

United Proclamation of the Gospel



PEW NEWS

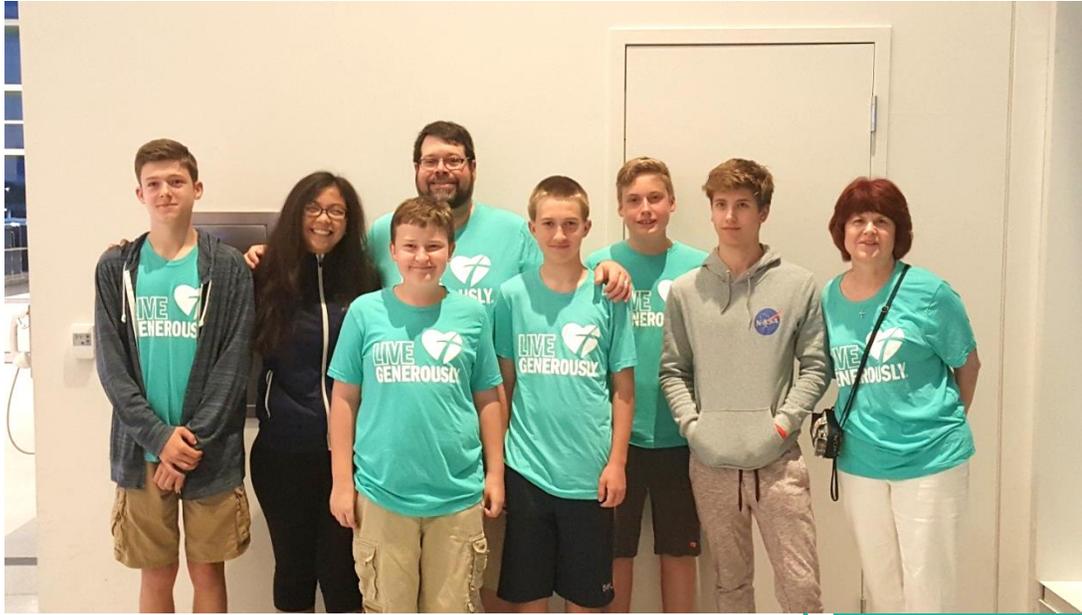
SPECIAL EDITION! UPG AT THE 2018 ELCA YOUTH GATHERING!

July 8 and 9, 2018



TEAM UPG returned July 1 from the AMAZING 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering!

***More photos and updates at www.stpetersbethlehem.org and a
NEW! Youth Gathering Web Log (blog) at
<http://www.lightofchristlutheran.org/upg-at-elca-youth-gathering/>
A HUGE thank you to Pr. Tom Keener (webmaster at LoC)
who created the blog!***



**WEDS
JUNE 27
AT THE
AIRPORT
AND ON
OUR WAY!**

WEDS JUNE 27 6PM

Wow! We're here! Already God's Spirit has been active today. One of the informal traditions of the gathering issues that the youth exchange small "trinkets" with each other to remember where all the people you have met come from. Our first exchanges occurred at 4:30 this morning when our airline agent gave each of us "United airline wings!" In response we shared one of our rest bands with her. Our trip down had several God sightings... a woman helped "organize" one of our youth by sharing and packing a food bag for him while another stranger ran down the concourse to return a left behind wallet. Our cab driver asked what we were doing in Houston at the gathering and when I shared that one of our goals was to share 100'000 books with children of Houston his mouth dropped and he simply said God bless you all!

We're getting ready to go into the mass gathering now so I will sign off... but please know the feeling here in Houston is amazing.

Gracious Lord. We thank you for this amazing day experiencing Your presence. Continue to guide and protect all who are gathering and allow all of our hearts to be open to Your abiding presence. Amen. Peace for now PJ





THURS JUNE 28 SYNOD DAY 10 AM

What an amazing night worshipping God! Let me tell you 30857 people sure can sing loud! The worship started with some great music. Then Bishop Eaton the presiding bishop of the ELCA shared a vision that called on us to make a difference in our world.

