as one of your emcees.



## Abby Botten

My name is Abby and I am a senior at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, but I still call Minnesota home.

In my free time I enjoy being a campus ministry leader, eating tacos, laughing at puns and playing and watching any sport you put in front of me. A weird fact about me is that I am not ticklish.



## Ben Bernstein

Hello, my name is Ben, and I am 19 years old. I attend St. John's Lutheran in Spartanburg, S.C. I am very excited about this year's ELCA Youth Gathering.

This will be my second Gathering and I am ecstatic to be able to experience it as an emcee. I cannot wait to see what God has in store for all of us Lutheran youth in Houston.





# MEET YOUR HOUSE BAND



**Tyra Dennis**  
BAND LEADER  
@tyralucia

**Anthony Elder**  
PERCUSSION  
@anfurknee

**Miles Jensen**  
ACOUSTIC GUITAR  
@mileymomusic

**Paul Plata**  
VOCALS  
@paulplata

**Aisha Gaillard**  
DRUMS  
@aishagdrums

**Michael Lis**  
ELECTRIC GUITAR  
@mikelismusic

**Michael Wooten**  
BASS GUITAR  
@musicianmike

**Jonathan Hemphill**  
KEYBOARDS  
@pispeaks

**Carley Nunn**  
VOCALS  
@carleynunn

**Donovan Wright**  
VOCALS  
@donyvano





**Prairie Rose  
Seminole**  
@msprairierose



**Bishop Michael  
Rinehart**  
@BreadTweet



**The Rev.  
Tuhina Rasche**  
@tvrasche



**Deborah D.E.E.P.  
Mouton**  
@livelifedeeep



**Presiding Bishop  
Elizabeth Eaton**  
@ELCABishopEaton



**Bryan Stevenson**  
@ejl\_org

# SPEAKERS

# ARTISTS



**AGAPE\***  
@agapedave1



**LZ7**  
@LZ7official



**Josiah Williams**  
@JDeanWilliams



**Ginny Owens**  
@GinnyOwens





**Find Your Future at an ELCA College or University –**

*uniquely* Lutheran,  
*uniquely* ELCA



Education is for the whole person – body, mind and spirit – and when this education comes from one of the 26 colleges and universities of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, it is uniquely Lutheran.

The newly formed Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities exists to strengthen the mission of its members, individually and collectively, as the ELCA in higher education. Educating students for lives of meaning and purpose is our vision. Learn more about the network at [ELCA.org/colleges](http://ELCA.org/colleges).



*Network of Colleges and Universities*

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.



**Caroline Meeker**  
@meeker\_caroline



**The Rev. Aaron Fuller**  
@ELCAhoneybadger



**Deacon Erin Power**  
@erin\_wonders



**Marlon Hall**  
@marlonfhall

# SPEAKERS

# ARTISTS



**Ryan Brown**  
@RyanRBrownMusic



**Rachel Kurtz**  
@iamrachelkurtz







**Elizabeth Peter**  
@epeter\_03



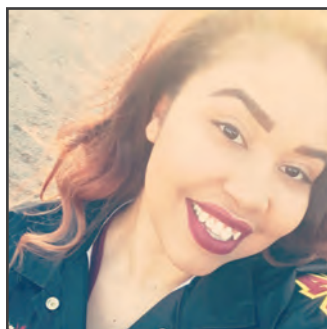
**The Rev. Will Starkweather**  
@wrstark730



**Michaela Shelley**  
@m\_shelley19



**The Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber**  
@sarcasticluther



**Jasmine Seguarra**  
@\_Jaszysegarra

ARTIST



**Tauren Wells**  
@taurenwells

SPEAKERS



**The Rev. Dr. Stephen Bouman**  
@stephenbouman



**Deborah D.E.E.P. Mouton**  
@livelifedeep



**Carson McCullar**  
@McCullarCarson



**Joe Davis**  
@JoeDavisPoetry



**Jamie Bruesehoff & Rebekah Bruesehoff**  
@hippypastorwife



**Maria Rose Belding**  
@MissMariaRose

# ARTIST



**Tenth Avenue North**  
@tenthavenorth

# SPEAKERS







Presiding Bishop  
Elizabeth Eaton  
@ELCABishopEaton



Savanna  
Sullivan  
@sav\_sull

# SPEAKERS

# CALLED TO LEAD

This is where the saga begins ...

Explore your spiritual gifts by visiting the “Called to Lead” booth in the Interactive Learning Center. There you will undertake a journey that will help you identify which spiritual gifts you have received in greatest measure.

Presented by the candidacy, behavioral interviews and ELCA Fund for Leaders teams.



ELCA Fund for Leaders  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

[ELCA.org/LightWithin](https://www.elca.org/LightWithin)



# COMMUNITY LIFE



Community Life is a one-stop shop for youth and adults, happening in the NRG Arena daily starting Wednesday. It is a great place for participants to play games, enjoy inflatables and visit live stages with prizes. Daily Bible studies are held here in the afternoons. The Hammock Village offers a place for participants to relax.

## Looking for the Community Life stage line-up?

Check the Gathering app for the most up to date schedule.

### Schedule

Community Life at the NRG Arena open to all groups  
June 27, 1-6:30 p.m. and June 28-30, 11 a.m.-6:30 p.m.

#### Info booth & adult recharge

Open all times

#### Playground & inflatables (Games, games & more games + Active zone)

Open all times

#### Hammock Village & video games

Open all times

#### Carpool karaoke

Daily from 1-5 p.m.

#### Live arena stage

Open all times

*with live band Daniel's Window*

Guest musicians daily, 1-2:30 p.m.

Lip sync battle daily, 4:30-6 p.m.



