

Spring 2008

Dear Partners in Christ,

Greetings to you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Attached you will find an application for adult lay people interested in participating in a wonderful opportunity for certified training in youth and family ministry. The specific purpose of this training is to produce quality individuals to help with youth ministry in your congregation. These trained individuals will also help identify and encourage young people who may feel called to a future in ordained ministry and other leadership opportunities. Participants in this certification process are affectionately known as SPUNGE's, an acronym for Synod People Uplifting the Next Generation in the ELCA.

As part of a large grant from the Siebert Lutheran Foundation called "The Bishops' Initiative", each of the six synods of Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan are able to send six people to attend a one-week initial "Adventure Week" in July. This will be followed by six weekends of additional training which will be held at different Bible camps in the six participating synods. (A complete schedule of dates is attached.) At the conclusion of this training, the participants will be certified in youth and family ministry. This is the last opportunity for lay leaders to become certified in youth & family ministry through this grant.

Instruction for this certification school will be provided by specialists in Youth & Family Ministry from The Youth & Family Institute, the six bishops from participating synods, and other institutions of the ELCA.

The cost for this training, which is normally \$2,000, will be covered in full by the grant and includes all housing, meals, instruction, and resources/textbooks. Hopefully, your congregation will consider monetary assistance for travel costs if a candidate from your church attends this school. Synod teams car pool as much as possible to the learning sites.

We are looking for individuals with a passion for young people and youth ministry, and who are willing to give up some time for training. Are you one of those people? Are there people in your congregation who may be interested? Whom do you know with wonderful spiritual gifts to bring to such a program?

We ask your help in encouraging people to apply for this opportunity. There is no age restriction, however, we prefer that candidates be at least 21 years old. Interested individuals must complete the attached application and return it, along with a letter of recommendation from their pastor, no later than May 25, 2008. Completed applications and any questions/comments should be directed to:

Wendy Black, NGLS Youth Ministry Coordinator  
9469 Rocky Run Road  
Harshaw, WI 54529  
715-282-5882 or 906-228-2300  
[WKBlack@yahoo.com](mailto:WKBlack@yahoo.com)

Thank you for your partnership in this outstanding opportunity for youth ministry in the Northern Great Lakes Synod!

May God's peace be with you,



Wendy K. Black  
Youth Ministry Coordinator



What are your congregation's expectations for your involvement in certification school?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What are your expectations for attending certification school? Please be specific. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Work Experience**

Are you currently involved with any youth group at this time which is/is not church related?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please summarize your experience in the area of youth ministry/youth education. Make sure to include volunteer and staff experience.

Type of work Years

Please summarize your work experience *not* related to youth ministry.

Type of work Dates

Please fill in the blank. "I am passionate about..."

**Academic Background**

School(s)/Other      Location      Major      Graduation      Grade Point /Honors

Please highlight your continuing education experiences or other certification programs: \_\_\_\_\_

What languages other than English do you speak? \_\_\_\_\_

**Health History**

Some of the activity which will take place during certification school includes team course activities and group games. Participation is expected. However, this is not a school of athletics. Activities emphasize team building, communication, trust, and fun. Cooperative challenge rather than competition is encouraged.

Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Height \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Doctor's name & city \_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person in emergency \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies (insect stings, drugs, food, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Conditions requiring regular medical attention (diabetes, epilepsy, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Recent or chronic injuries \_\_\_\_\_

Other physical disabilities \_\_\_\_\_

Emotional or behavioral disorders \_\_\_\_\_

I, the applicant declare that:

The applicant agrees to abide by the rules and regulations outlined in the certification school activities by the instructors.

The applicant understands and appreciates that there are a number of inherent risks involved in the activity which are beyond the control of the sponsoring agency or its staff and agrees to personally assume such risks.

The applicant understands that every care and attention will be given to the health and comfort of the participants, but The Youth and Family Institute and/or WAPO Camping Ministries cannot be held liable for any injuries sustained which were not directly caused by their failure to take due care.

The applicant is responsible to carry adequate healthcare insurance. The Youth and Family Institute and/or WAPO Camping Ministries does not provide health insurance for participants. Please include a photocopy of proof of insurance.

I hereby authorize the leader of the event to secure such medical advice and services as may be deemed necessary for the health and safety of myself and I agree to accept primary financial responsibility. It shall be at the discretion of the leader of the event as to what steps must be taken for the welfare and safety of the applicant.

I declare that the statements on this form are true.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**REQUIRED DOCUMENTS TO SUBMIT WITH THIS APPLICATION**

1. A brief autobiography of your faith journey. Include how you came to believe in Christ, what this faith means to you, how it has affected your life and life choices. (1-2 pages)
2. Describe your vision/dream for youth ministry. Why are you interested in youth ministry and what gifts do you bring to youth ministry? What do you hope to accomplish? (1-2 pages)
3. Proof of insurance. A copy of an insurance card is adequate.
4. Letter of recommendation from your pastor.
5. Read, sign, and return a copy of the Program Expectations and Covenant. Both you and your pastor should sign and date this covenant which will also be signed by Wendy Black and Bishop Skrenes.

Please mail completed form and additional documents **by May 25, 2008** to:

Wendy Black  
Youth Ministry Coordinator  
Northern Great Lakes Synod  
9469 Rocky Run Road  
Harshaw, WI 54529

If you have any questions, please contact Wendy Black at 715-282-5882 or [WKBlack@yahoo.com](mailto:WKBlack@yahoo.com)

Thank you!

**2008-09 Bishops' Initiative Grant  
Youth & Family Ministry Certification School  
Northern Great Lakes Synod  
Program Expectations and Covenant**

**Each selected participant will:**

- † Make themselves available for all training sessions.
- † Complete required reading in preparation for training sessions.
- † Complete long range plans for their own congregational ministries. (Instructions/guidelines are part of the curriculum.)
- † Work as a ministry team with the other selected participants from Wisconsin/Upper Peninsula, but in particular with the Northern Great Lakes Synod team. Your ability and willingness to work within a team is a high priority.
- † Be open to learning and growing in faith, while serving as a disciple of Jesus Christ alongside the youth and families we serve.

\_\_\_\_\_

Applicant

Date

Wendy Black

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Congregational Pastor

Date

Bishop Thomas Skrenes

Date

**2008-09 Bishops' Initiative Grant  
Youth & Family Ministry Certification School  
Northern Great Lakes Synod  
Training Dates**

July 13-19, 2008	“Adventure Week” Luther Park Bible Camp Chetek, Wisconsin and Camp Wapogasset, Ox Lake Site Amery, Wisconsin
Oct. 10-12, 2008	Luther Point Bible Camp Grantsburg, Wisconsin
Nov. 7-9, 2008	Lutherdale Bible Camp Elkhorn, Wisconsin
Dec. 12-14, 2008	Sugar Creek Bible Camp Ferryville, Wisconsin
Jan. 16-18, 2009	Pine Lake Bible Camp Waupaca, Wisconsin
Feb. 13-15, 2009	Luther Park Bible Camp Chetek, Wisconsin
March 13-15, 2009	Final Presentation and Graduation Weekend Imago Dei Village Clintonville, Wisconsin

Adventure Week begins on Sunday evening and concludes in early afternoon on Saturday. All weekend dates begin with supper on Friday evenings and conclude by early afternoon on Sundays.