We heard the powerful story of a woman who used to be Hindu converted to Christianity and is now a Lutheran pastor. We also heard from a woman who has been blind since the age of three yet makes incredible music. But during our time together before heading off to bed I think most of our youth talked about our final speaker who shared powerful stories about social injustice particularly in regard to young people

being placed into the adult prison system.

The night provided a great deal for us to think about. We also shared time together before bed and I was so impressed how our youth recognized the incredible efforts that are occurring to make this gathering possible. From all the people at the airport to our wonderful hotel staff to the thousands of youth volunteers to bus drivers who transported over 30000 people from the NRG building to hotels in less than an hour! It's awesome to see how all these different people in all these different vocations are being used to share God's amazing love with all of us!

Truly God's calling for us to be in Houston changes everything. Now my friends it's time for a good night's sleep. Peace and blessings to you all. Pj



**JUNE 28 is Synod Day – and look who we met!
Rev. Dr. Samuel Zeiser, Bishop, NE PA Synod!**



JUNE 28 2PM Howdy from Houston! This morning our day began by reading John 4. The story of Jesus meeting the Samaritan woman at the well. Our teaching and the theme of today is "God's love changes everything!" Jesus showed love to the woman at the well by accepting her and telling her that she belonged! This changed everything for her.

Now we are gathering with the other 600 people from across our synod. Think about it... 8 of us representing the 700 people of the UPG... joining 600 people representing the 270+ congregations of the NE Penn synod... joint the 30857 people representing the over 3 million people of the ELCA! And today we share with one another, with you and everyone we meet, and Witherspoon the residents of Houston that "you all belong to God!" "All are important in God's family!" Allow God's love and the love of God's gathered children to change everything!

Gracious Lord...thanks for loving us! Help us to love the people You place in our path. Amen



JUNE 28 9PM

GOD'S LOVE changes everything! Our hearts are full as we gather with 30000 of our best friends! Already we've worshipped our God through song and prayer, but on this night it was all about intimate and loving relations with God through Christ incarnate in US, God's children. A young woman of 19 who finally feels like she is welcome and loved by God after ten years of battling anorexia because it 9 people around called her fat!

Another young woman whose mother came to our country from Nigeria and by the color of her skin and by her culture wasn't sure if she could belong in an ELCA congregation. But what she found was a place of acceptance and love!

These stories carried such a powerful message because for both of these women God was felt and experienced in the people who surrounded them, encouraged them and loved them with a kind of love that could only come from our God!

Tonight I am ever thankful to God who offers us this kind of passionate love in our communities of faith. May we all strive to be so welcoming to people whom we meet in our daily lives. Now... I need to pay attention to the reminder of our time together but wanted to share this feeling with you before it passed. Peace and blessings Pj



During our synod day each of us signed a blue prayer stone with our name. We exchanged stones and now each one of us can pray for a new sister or brother in Christ and those who received our stones will pray for us. God's love changes everything.

JUNE 28 midnight

What an incredible day the Lord has provided! My heart is overflowing as I watch our youth experiencing God a new, powerful, and profound ways! We can all be proud of Kailyn, Luke, Jesse, Evan, Matthew, and Quinn who have found the courage to open their hearts and minds to experience God in such wonderful ways.

After my last update we had another speaker who shared with us that not only did God love us before we were born but indeed God's love for each one of us began before creation itself and will continue to eternity! Powerful stuff! Our final musical offering for the night was the "Guardian drum and bugle corps!" Talk about blowing the roof off the center! They were great!

Every night before we go to bed the eight of us gather in the hallway to review our day. Tonight we talked about how God often comes to us through the people around. As we were talking an adult leader from another community of faith stopped to listen to our stories. He shared some of his experiences with us from the day. I believe he truly felt welcomed and like he belonged with us! That my friends was the theme of this day at the assembly. "We BELONG!" The truth is his presence among us was exactly what WE needed! Oh... and talk about ironies that God shares... this man is a very close friend of the UPG'S very own Kenny Young!