# COMMUNITY LIFE MAP

## NRG ARENA

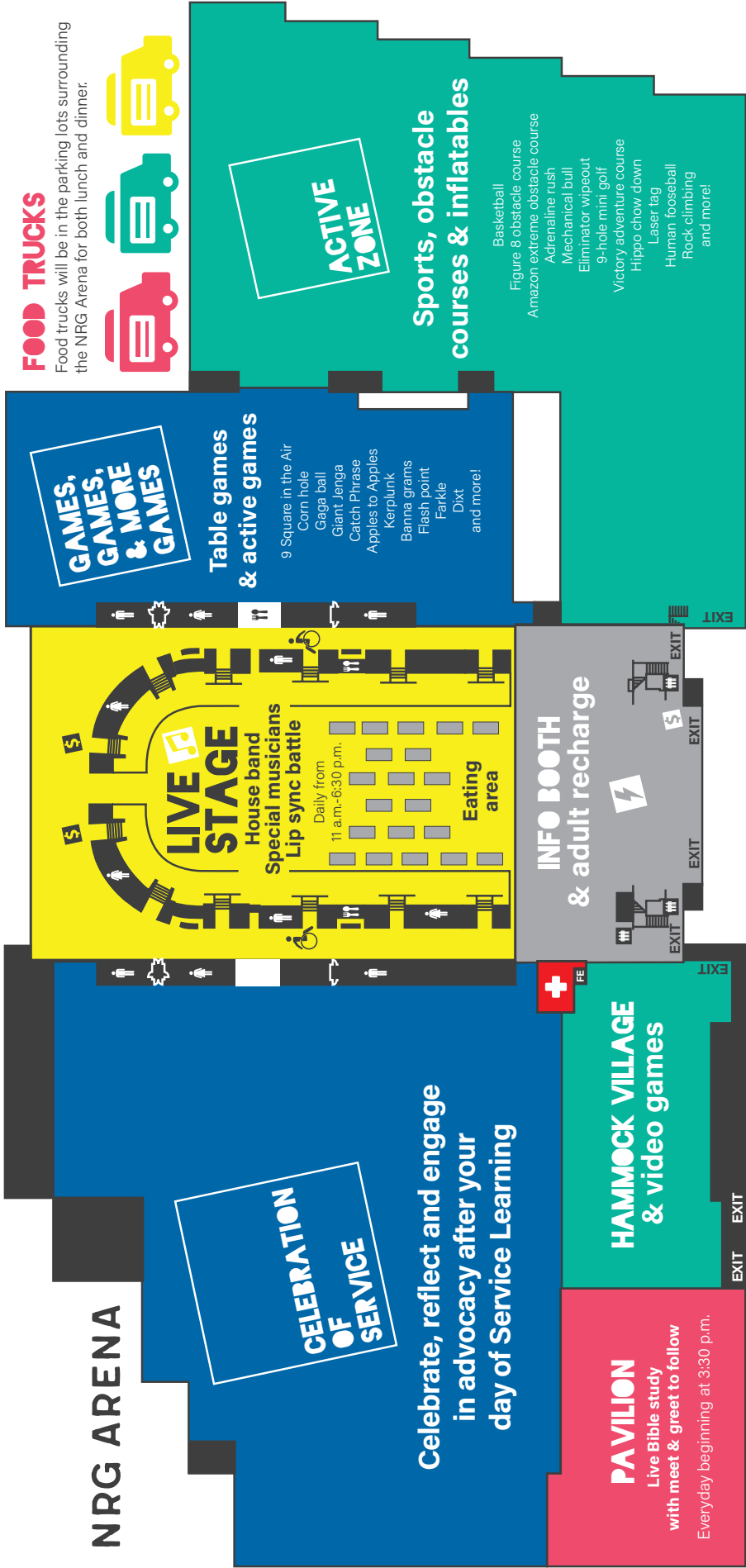
**CELEBRATION OF SERVICE**

**Celebrate, reflect and engage in advocacy after your day of Service Learning**

### PAVILION

Live Bible study with meet & greet to follow  
Everyday beginning at 3:30 p.m.

**HAMMOCK VILLAGE & video games**



### FOOD TRUCKS

Food trucks will be in the parking lots surrounding the NRG Arena for both lunch and dinner.



**GAMES, GAMES, & MORE GAMES**

**Table games & active games**

- 9 Square in the Air
- Corn hole
- Gaga ball
- Giant Jenga
- Catch Phrase
- Apples to Apples
- Kerplunk
- Banna grams
- Flash point
- Farkle
- Dixt
- and more!

**ACTIVE ZONE**

**Sports, obstacle courses & inflatables**

- Basketball
- Figure 8 obstacle course
- Amazon extreme obstacle course
- Adrenaline rush
- Mechanical bull
- Eliminator wipeout
- 9-hole mini golf
- Victory adventure course
- Hippo chow down
- Laser tag
- Human foosball
- Rock climbing
- and more!



### CARPOOL KARAOKE

Ride around the Community Life lots in one of our 12-person trains with Lutheran leaders like Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Rachel Kurtz, synod bishops, and more, daily from 1-5 p.m.



## Hotel teams

Community Life has volunteers who will check you in at your hotel and make sure you have everything you need for the Gathering. Volunteers will help you starting on Tuesday, June 26, at 3 p.m.

Once your congregational group has completed hotel check-in, look for the Community Life display for your Gathering check-in. There you will receive your wristband, which must be worn to access all Gathering venues, and your transportation wristband if you are registered for Gathering transportation to and from NRG Park.

You will also get your instructions on Service Learning launches. This is also the time to meet your Community Life hotel team so you know who the contact is in your property.

## Info booth

One service of Community Life is the Gathering information booths – on the first floor of the NRG Center, the lobby of NRG Arena and at each entrance to the NRG Stadium. Staffed by the knowledgeable Information Sharing Team, these locations will be open to serve you throughout the day and even after the Mass Gathering each evening.

## Final tips

You have been invited and called into the sacred space of this Gathering. This event is fun and exciting, but, most importantly, it is about faith formation. As a leader you can and should help frame this for your group.

The Gathering is an opportunity to enter into a relationship and have space to reflect on faith development. It is important to process this event and help make connections with each other, the wider church and to God's work in our lives.



This event is a reminder that we are connected to the entire community of saints, that when we gather each day, we gather with the entire church, reminded that we are all part of God's larger story and work in this world.

Be fluid, be flexible and be ready to punt. Be a leader and be mindful that you are modeling the tone for your group. You are a gift; your presence matters and the way you share your stories impacts the way participants will see their faith in the world.

## Devotions: The First and Final 15

Printed in the back of this guidebook and found on the Gathering app are two 15-minute daily devotional tools we call the First 15 and the Final 15. Designed to open and close our day in prayer, Scripture and caring conversation around our daily themes, these two 15-minute periods of time have become an integral part of the daily routine at the Gathering.







## Stay Near the CROSS®



*The Cross –  
Joining Us Together into a  
Community that Works to  
Spread God’s Love...*

**Christians know the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus on the cross is God’s gift of love, hope and peace to everyone.**

**We encourage you to join with fellow Christians in embracing your faith by displaying this beautiful, handmade oak cross.**

Whether it’s a gift for yourself, your friends or family, each cross helps spread God’s promise – and supports our non-profit organization\* that exists solely to **encourage the growth of Christian faith worldwide.**

**Stay Near the CROSS –  
Join Us Today in Spreading the Message of God’s Love!**

*\*The founder does not profit in any way, and net proceeds from purchases will be used to further advance and support Christianity worldwide.*

### Displaying the Holy Cross...

There are many opportunities to Stay Near the CROSS and spread our Christian values, including:



wearing and/or gifting the cross during outreach & mission work;

displaying the cross on your Christmas tree, desk or car;



as a gift for baptism, confirmation or graduation; and more!

Obtain your crosses at: [www.staynearthecross.com](http://www.staynearthecross.com) • Made in the U.S.A.



## Offerings

As part of the Gathering, we give offerings in three ways – in-kind, Sunday morning and special offering. Each of these offerings support unique missions and values of the ELCA and the Gathering.

### In-kind

The Gathering has recognized the need to lift up literacy in Houston. Building a foundation of literacy starts before entering kindergarten. Students who read at home become strong writers, critical thinkers and more successful students than those who do not. The Houston Independent School District estimates that 74 percent of the students in the district come from families that struggle to provide books for their children. This means the students begin each school year at a disadvantage.

