

# THE CONTACT

AFLC YOUTH WORKER'S NEWSLETTER

FALL 2014



## Table of Contents

Coffee Shop.....	2
Youth Workers Weekend.....	3
Reference Room.....	4-5
Convenience Store .....	6
Urgent Care .....	7
Upcoming Events.....	8

## *Relationship Building Conversations*



# Relationship Building Conversations

By Kaitlyn Russum

If I were to have a chance to share a cup of coffee with youth leaders throughout the AFLC here is what I would have to say... youth ministry is crazy; crazy in the most passionate, difficult, grace-and-fun-filled way! Let's just face it, teens are crazy. They have this youthful spirit that runs laps around my mid 20's self. Their passion is what I want to harness as a youth director. I want to unleash their crazy spirited passion, but for God's glory.

Equipping our youth in order to be relentless disciples sharing the good news of Christ is the crazy part for us youth leaders. The reason it is crazy is because there will be times that it means picking someone up in the wee hours of the morning because of a crisis situation. It will mean spending hours in the

word to plan and prepare messages for youth group. It will mean self sacrifice of time, energy, plans, etc. But here is the best part of it all...we were called to this crazy position to share and show Christ's love to teens in our communities and that is worth it! Bring on the crazy, embrace the crazy, because in those moments of craziness teens are being brought to Christ and, my friends, nothing is sweeter than that!

*Kaitlyn is the Youth Leader  
at Elim Lutheran Church,  
Lake Stevens, WA*



Coffee  
Shop



A close-up photograph of a person's hands. The left hand is resting on an open Bible, with the index finger pointing to a specific line of text. The right hand is holding a dark-colored mug, likely containing coffee. The background is a dark, textured surface, possibly a table or desk. The lighting is warm and focused on the hands and the Bible.

# YOUTH WORKERS WEEKENDS

January 9–11, 2015

Location: Comfort Inn, Plymouth MN

Registration Rates

Best Rate by December 12

Full: \$109

Sessions Only: \$79

More information and registration on our [website](#).



# Reference Room

***Relationship-building conversations are vital to healthy youth and family ministry. The youth leader understands that because of his or her role in the congregation that the Lord has positioned the youth leader for Biblical influence. The purpose of engaging communication is to speak the truth in love and consistently look to Jesus together. The “Reference Room” for this issue addresses four audiences that are useful to keep in mind for these conversations.***

## **YOUTH**

Building relationships with youth is quite the intimidating task. If I could just leave you with one principle to keep in mind as you consider building relationships with the youth in our culture, it would be to consider Christ. Consider Jesus who, being God, decided to come down and live with us humans. He ate with us. He walked with us. He listened to us. He talked with us. He gave of himself for us, so that we could be with Him.

There are enough people in the world that are trying to take something from teenagers; maybe it is time to give something to them. Eat some pizza with kids who don't appreciate your finely tuned tastes. Find time to bring these youth along the walk

that is your life. When you see teens that don't feel their voice is heard, listen to their hearts. When God opens the door for you to speak life-giving truth into a willing heart, speak life. Most of all, when considering the call to give of yourself to your fellow brother and sister in Christ, remember that the youth in your church are that. You are their brother or sister; consider them family. In an age where broken homes are more common than stable homes, it is of utmost importance to be the family of God. Look to Christ; He did it right.

*Matt Rieniets  
Youth Leader, Tioga ND*

---

## PARENTS

As a parent of five children in the ages of 10 to 18, I find myself thinking through conversations with other parents differently than when I first got into youth ministry. Back then, I would early ask if the parents knew about the next event or the fundraiser coming up. Now I prioritize finding ways to really **“bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2).**

I want to demonstrate to parents of teens that I am concerned about their own relationship with Jesus. I am growing to find ways to **inquire** about the pace and rhythm of their family and what that means for nurturing faith in Christ for **the whole family.**

One parent told me over the summer, “We are a sports family and that’s just the way it’s going to be.” With that tag of “sports family”, how can I point them to Jesus in their activities? **How can I encourage and equip** them to be Christ-bearers to the other families in the sport of the season?

We need to be youth leaders that are **actively concerned** about the parents of teens. We can ask, listen, and care for parents in the parallel ways that the Lord has given us a passion to be alongside of teenagers.

*Jason Holt  
Director of AFLC Youth Ministries*

---

## PASTOR

Here at Elim I work closely with our head Pastor, Mark Molstre, when it comes to youth ministry. What that looks like for us at Elim is that Pastor Mark and I meet on a weekly basis. First, we study the Word or read through different books that help develop us both in ministry. Then we dig into what is planned for the month, quarter, and year.

It’s important to communicate regularly so we know we are both on the same page with where the ministry is headed. Pastor Mark is one of the biggest advocates for our youth ministry. During this time we try to bridge the gap together that the youth in church and youth group on Sundays are not just the church of the “future,” but that they are an integral part of the church here and now. He leads our church congregation as a whole and the teens involved are

just as much a part of the overall make up of our church congregation as they are for our youth group.