Now we rest! Tomorrow we will hit the streets of Houston to share more of God's love! Feeling and sharing God's love truly does change everything!

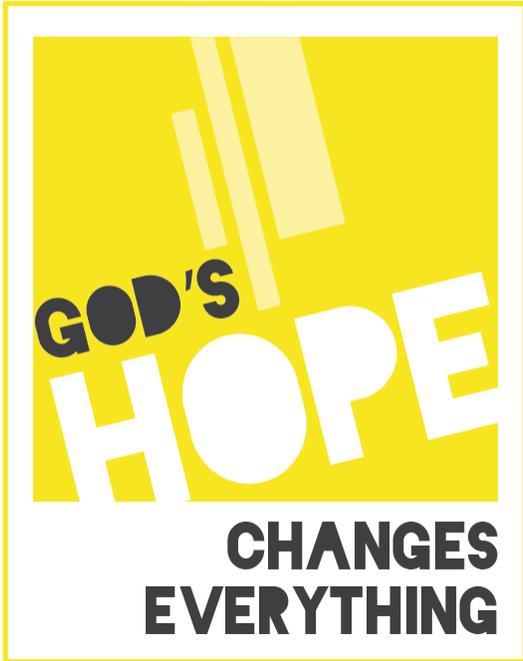
Good night my sisters and brothers... rest well knowing you are loved...and you belong!



FRI JUNE 29 DAY OF SERVICE







SATURDAY JUNE 30 2PM

Howdy from Texas! Today's theme is God's hope changes everything! This morning our group gathered at breakfast and reflected on the road to Emmaus text. You remember... disciples thinking Jesus is dead and gone walking along the road to Emmaus when suddenly Jesus "shows up" on the scene. This encounter with Jesus obviously inspired hope.

We spoke about how we bring hope to people. Our youth felt like extending an open and welcoming presence in the world brings hope into lives. Hope that a person feels welcomed and belongs somewhere. Hope built on the truth that a loving God has created you and loves you and so from one of God's kids to another... you belong and are welcome.

I challenged our team this morning to find a person they don't know and to really get to know them more than just a name and where they are from.

Then we went off to the interactive learning center... think expo or farm show. There are a lot of fun offerings for our youth like rope courses and games but there are also great educational booths set up. In one of these booths we took a virtual reality tour of a village in Africa where the ELCA is accompanying the people in developing agricultural diversity.... here's the awesome connector. ... if you remember during Lent the UPG collected offerings to purchase goats... we got to experience a place where goats are shared with our sisters and brothers in Christ living in Africa! Powerful! And all of a sudden Bethlehem Pa and the people of the UPG don't seem so far away from the people of Millawe village in Africa!

Hope received by us in our relationship with God and in relationship of our new community of faith and hope shared by us Witherspoon the people who receive goods from the ELCA farming initiative really does change everything. Peace to you all Pj

JUNE 30 10PM

"I want a church that doesn't just welcome me. I want a church that celebrates ALL people."