In joining the Gathering's Blast Off for Books campaign, you help ensure bright futures for Houston's students. The books you donate will be distributed at community book fairs, camps and other events around the city as part of the Gathering's Service Learning experience. By putting books in the hands of Houston's economically disadvantaged students, you can help change lives.

### #BlastOffForBooks

Bring your books to the stadium with you for the Wednesday Mass Gathering.





## Sunday morning

The Sunday offering is split between three ministries – local, domestic and global.

### Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod

As a thank you for being the host synod for the Gathering, we give a third of our Sunday offering to the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod. This synod has hosted us many times – in 2009 and 2012 for our Gatherings in New Orleans. We are so lucky to work with the synod for the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering as we come together in Houston.

### Prison Congregations of America

Prison Congregations of America (PCA) is a ministry through which Christian congregations are established in prisons around the country. There are currently over 30 worshipping communities that follow the PCA Model of Prison Ministry, in which the members are people who are incarcerated, whose congregation is led by a clergyperson from the outside who is trained and accountable to the sponsoring denomination. The congregation, though denominational in sponsorship, is ecumenical and open to all who wish to participate. The pastor is supported by surrounding outside congregations, which also take turns worshipping with the inside group. The strong inside-outside relationship is reinvigorating congregations all over the United States.

### Global ministries

We recognize that being the church together means being the church outside of the United States. With that in mind, we raise up Global New Starts as a recipient of a third of the Sunday morning offering with the hope that we can continue to do God's work around the world.

## Special

The ELCA Youth Gathering is partnering with ELCA World Hunger for our special offering. We are teaming up to participate in its **Global Farm Challenge**.

The Global Farm Challenge is a yearlong, youth-driven fundraising challenge to support the agriculture-related programs of ELCA World Hunger, our church's ministry to end hunger and poverty. Many youth groups will raise funds in advance of the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering, and many will bring their offerings to the event.

At Interactive Learning in the NRG Center, youth and young adult leaders will have a chance to participate in an unforgettable experience designed to immerse them in what it is like to be a smallholder farmer around the world.

“  
***In a world that seems  
 unchanging with so many  
 challenges, it can be hard  
 to believe that change is  
 possible. But we are  
 a church founded  
 on change.***”

– Dr. Ryan P. Cumming,  
 ELCA World Hunger

## Available parking

There is free parking at NRG Park. Drivers will need to show a parking pass to access the available lots. Parking passes to NRG parking lots will be given upon check-in at the hotel. Parking is on a first-come, first-served basis each day until the lot is full. The lot is available for overnight parking. Gates are open from 6 a.m.-10:30 p.m. There is limited security. The Gathering and NRG Park are not liable for any loss or damage to the vehicles. Obey parking regulations and rules.

## Cellphone laws

Houston prohibits handheld cellphone use while driving. Municipalities that have enacted ordinances post notification at their jurisdictional boundaries to alert motorists.

## Texting laws

Texting while driving is prohibited in Texas. Under Texas' anti-texting law (sec. 42-11.2):

"It shall be unlawful for any permittee, registrant or licensee to use or cause to be used any cellular telephone or any other electronic communication device to place or receive a phone call or write, send, or read a text-based communication during the active provision of transportation services while the passenger is in the vehicle for hire unless the cellular telephone or electronic communication device is specifically designed and configured to allow voice-operated and hands-free operation to listen and talk or dictate, send, or listen to text-based communication and is used in that manner during the active provision of transportation services while the passenger is in the vehicle for hire."

## Buses and departure of groups after Sunday worship

Parking is available in the orange lot at NRG Park. Additional information about transportation is available on the Gathering app. You can also call the Gathering Infoline at 888-411-3522 (ELCA).

# Reflect. Recharge. WIN!

SPARK  
HOUSE



Stop by the Sparkhouse booth to tell us how your  
**#FaithisNeverFinished**



Photo Booth



Fun Games



Community Art

**PLUS!** Youth workers can enter to **WIN** a **\$2,000** donation to their church! Stop by the Sparkhouse booth to learn how.



## Accessibility in Houston

The Gathering has been working closely with the city of Houston, and we have been assured that the NRG Center, NRG Arena, NRG Stadium and the majority of hotels are accessible for individuals with physical challenges. Gathering staff have visited all the hotels and are convinced the hosts share our commitment to serving those with special accessibility needs. The Gathering Infoline should be your first resource for questions and assistance regarding accessibility: 888-411-3522 (ELCA).

## Transportation

The transportation team has made a commitment to meeting the transportation needs of our participants who have additional difficulty getting around the city. Accessible vans will be available by reservation for those with mobility and other special needs by calling toll-free 866-521-7729. This service is available for traveling between the hotels and NRG Park.

Whenever possible, a reservation for a person who uses a wheelchair may include space for at least one, but no more than two, companions. Please take care to confirm the precise location of the pick-up, location of your destination, pick-up times and the number of people.

For those participants utilizing the light rail, the following is information regarding accessibility:

### Rail trains

- All METRORail accessible stations feature audio and visual announcements explaining when the next train is arriving.
- Rail cars are level with the station platform for easy boarding.
- There are audio and visual announcements of stops inside the rail cars.
- Each rail car offers four areas for wheelchairs. No securements are required on the train. Riders using wheelchairs also may choose to sit in any space that is available to them.
- The rail car doors open automatically and have a sensitive edge that prevents closing if an object or person is detected in its path.
- Major bus transit centers Northline, Downtown, Midtown and in the Texas Medical Center connect the accessible METRORail with the accessible METRO bus service.

*"The best journeys answer questions that in the beginning you didn't even think to ask."*

– Jeff Johnson

**HERE IS ONE TO ASK YOURSELF  
AND YOUR GROUP:**

**How will we be  
good visitors  
to Houston?**



## Station platforms

- All platforms are 100 percent ADA-compliant.
- There is sloped ramp access from both ends of level boarding platforms.
- Variable message signs are on all platforms.
- Exit left or right announcements are in English and Spanish.
- The edge of the platform is marked with contrast-colored, 24-inch tactile warning strips with truncated domes.
- Accessible shuttle buses are available when rail is not operational.

## NRG Stadium

NRG Stadium meets and exceeds all requirements stipulated in the Americans with Disabilities Act. All public restrooms and entrances are clearly labeled and equipped with Braille signs. Restrooms, drinking fountains, phones and counters (including concessions) are accessible to guests with disabilities.

## Designated accessible entrance

All gates are accessible to guests with disabilities. The East Club Entrance will be the designated accessible entrance and will open 15 minutes before all other gates (5:45 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday and at 8:15 a.m. on Sunday).

All participants with mobility or sensory needs, both those who indicated these needs on the original Gathering registration and those for whom significant special needs have arisen more recently, must come in person to the info booth in the NRG Center to request tickets for access through this gate. Each of these participants entering through the East Club Entrance is permitted to be accompanied by members of their congregation. The transportation team will provide drop-offs near that entrance.