Also, the most important part of these weekly meetings is prayer. It is a time I can share with Pastor Mark the needs of the youth group and specific needs of teens knowing he will be supporting the ministry in prayer.

I wholeheartedly encourage all youth pastors/directors to utilize your head pastor with your ministries. Keeping in close communication with him can be encouraging to you as a leader, provides more prayer support, and allows him to know what is going on and learn more about the teens involved in the ministry. To me that is a win, win situation!

*Kaitlyn Russum  
Youth Leader, Lake Stevens WA*

---

## CONGREGATION

Relationships are vital in ministry. As I consider my nine years at Amery Free Lutheran I see four ingredients that have been present in every relationship I have built — regardless of age. The first ingredient in building a relationship is **purpose.** I needed to be purposeful in seeking people out, not waiting for them to find me. Adults can assume youth leaders are not interested in them, but when I pursued them, they responded warmly. Next, I needed to **ask questions.** Simply questions about them, their family, hobbies, likes, dislikes, spiritual background, etc... But what happened after that was vital, **I listened, truly listened** to what they had to say; asking followup questions and even following up later based on things they had shared. Finally, **I shared openly** with them.

Not only about what was going on in youth ministry, or how they can pray or support me or the ministry; but openly shared about my life, my past, present, and future joys, struggles, and dreams. The more I opened up, they more they responded in kind. As I consistently pursued members in my congregations, asking, listening, and sharing the stronger the relationships that were built, even with those who did not have any connection to the Youth Ministry. And, as they got to know me, their interest and support of the Ministry and the lives of the youth grew as well.

*Eric Christenson  
Pastor/Youth Leader, Amery WI*



# Convenience Store



## **3 Things Volunteers Don't Want to Hear Church Volunteer Central**

**<http://bit.ly/1yuVd9F>**



## **Why I Miss Being A Born Again Christian Interlinc**

**<http://bit.ly/1t8VOO8>**



## **Breaking Through the Walls of Teens All Pro Dad**

**<http://bit.ly/1wuMO50>**



## **Use Abuse YouthMinistry.com**

**<http://bit.ly/1rurj0t>**



# Urgent Care

## SNACKS, SHIRTS, & SERIOUS CHALLENGES

Do you segment everyday worries from extraordinary worries?

I think that has been my mode for most of my life. When every day worries come, I respond by God's grace to His provision. The furnace doesn't work? The family budget is tight for food? No, problem! Jesus reminds me, **"Do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on. For life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing."** (Luke 12:22b-23)

But when extraordinary worries arrive, I seem to have spiritual amnesia. This teen is heading down the wrong path!?! That family is growing apathetic in their relationship to Christ!?! Personal panic sets in.

For some reason, my mind segments the promises of the Lord for my everyday needs from His capacity to answer the big hurdles of ministry. Would it not be consistent that the Savior King who meets my needs will move in the serious challenges as well?

The Lord reminded me this week that as we seek His Kingdom by His grace that He is eternally invested in the ministry that He has called me to. In Luke 12:32, a few verses after the "anxious thoughts" ones above, Jesus tells his disciples, **"Fear not, little flock, for it**

**is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."**

Our Savior King proclaims that the spiritual battle is His and that the Kingdom of God is ours in Christ! That reality nurtures my soul and changes my perspective. It is not on Jesus for snacks and shirts and on me for ministry. It is Jesus in the temporal and in the eternal. It is Jesus in the serious challenges of ministry.

With confidence in Christ, we can step forward in the ministry that He has given to each of us.

*Jason serves as the  
Director of AFLC  
Youth Ministries*



# THE CONTACT

Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

Youth Ministries Department

3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.

Plymouth, MN 55441

E-mail: [youth@aflc.org](mailto:youth@aflc.org)

## Upcoming Events

January 9-11	Youth Workers Weekends, Comfort Inn, Plymouth MN <a href="http://www.aflc.org/youth">www.aflc.org/youth</a>
Jan 30-Feb 1	SIDExSIDE & Sno Daze, ARC Winter Retreats, Osceola WI
February 15-16	North Central MN District Event, Bemidji MN
March 13-15	AFLBS Campus Days, Plymouth MN Youth Leaders & Parents Session on Saturday
April 30	Apprenticeship Program Applications DUE Congregational 12-month training track
June 29—July 4	FLY Convention—National Youth gathering, Estes Park, CO <a href="http://www.flyconvention.org">www.flyconvention.org</a>

The Contact is published twice a year to encourage and engage youth workers of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations.

The AFLC is a growing fellowship of 275 churches whose members believe that the Bible is true and that everyone needs Jesus.

AFLC Youth Ministries exist for three goals: to win, to build, and to equip youth for Jesus Christ. We are here to assist in multiplying making disciples!



Editor Pastor Jason Holt  
AFLC Youth Ministries  
National Youth Director  
Mon-Fri 8:30am-5:30pm  
[jasonholt@aflc.org](mailto:jasonholt@aflc.org)

Managing  
Editor Chris Rasmussen  
AFLC Youth Ministries  
Administrative Assistant  
Mon-Fri. 8:00am-4:30pm  
[chr isr@aflc.org](mailto:chr isr@aflc.org)