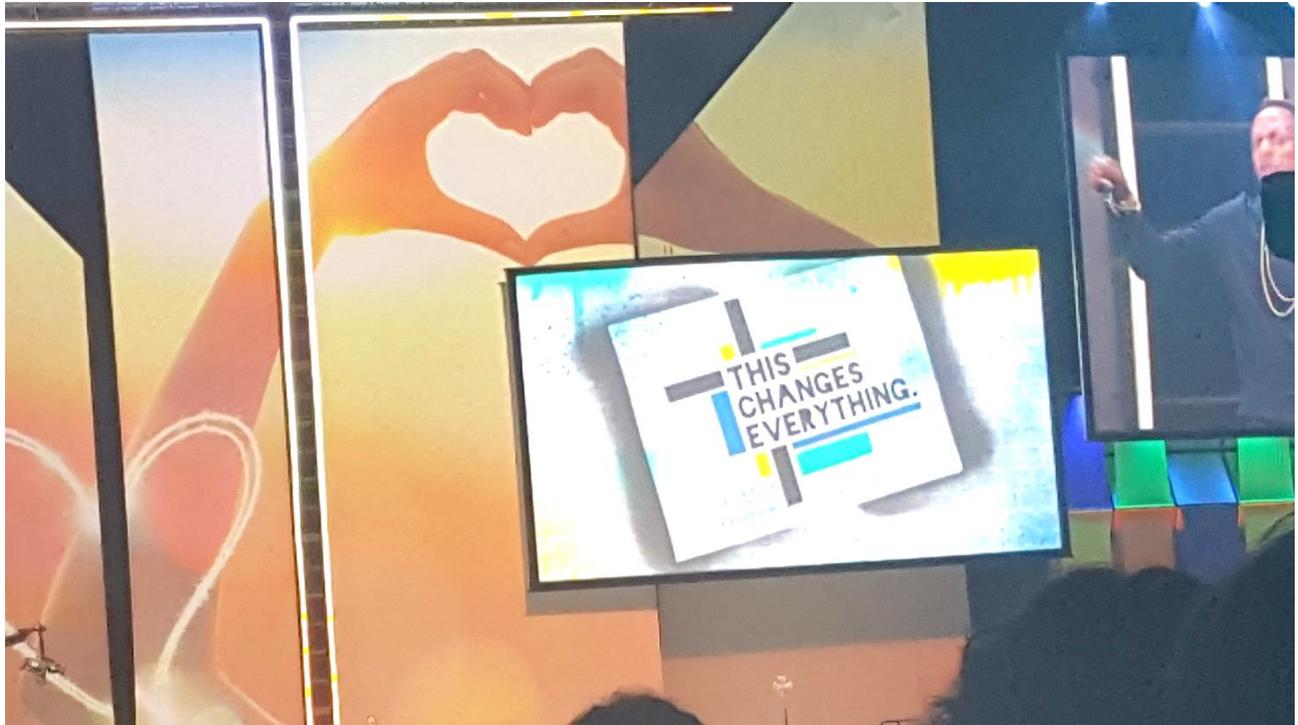
These words spoken in front over 30000 of us by an 11-year-old girl! A transgender who looks, acts, and plays like any other child. An 11-year-old girl who just wants to be loved and supported like any person in the world....and I simply ask...shouldn't every beautifully and wonderfully made child of God be able to be loved and supported?

On this night we've heard from a 20-year-old young man who is two years sober from drugs after 7 years of abuse. You can do the math. He was 11 when he began smoking pot! Soon enough pot became stronger drugs. By his own words it was only through God's hope expressed through his white middle class church going family in which he was finally able to realize that he was loved and beloved by God... and he was enough.

Still another speaker who has been doing incredible work in food redistribution... oh by the way...she shares that nearly 40% of the food produced in our country ends up in landfills... unconsumed. She's on a mission to change that!

The stories. The power of the gospel. God's love poured out on this broken world shares a desperately needed world of hope in our time! And that Hope my sisters and brothers can truly CHANGE EVERYTHING!

Thank You Lord! Thank You! Peace for now my family. Pj



JUNE 30 midnight

Our final evening reflection is complete. Our young people are mingling with their new friends. Shirley has gone to bed. My prayers have been offered to our Lord, but instead of sleeping my mind is mulling over this experience.

I've been through enough of these experiences to know that come Monday the lives of Shirley and I and the rest of our UPG ambassadors will return to "normal". I am also keenly aware that you were not able to be physically present with us in Houston; although trust me when I share with you all that indeed your spirit has been with us throughout this experience.

I also understand that your lives continued in our absence; your daily vocations, your daily chores, your Joy's, and your trials. I know that in previous experiences that I've had such as this one that the exhilaration wears off, the good intentions of make substantive change based on new learning fades, and soon enough the daily grind consumes and before you know it events such as these become a treasured memory.