## Disabled/ADA seating

There is wheelchair-accessible and companion seating located on all levels. Due to the lack of accessible restrooms on the floor of NRG Stadium, it is recommended that participants with disabilities use the accessible reserved seating on the main concourse (100 sections) and club level (300 sections) of the sections on the lower and upper concourses.

## Wheelchairs and scooters rentals

A limited number of wheelchairs are available within NRG and are available for rent at Guest Services in the NRG Center. However, these wheelchairs are available only for use within NRG Park and must be returned daily. If you anticipate a need, or one should occur, please use

the wheelchair vendor information to secure a wheelchair to assist with your mobility.

## NRG Stadium

Guest services, 832-667-1400

Free to use while in stadium and to curb outside only.

## NRG Center

Guest services, 832-667-1400 (Daily rental only)

Wheelchair rentals:

1 hour \$10, 2 hours \$16, 3 hours \$20,  
4 hours \$24, day rental \$35.

Scooter rentals:

1 hour \$20, 2 hours \$32, 3 hours \$40,  
4 hours \$48, day rental \$70.

## Horizon Medical Equipment

2236 W Holcombe Blvd, Houston TX 77030, 713-839-1420

Walker/Rollator rental: 1-7 days/weekly \$25.

Transport chair rental: 1-7 days/weekly \$25.

Standard wheelchair rental: 1-7 days/weekly \$25.

Knee walker rental: 1-7 days/weekly \$35.

Power wheelchair rental: 1-7 days/weekly \$125.

Portable scooter rental: 1-7 days/weekly \$125.

## Multi-medical equipment and supplies

5313 Bellaire Blvd, Bellaire, TX 77401, 713-636-3834

Standard wheelchair rental:

\$35 daily, \$50 weekend, \$65 weekly.

Transport chair rental:

\$30 daily, \$45 weekend, \$50 weekly.

Crutches purchase: \$39.95 aluminum pair.

No scooter chair rental for less than one month.





## Safety on the streets of Houston

- Know the best and safest route to your destination.
- Always travel in groups of at least three or four people, including an adult leader. Never travel alone!
- After dark, walk in well-traveled, busy and well-lit areas and in groups, if possible.
- Keep all bags and purses close to your body.
- Walk with confidence.
- Do not text, read, email or wear headphones while walking, especially at night.
- Just because you have the right-of-way does not guarantee a bus or vehicle will stop or that the driver is paying attention.
- Carry your cellphone and keep it within easy reach at all times.
- Do not hesitate to approach a police officer, security officer or Gathering staff for help.
- Always let your adult leaders know where you are going. Designate a meeting spot for your group in the event someone becomes separated.
- Each Gathering participant should carry photo identification at all times. A designated adult should also carry a copy of each group member's medical release form.
- Hydration, light-colored clothing, a balanced diet and sleep are the best prevention for heat exhaustion in Houston. It is recommended that participants carry water bottles and drink the equivalent of eight to 10 glasses of water daily.
- All participants should wear proper footwear. Flip-flops or other open-toed footwear is not recommended for the Service Learning projects, walking around the city and inside NRG Center, NRG Arena and NRG Stadium.
- Each group should have a basic first-aid kit, which includes Band-Aids for unexpected blisters.
- Notify the Houston Police Department (911) and the Gathering Infoline 888-411-ELCA (3522) if you become the victim of a crime.
- Call the Gathering Infoline 888-411-ELCA (3522) to report any unsafe condition in addition to an actual crime or injury.

## Curfew

On Wednesday, May 9, 2007, the Houston City Council enacted changes to the juvenile curfew ordinance. It is unlawful for any minor under the age of 17 years to remain, walk, run, drive or ride about, in or upon any public place in the city between the hours of 11 p.m. on any Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday and 6 a.m. of the following day, or between the hours of 12 a.m. (midnight) and 6 a.m. on any Saturday or Friday, or between the hours of 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday. It is also unlawful for the parent or guardian having legal custody of a minor under the age of 17 years of age to knowingly allow the minor to be in violation of these curfew hours.

## Cellphones

- It is recommended that all participants who own cellphones bring them to the Gathering. Although cellphones can be a distraction, for safety reasons they can become an important tool in communicating with others should someone become separated from the group. Even though Houston is a safe city, cellphones offer a fast means of communication in the event of an emergency.
- Include in the group's covenant a statement regarding cellphone usage during the trip.
- Maintain a printed list of cellphone numbers to distribute to your group. Program the group leader's cell number and the Gathering Infoline number 888-411-3522 (ELCA) on all cellphones.
- Programming an emergency phone number into your mobile device no longer works due to the security locks on phones. Youth and adults can turn on the health data app on their phone. Under medical ID, fill out the corresponding information. The medical ID allows medical personnel to access medical information and the person to call in case of an emergency. Include an adult leader as one of the emergency contacts. Once this is filled, on the screen in the lower left corner appears an emergency button. This allows emergency services personnel, hospitals and our team to quickly access necessary health and contact information without the added challenge of a password.

***At the end of the day,  
the goals are simple:  
safety and security.***

*– Shawn Hannon,  
Safety and Security  
team leader*

## Set up your medical ID

To make your important health information accessible in case of an emergency, you can set up your medical ID on your mobile device.

### **Create a medical ID in Apple:**

- Open Health and tap Medical ID > Edit.
- Enter your emergency contacts and health information like your birth date, height, and blood type.
- Turn on "Show When Locked" to make your medical ID available from the lock screen. In an emergency, this gives people who want to help some important information, like the emergency contacts you have entered.
- When you are finished, tap "Done."

### **Create a medical ID in Android:**

- Android devices feature an emergency contact function, which differs depending on your phone. On the Galaxy S8, editable info in Contacts includes emergency contacts as well as medical conditions and medications, allergies and blood type. Since this feature differs with each type of phone, please check with your phone's company or carrier.

## Entering NRG Stadium

- Entry to NRG Stadium will be through Budweiser Plaza at the south end of the stadium. There are two entrances in the plaza, Amegy Bank Entrance (on the east side) and Ford Entrance (on the west side). Participants will be directed up the escalators at each entrance.
- NRG Stadium will open for participants at 6 p.m. on Wednesday through Saturday evenings with the Mass Gathering sessions at 7:30 p.m.
- No food or beverages can be brought into NRG Stadium. Water bottles and food required for medical reasons will be allowed.
- NRG Stadium personnel will be checking all bags brought into the location.
- Food and beverage concessions will be open from 6 p.m.-7:30 p.m. Please note that concessions close promptly at 7:30 p.m. even if you are in line.

- Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. There is no reserved seating.
- There is no saving of seats. It is highly recommended that groups enter NRG Stadium together, as they run the risk of not sitting in the same area.
- Access to the main-floor seating will be through staircases at the end of designated aisles. Once the floor seating has been filled, no additional participants will be permitted. Participants seated on the floor will be issued a designated wristband that will allow them to leave the floor to use the restrooms and concessions and return to their seats.
- On Sunday, NRG Stadium will open at 8:30 a.m. for the closing worship service.

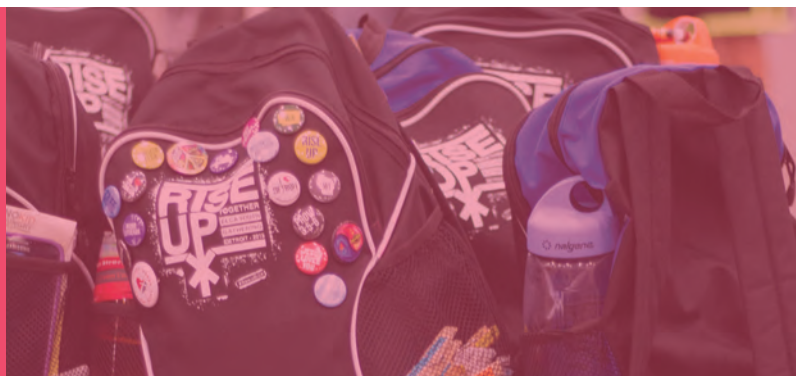
## Safety and behavior in NRG Stadium

- For your safety and security, all backpacks, bags, containers, purses, etc., may be inspected before you enter the NRG Stadium. Laser pointers, glass containers, weapons or anything else that poses a safety or health risk will be confiscated. Do not joke about weapons, violent acts or terrorism.
- Mosh pits and body surfing are prohibited. Anyone participating in these activities will risk removal from NRG Stadium.
- No open flames (lighters, candles, matches, etc.).
- No throwing items, such as beach balls, toilet paper, coins, etc.
- No laser pointers.
- Selfie sticks are not allowed in NRG Stadium.
- Outside soft drinks and food cannot be brought into NRG Stadium.
- Before entering the stadium, have a realistic plan of where your group plans to sit, in case someone gets separated. To avoid injuries, do not run when the doors open.
- Designate a spot for your group to meet after the program.
- The Gathering believes that groups have the right to express their views on a particular issue or cause. However, demonstrations should not interfere with the operation of the Gathering.

## Lost and found items

Items can be claimed at the Gathering info booth at the NRG Center. If you lose something, contact the Gathering Infoline at 888-411-3522 (ELCA).

If you find an item, give it to any volunteer.





## Code of conduct

- The Gathering has an obligation to protect the safety and welfare of its staff, volunteers and participants.
- Possession of illegal drugs and weapons is grounds for removal from the Gathering.
- It is strongly recommended that adults refrain from using alcohol and tobacco products (including electronic and vapor cigarettes) during the Gathering. Alcohol products are strictly prohibited from use during Gathering program times. Any inappropriate or excessive use of alcohol may result in the removal from the Gathering.
- Any disrespectful or disruptive behavior will be dealt with quickly and certainly. Participants who use inappropriate language, hate speech or offensive language or destructive behavior may be removed from the Gathering.
- Youth are expected to attend and remain with their assigned leaders during Service Learning projects and other events and should never wander off on their own at any point during the Gathering. Youth and groups will keep their whereabouts known in ways consistent with their group's policies.
- Respect and appropriate behavior will be given to fellow participants and adults at all times. The Gathering believes that groups have the right to express their views on a particular issue or cause.

- However, demonstrations should not interfere with the operation of the Gathering.
- Care should be taken to respect the individuals outside our event who make the Gathering possible including bus drivers, police officers and security personnel, and other venue and hotel staff people.
  - The Gathering will remain free of all sex and gender discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, interpersonal violence, bullying and stalking. Any of the above behavior may result in immediate removal from the Gathering.



# LIRS

## Welcome

### REBUILDS HOPE

LIRS is committed to  
Youth Engagement and Empowerment.

The Future is Now!

Connect with us  
and be part of a brighter tomorrow!



LIRS.org



## WELCOME MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

*This Changes Everything.*

## Gathering chaplains

Recognizing that the experience of the Gathering can be both joyful, overwhelming and every other possible emotion in between for congregational groups and individuals, a supportive service is being provided for participants of this Gathering.

A small team of chaplains will be available to help navigate arising, unexpected and crisis pastoral care needs that congregational groups and individuals might experience. Adult leaders accompanying congregational groups are often the first people to address possible pastoral care concerns within their groups. Gathering chaplains are intended to be an extra layer of pastoral care support for participants. Chaplains will be available onsite in NRG Center in dedicated chaplains rooms, 102 and 103. They will also be available on an on-call basis through the Gathering Infoline at 888-411-3522 (ELCA).

## What to do in an emergency

For all emergencies, call 911 and then call the Gathering Infoline 888-411-3522 (ELCA) to report the illness, injury or incident. If it occurs at a hotel, call the front desk to alert them of the 911 call.

## For general health information

Call the Gathering Infoline at 888-411-3522 (ELCA) and ask for one of our Gathering volunteer nurses. They will be able to assist with your health care questions or refer you to the appropriate facility.

## First-aid stations

First-aid stations will be open in NRG Park in the Center, Arena and Stadium with additional roaming teams within Interactive Learning and Community Life. For emergency medical assistance or if you are unable to get to a first-aid station, please notify a safety and security volunteer or a security guard, and a first-aid team will be sent to you.

- NRG Center – outside entrance Hall C
- NRG Stadium – located on several floors
- NRG Arena – in lobby by Hall B

## Emergency facilities

Memorial Hermann – Texas Medical Center  
6411 Fannin St  
Houston, TX 77030  
713-704-4000

Children's Memorial Hermann – Texas Medical Center  
6411 Fannin St  
Houston, TX 77030  
713-704-5437

Memorial Hermann Memorial City (I-10)  
921 Gessner Rd  
Houston, TX 77024  
713-242-3000

Memorial Hermann Greater Heights  
1635 North Loop West  
Houston, TX 77008  
713-867-2000

Memorial Hermann Southwest Hospital  
7600 Beachnut St  
Houston, TX 77074  
713-456-5000

## Hospitals and freestanding emergency rooms near downtown Houston

Methodist Emergency Care Center – Kirby  
2615 Southwest Fwy, Suite 140  
Houston, TX 77098  
713-441-3724

Houston Methodist Hospital  
6565 Fannin St  
Houston, TX 77030  
713-790-3311

First Choice ER- Briar Forest Location  
1717 Eldridge Pkwy  
Houston, TX 77077  
832-672-4010

First Choice ER- Fallbrook  
13338 Tomball Pkwy  
Houston, TX 77086  
346-907-5550

First Choice ER- Jones  
9530 Jones Rd  
Houston, TX 77065  
832-756-2040





## Urgent care centers

*MinuteClinics are in CVS Pharmacies  
RediClinics are in Rite Aid Pharmacies  
Healthcare clinics are in Walgreens*

Memorial Hermann Urgent Care  
500 Washington Ave #300  
Houston, TX 77007  
713-861-6490