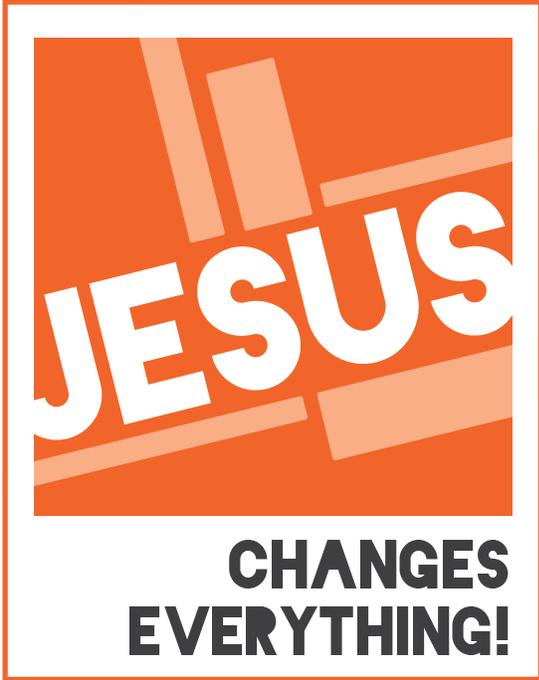
I hope and pray that I can sense my heart when I share with you all that if this happens...it would be tragic! If we are unable to use an event such as this one to stimulate renewed thought and practices in our community of faith we will have missed an incredible opportunity that God has provided us!

You see... we are still in our infancy as the UPG... we are truly in a perfect situation to reimagine what our community might be, how we might be able to proclaim God's love in 2018 and beyond that is relevant and profound in the fast-paced world that all of us now live in.

Trust me when I share with you that if we are able to run with God's Spirit that has been present in the UPG since our formation and combine that with the same passion and openness that we experienced in Houston, not only each of our lives be renewed and refreshed in faith but we will be bearing a bold and courageous vision of discipleship with the world around us.

Pray my sisters and brothers. Pray that our Lord will inspire myself and the leadership to continue to pursue God's spirit moving among us. Pray that all of our sisters and brothers in Christ would allow their hearts and minds be so moved by the Spirit that we would all carry a hopeful expectation of what might await us on our continued journey together and to not have a fear of what we might have to concede to continue to move forward to thwart our efforts. Pray that each of us would become fully enveloped in understanding that God shared such an abundance of grace in this world that we can move forward unfettered by any fear of failing!

As I told our youth I now share with you. Moments such as this one are truly precious... we should live in the moment that our Lord has so graciously shared and enjoy it to its fullest. For now...peace and blessings to you! And remember God's love truly does change everything! Pj



JULY 1 at 2pm

Preparing to board our plane
My eyelids are beginning to strain.
A week of God's call, grace, hope and love
Helped us feel like we could fly with a dove.
A dove of peace in the midst of trial,
We face the world with God's love ... not denial.
We welcome those like us and those who are not.
For God's love on us has created an indelible spot.
We thank you for your support, your thoughts and your prayer.
But It's time to fly ... or at least that's what I hear.
So see you soon my friends and we will sing.
GOD'S LOVE FOR THIS WORLD CHANGES EVERYTHING!
Peace Pj



UPG 2018 SUMMER SCHEDULE HIGHLIGHTS

Third Sunday Joint Worship in July and August

July 15, 2018 8 AM Light of Christ Campus
August 19, 2018 10 AM Bethlehem Township Park with Town Hall & Church Picnic

Saturday Worship on the Lawn! Outdoor Worship 5PM First Saturdays

First Saturday of each month, August 4 and September 1
5PM on the Light of Christ Campus - Fellowship Picnic Dinner after worship

THIS WEEK IN THE UPG

July 8-15, 2018

Sunday July 8

8:00 AM Worship (LoC)
10:00 AM Worship (St. P)
2:00 PM Pastors/Guardians Worship (St. P)
7:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous (LoC)