American Family Care  
5568 Wesleyan St  
Houston, TX 77005  
713-666-7050

Concentra Urgent Care  
2004 Leeland St  
Houston, TX 77003  
713-223-0838

Med Spring Urgent Care  
102 W 11th St  
Houston, TX 77008  
832-539-4707

## 24-hour pharmacies

Harris County Clinic Pharmacy  
1200 Baker St  
Houston, TX 77002  
713-755-6722

Saint Joseph Medical Center  
Inpatient Pharmacy  
1401 St Joseph Pkwy  
Houston, TX 77002  
713-757-7504

Walgreens Pharmacy #3157  
3317 Montrose Blvd  
Houston, TX 77006  
713-520-7777

Park Plaza Hospital Inpatient  
Pharmacy  
1313 Hermann Dr  
Houston, TX 77004  
713-527-5095

CVS Pharmacy #7092  
110 W 20th St  
Houston, TX 77008  
832-673-7131

Hermann Hospital Pharmacy  
6411 Fannin St  
Houston, TX 77030  
713-704-4000

Ben Taub General Hospital  
Pharmacy  
1504 Taub Loop  
Houston, TX 77030  
713-873-2980

CVS Pharmacy #7198  
3811 Old Spanish Trail  
Houston, TX 77021  
713-741-7900

Walgreens Pharmacy #4745  
5280 Buffalo Speedway  
Houston, TX 77005  
713-838-7704

Houston Methodist Hospital  
Pharmacy  
6565 Fannin St DB1 09  
Houston, TX 77030  
713-441-5364

Lyndon B Johnson General  
Hospital Pharmacy  
5656 Kelley St  
Houston, TX 77026  
713-566-5136

Memorial Hermann Northwest  
Hospital Pharmacy  
1635 North Loop W  
Houston, TX 77008  
713-867-3353

Woman's Hospital of Texas  
Pharmacy  
7600 Fannin St  
Houston, TX 77054  
713-791-7185

Pharmerica Pharmacy #4124  
1289 N Post Oak Rd Ste 130  
Houston, TX 77055  
713-680-1325

CVS Pharmacy #6240  
3939 Bellaire Blvd  
Houston, TX 77025  
832-778-9025

Walgreens Pharmacy #4027  
5200 Westheimer Rd  
Houston, TX 77056  
713-623-0643

Walgreens Pharmacy #2135  
6610 Tidwell Rd  
Houston, TX 77016  
713-633-2230

Walgreens Pharmacy #553  
5300 N Braeswood Blvd  
Houston, TX 77096  
713-721-1516

CVS Pharmacy #7038  
6504 W Little York Rd  
Houston, TX 77040  
713-937-9600

Walgreens Pharmacy #4647  
388 Uvalde Rd  
Houston, TX 77015  
713-455-9944

Walgreens Pharmacy #6239  
105 West Rd  
Houston, TX 77037  
281-445-1308

Memorial Hermann SW Hospital  
Pharmacy  
7600 Beechnut St  
Houston, TX 77074  
713-456-5000

Memorial Hermann City Hospital  
Pharmacy  
929 Gessner Rd  
Houston, TX 77024  
713-932-3000

# HEALTH CARE INFORMATION + ADDRESSES

CVS Pharmacy #6238  
4451 W Fuqua St  
Houston, TX 77045  
713-433-6447

CVS Pharmacy #3693  
7950 S Gessner Rd  
Houston, TX 77036  
713-484-6011

Walgreens Pharmacy #4133  
3707 Spencer Hwy  
Pasadena, TX 77504  
713-946-4650

Bayshore Medical Center Pharmacy  
4000 Spencer Hwy  
Pasadena, TX 77504  
713-359-5800

West Houston Medical Center  
Inpatient Pharmacy  
12141 Richmond Ave  
Houston, TX 77082  
281-588-8257

Walgreens Pharmacy #5094  
14616 Memorial Dr  
Houston, TX 77079  
281-493-3043

CVS Pharmacy #5877  
2900 Broadway St  
Pearland, TX 77581  
281-997-4400

Walgreens Pharmacy #3660  
3287 Broadway St  
Pearland, TX 77581  
281-485-7843

Memorial Southeast  
Hospital Pharmacy  
11800 Astoria Blvd  
Houston, TX 77089  
281-929-4169

Kroger Pharmacy #311  
9330 Jones Rd  
Houston, TX 77065  
281-894-4859

Houston Northwest Medical  
Center Pharmacy  
710 Cypress Creek Pkwy # 1960  
Houston, TX 77090  
281-440-2178

Walgreens Pharmacy #3661  
6768 S Texas 6  
Houston, TX 77083  
281-530-9768

Cypress Fairbanks Medical  
Center Pharmacy  
10655 Steepletop Dr  
Houston, TX 77065  
281-897-3172

Methodist Willowbrook Hospital  
18220 State Highway 249 Ste 100  
Houston, TX 77070  
281-477-1407

Walgreens Pharmacy #4161  
8206 Highway 6 N  
Houston, TX 77095  
281-550-2169

CVS Pharmacy #3190  
9101 Highway 6 N  
Houston, TX 77095  
281-859-6667

Walgreens Pharmacy #5709  
16590 El Camino Real  
Houston, TX 77062  
281-488-3424

Kingwood Pines Hospital Pharmacy  
2001 Ladbrook Dr  
Kingwood, TX 77339  
281-358-1495

Kingwood Medical Center-HCA  
Inpatient Pharmacy  
22999 Highway 59 N  
Kingwood, TX 77339  
281-348-8431

CVS Pharmacy #7475  
1350 Kingwood Dr  
Kingwood, TX 77339  
281-358-3143





# FIRST + FINAL 15

Use the First 15 with your group as you gather first thing in the morning to start the day. This will help frame the day's focus for your group. You will need a Bible app or the Gathering app or a Bible for reading Scripture passages for each day.

The Final 15 is to be used at the end of your day to recall your experiences, make note of things your group wants to remember and wind down for a restful night. You will need note cards or paper and pens for youth to make notes (or they can use the notes feature of the Gathering app on their phone to keep their notes).

These practices will help your group prepare for and then reflect on the day, which research shows helps with retention and recall. This will also help shape your story that you will share with your congregation when you return home. Enjoy the experience!

## FIRST 15

**Morning greeting:** Thanks be to God the creator for this new day. We welcome this new day as we anticipate all the amazing wonders God has in store for us!

Have a volunteer read Exodus 3:1-12, the calling of Moses.

- Ask:**
- What did God ask of Moses?
  - What have you been asked to do that seems an impossible task or something you don't think you could do?
  - How was God present with you in that task?
  - What is one hope you have for today?
  - What is one way you will respond today to God calling each of us to step out of our comfort zone?

Let us pray using portions of Martin Luther's morning prayer from the Small Catechism:

*We give you thanks God, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have protected us through the night from all harm and danger. We ask that you also protect us today from sin and all evil, so that our life and actions may give honor to you. This we pray in your name and the name of Jesus our Savior. Amen.*

**Finish with this blessing:** Stand up for being open to new experiences and possibilities.

Stand with all people we encounter today, especially the residents of Houston.

Stand for encouraging all people to live out their calling from God.

St. Paul reminded the community of the Ephesians: "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your doing; it is the gift of God." This changes everything! Amen.

Go in peace, show love, serve the Lord. Thanks be to God! We will!



## FINAL 15

*Encourage your youth to really dig deep in these final minutes of the day, challenge them to think critically about their experiences and how they are changed because of the day.*

**Evening greeting:** Thanks be to God the creator for this awesome day! We experienced so many wonderful, life-changing people and events. Let this day and all these things forever change us.

**Say:** Today's theme was "God's Call Changes Everything." Remember we talked about Moses' call this morning. Today we heard lots of great stories about call! This evening we heard about how God calls people in a variety of ways to many different things.

- Ask:**
- What was something you experienced today that really impacted or surprised you?
  - Where did you see God today?
  - What is something significant you got from the speakers tonight?
  - How do you understand "God's Call Changes Everything" in a different way because of today?

**Say:** On your phone, or in your journal, or on a piece of paper or note card, write three things you want to remember from today to share with our congregation back home.

Leaders, have the youth hang on to these or give them to you to use upon your return home to build the story you will share with the congregation.

Give time to write these things.

Take time to share what group members want to remember from the day.

Ask for a volunteer to close the day in prayer, focusing on listening to God's calling for each of us. If someone doesn't volunteer, use the following prayer:

*God of calling, we give you thanks for this amazing day! We experienced so many things we will hold close to our hearts. Help us to be changed by your calling for each of us and help us build others up in their calling. We thank you for watching over us this day and as we rest to be ready for a whole new day tomorrow. All this we pray in your name and the name of Jesus, your dear Son! Amen.*

**Finish with this blessing:** As the blessing is read, turn to the person(s) next to you and make the sign of the cross on their forehead: *The love of God surround you, the peace of Jesus sustain you and give you rest this night. In the name of God, the creator, Jesus the Savior and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*





# FIRST 15

**Morning greeting:** Thanks be to God the creator for this new day! We welcome this new day as we anticipate all the amazing wonders God has in store for us!

Have a volunteer read John 4:4-30, Jesus shows love to a Samaritan woman.

**Explain:** In the time of Jesus, Samaritans were considered outsiders with whom Jews did not associate. Jesus didn't care about any of that stuff. Jesus saw everyone as equal, valued and worthy of love!

- Ask:**
- What do we hear from this story?
  - When have you been in a situation that you've stood up against what society tells you to do?
  - How was God present with you in that time?
  - What is one hope you have for today?
  - Today, what is one way you will follow Jesus' example of showing love for all?

Let us pray using portions of Martin Luther's Morning Prayer from the Small Catechism:

*We give you thanks God, through Jesus Christ your dear Son, that you have protected us through the night from all harm and danger. We ask that you also protect us today from sin and all evil, so that our life and actions may give honor to you. This we pray in your name and the name of Jesus our Savior. Amen.*

**Finish with this blessing:** Stand up for being open to new experiences and possibilities.

Stand with all people we encounter today, especially the residents of Houston.

Stand for encouraging all people to live out the example of Jesus' love.

St. Paul reminded the community of the Ephesians: "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your doing; it is the gift of God." This changes everything! Amen.

Go in peace, show love, serve the Lord. Thanks be to God! We will!



# FINAL 15

*Encourage your youth to really dig deeper in these final minutes of the day, challenge them to think critically about their experiences and how they are changed because of the day.*

**Evening greeting:** Thanks be to God the creator for this awesome day! We experienced so many wonderful, life-changing people and events! Let this day and all these things forever change us.

**Say:** Today's theme was "God's Love Changes Everything." Remember we talked about Jesus' love for the Samaritan woman. Today we heard lots of great stories about how God's love surrounds us in all places and spaces. This evening we heard about how God's love changes us and the world.

- Ask:**
- What was something you experienced today that really impacted or surprised you?
  - What is something significant you got from the speakers tonight?
  - Where did you see God today?
  - How do you understand "God's Love Changes Everything" in a different way because of today?
  - How are you changed because of our experiences today?

**Say:** On your phone, or in your journal, or on a piece of paper or note card, write three things you want to remember from today to share with our congregation back home.

Leaders, have the youth hang on to these or give them to you to use upon your return home to build the story you will share with the congregation.

Give time to write these things.

Take time to share what group members want to remember from the day.

Ask for a volunteer to close the day in prayer, focusing on listening to God's love for each of us. If someone doesn't volunteer, use the following prayer:

*God of love, we give you thanks for this amazing day! We experienced so many things we will hold close to our hearts. Help us to be changed by your love for each of us and help us build others up with this love. We thank you for watching over us this day and as we rest to be ready for a whole new day tomorrow. All this we pray in your name and the name of Jesus, your dear Son! Amen.*

**Finish with this blessing:** As the blessing is read, turn to the person(s) next to you and make the sign of the cross on their forehead: *The love of God surround you, the peace of Jesus sustain you and give you rest this night. In the name of God, the creator, Jesus the Savior and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

# FIRST 15

**Morning greeting:** Thanks be to God the creator for this new day! We welcome this new day as we anticipate all the amazing wonders God has in store for us.

Have a volunteer read Acts 8:26-39, Philip baptizes the Ethiopian.

**Explain:** In biblical times it was common for men with official duties in royal courts to be physically changed so they could not have children. The thought was they would not be tempted and could focus on their royal duties.

- Ask:**
- What do we hear from this story?
  - What does your baptism mean to you after hearing this story?
  - How was God working through Philip?
  - How does God work through you?
  - What is one hope you have for today?
  - Today, what is one way you will be an example of God's grace for all?

Let us pray using portions of Martin Luther's Morning Prayer from the Small Catechism:

*We give you thanks God, through Jesus Christ your dear Son, that you have protected us through the night from all harm and danger. We ask that you also protect us today from sin and all evil, so that our life and actions may give honor to you. This we pray in your name and the name of Jesus our Savior. Amen.*

**Finish with this blessing:** Stand up for being open to new experiences and possibilities.

Stand with all people we encounter today, especially the residents of Houston.

Stand for encouraging all people to see God's grace available for everyone.



St. Paul reminded the community of the Ephesians: "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your doing; it is the gift of God." This changes everything! Amen.

Go in peace, show love, serve the Lord. Thanks be to God! We will!

# FINAL 15

*Encourage your youth to really dig deeper in these final minutes of the day, challenge them to think critically about their experiences and how they are changed because of the day.*

**Evening greeting:** Thanks be to God the creator for this awesome day! We experienced so many wonderful, life-changing people and events! Let this day and all these things forever change us.

**Say:** Today's theme was "God's Grace Changes Everything." Remember we talked about God's grace for the Ethiopian man through Philip. Today we heard lots of great stories about how God's grace surrounds us just as we are! This evening we heard about how God's grace is present even in hard, difficult times.

- Ask:**
- What was something you experienced today that really impacted or surprised you?
  - What is something significant you got from the speakers tonight?
  - Where did you see God today?
  - How do you understand "God's Grace Changes Everything" in a different way because of today?
  - How are you changed because of our experiences today?

**Say:** On your phone or in your journal or on a piece of paper or note card, write three things you want to remember from today to share with our congregation back home.

Leader, have the youth hang on to these or give them to you to use upon your return home to build the story you will share with the congregation.

Give time to write these things.

Take time to share what group members want to remember from the day.

Ask for a volunteer to close the day in prayer, focusing on listening to God's grace for each of us. If someone doesn't volunteer, use the following prayer:

*God of love, we give you thanks for this amazing day! We experienced so many things we will hold close to our hearts. Help us to be changed by your grace for each of us and help us build others up by sharing your grace. We thank you for watching over us this day and as we rest to be ready for a whole new day tomorrow. All this we pray in your name and the name of Jesus, your dear Son! Amen.*

**Finish with this blessing:** As the blessing is read, turn to the person(s) next to you and make the sign of the cross on their forehead: *The love of God surround you, the peace of Jesus sustain you and give you rest this night. In the name of God, the creator, Jesus the Savior and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*



## FIRST 15

**Morning greeting:** Thanks be to God the creator for this new day!  
We welcome this new day as we anticipate all the amazing wonders God has in store for us.

Have a volunteer read Luke 24:13-35, disciples on the road to Emmaus.

- Ask:**
- What is significant in this story?
  - When have you been unable to see hope?
  - How was God present with you in that time?
  - What is one hope you have for today?
  - Today, what is one way you will live in the hope given to us in Jesus' resurrection?

Let us pray using portions of Martin Luther's Morning Prayer from the Small Catechism:

*We give you thanks God, through Jesus Christ your dear Son, that you have protected us through the night from all harm and danger. We ask that you also protect us today from sin and all evil, so that our life and actions may give honor to you. This we pray in your name and the name of Jesus our Savior. Amen.*

**Finish with this blessing:** Stand up for being open to new experiences and possibilities.

Stand with all people we encounter today, especially the residents of Houston.

Stand for encouraging all people to live in the hope that is given for all in Jesus' resurrection!

St. Paul reminded the community of the Ephesians: "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your doing; it is the gift of God." This changes everything! Amen.

Go in peace, show love, serve the Lord.  
Thanks be to God! We will!



## FINAL 15

*Encourage your youth to really dig deeper in these final minutes of the day, challenge them to think critically about their experiences and how they are changed because of the day.*

**Evening greeting:** Thanks be to God the creator for this awesome day!  
We experienced so many wonderful, life-changing people and events. Let this day and all these things forever change us.

**Say:** Today's theme was "God's Hope Changes Everything." Remember we talked about the disciples not recognizing Jesus after the resurrection. Today we heard lots of great stories about how God's hope is found in all kinds of places! This evening we heard about how God's hope is witnessed in so many astounding ways.

- Ask:**
- What was something you experienced today that really impacted or surprised you?
  - Where did you see God today?
  - What is something significant you got from the speakers tonight?
  - How do you understand "God's Hope Changes Everything" in a different way because of today?
  - How are you changed because of our experiences today?

**Say:** On your phone, or in your journal, or on a piece of paper or note card, write three things you want to remember from today to share with our congregation back home.

Leaders, have the youth hang on to these or give them to you to use upon your return home to build the story you will share with the congregation.

Give time to write these things.

Take time to share what group members want to remember from the day.

Ask for a volunteer to close the day in prayer, focusing on listening to God's hope for each of us. If someone doesn't volunteer, use the following prayer:

*God of hope, we give you thanks for this amazing day! We experienced so many things we will hold close to our hearts. Help us to be changed by the hope you give freely for each of us and help us share this hope with all we encounter. We thank you for watching over us this day and as we rest to be ready for a whole new day tomorrow. All this we pray in your name and the name of Jesus, your dear Son! Amen.*

**Finish with this blessing:** As the blessing is read, turn to the person(s) next to you and make the sign of the cross on their forehead: *The love of God surround you, the peace of Jesus sustain you and give you rest this night. In the name of God, the creator, Jesus the Savior and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

## FIRST 15

**Morning greeting:** Thanks be to God the creator for this new day! We welcome this new day as we anticipate all the amazing wonders God has in store for us.

Have a volunteer read Matthew 9:18-26, Jesus heals a woman and raises a girl from death.

- Ask:**
- What did you hear in this story?
  - Jesus changed everything when he came to earth! How do you feel your life is impacted because of your faith in Jesus?
  - What is one hope you have for today?
  - Today, what is one way you will be an example of how Jesus changes everything?

Let us pray using portions of Martin Luther's Morning Prayer from the Small Catechism:

*We give you thanks God, through Jesus Christ your dear Son, that you have protected us through the night from all harm and danger. We ask that you would also protect us today from sin and all evil, so that our life and actions may give honor to you. This we pray in your name and the name of Jesus our Savior. Amen.*

**Finish with this blessing:** Stand up for being open to new experiences and possibilities.

Stand with all people we encounter today, especially the residents of Houston.

Stand for encouraging living a radical life like Jesus did.

St. Paul reminded the community of the Ephesians: "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your doing; it is the gift of God." This changes everything! Amen.

Go in peace, show love, serve the Lord. Thanks be to God! We will!



## FINAL 15

*Encourage your youth to really dig deeper in these final minutes of the day, challenge them to think critically about their experiences and how they are changed because of the day.*

**Evening greeting:** Thanks be to God the creator for this awesome day! We experienced so many wonderful, life-changing people and events. Let this day and all these things forever change us.

**Say:** Today's theme was "Jesus Changes Everything." Remember we talked about Jesus caring for the sick woman and raising the girl from death. Today we heard Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton share how Jesus continues to change the world.

- Ask:**
- What was something you experienced in the Gathering that really impacted or surprised you?
  - What is something significant you got from the Gathering?
  - Where did you see God today?
  - How do you understand "Jesus Changes Everything" in a different way because of today?
  - How are you changed because of our experiences today?

**Say:** On your phone, or in your journal or on a piece of paper or note card, write three things you want to remember from today to share with our congregation back home. Leaders, have the youth hang on to these or give them to you to use upon your return home to build the story you will share with the congregation.

Give time to write these things.

Take time to share what group members want to remember from the day. Ask each person to write one or two sentences about the Gathering they want to share with someone when they are asked "How was the Gathering?" Take time to share these statements.

Ask for a volunteer to close the day in prayer, focusing on listening to how Jesus changes everything. If someone doesn't volunteer, use the following prayer:

*God of call, love, grace, hope and Jesus, we give you thanks for this amazing Gathering! We experienced so many things we will hold close to our hearts. Help us to be changed by your call, love, grace and hope for each of us, and help us build others up with these very things. We thank you for watching over us this day and as we rest to be ready for a whole new day tomorrow. All this we pray in your name and the name of Jesus, who changes everything! Amen.*

**Finish with this blessing:** As the blessing is read, turn to the person(s) next to you and make the sign of the cross on their forehead: *The love of God surround you, the peace of Jesus sustain you and give you rest this night. In the name of God, the creator, Jesus the Savior and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*













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