Monday July 9

12 Noon UPG Ladies Luncheon (Palace Restaurant)
7:00 PM Mutual Ministry Committee

Tuesday July 10

8:00 AM UPG Staff Meeting (St. P)
10:00 AM Thrift Shop Volunteers
6:00 PM Brewing Theology (TAPS Restaurant Route 309)
7:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous (LoC)
7:00 PM Pastors/Guardians Worship (St. P)

Wednesday July 11

6:30 AM Men's Fellowship (St. P)
9:00 AM Christian Service (LoC)
6:30 PM Holden Evening Prayer (St. P)

Thursday July 12

9:00 AM Bible Study (LoC)
12 Noon LV Christian Chinese Church study (St. P)
7:00 PM Pastors/Guardians Worship (St. P)
7:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous (LoC)
7:00 PM UPG Stewardship/Evangelism Team (LoC)

Friday July 13

6:00 PM LV Christian Chinese Church Worship (St. P)

Saturday July 14

9:00 AM **UPG Leadership Retreat (St. P)**
5:00 PM ***Outdoor Worship and Picnic Dinner! (LoC) with
Installation of UPG VBS Staff***
7:00 PM Pastors/Guardians Worship (St. P)

Sunday July 15

8:00 AM **UPG Joint Worship at Light of Christ**
2:00 PM Pastors/Guardians Worship (St. P)
7:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous is cancelled tonight at LoC

JULY WORSHIP MINISTERS

Date	June 30, July 1 8A LoC, 10A St. P	July 7, July 8 8A LoC, 10A St. P	July 14, July 15 8A LoC Joint Worship	July 21, July 22 8A LoC, 10A St. P
Assisting Minister	5PM – Rosalie Adducie 8A – Susan Schellenberg 10A – Donna Musselman	5PM – Rosalie Adducie 8A – Rev. Deborah Wagner 10A – Taylor Baggest	5PM – Rosalie Adducie 8A – Tony Villani	5PM – Rosalie Adducie 8A – Rosalie Adducie 10A – Rev. Deborah Wagner
Communion Assistant	8A – Sandy Horwath, Rich Hasonich, Rev. Deborah Wagner, Cliff Bengston 10A – Nancy Kostas	8A – Joan Erb, Karen Favinger, Jen Grube, Ron Horwath 10A – Cindy Kemp	8A- Sandy Horwath, Mike Horwath, Ron Horwath	8A – Joan Neff, Susan Schellenberg, Tony Villani, Rev. Deborah Wagner 10A -Michel Lloyd
Lector	8A – Jennifer Grube 10A – Michel Lloyd	8A – Ryan Grube 10A – Sue DeAngelis	8A – Rich Hawk	8A – Shirley Kulp 10A – Nancy Kostas
Acolyte/ Crucifer	8A -Olivia Grube 10A – Ethan Seixas	8A – Delynn Gerhard 10A – Matthew Bleier	8A – Melissa Harvey	8A – Patrick Nolan 10A – Evan Hawk
Baker	8A – Olivia Grube 10A – Gina DeAngelis	8A – Sandy Horwath 10A – Sue DeAngelis	8A – Barbara Keener	8A- Louise Fielding 10A – Shirley Kulp
Ushers	8A – Jack Reichel, Joan Erb 10A – Tony DeAngelis Jr., Gerry Cutsler, Joan Helman, Dolores Kennedy	8A – Rich Hasonich, Lois Zigmund 10A – Bleier Family	8A – Cliff Bengston, Joan Erb	8A – Steve and Bonnie Harper 10A – Rich Hawk, Cindy Kemp, Wilma Kolman, Nancy Kostas
Greeters	8A – Cliff Bengston 10A – Mary Bender, Jackie/Dan Groff	8A – Joan Erb 10A – Barbara Keener, Shirley Kulp	8A – Karen Favinger	8A – Louise Fielding 10A – Donna Musselman, Susan Swavely
Altar Guild (LoC)	Joan Erb, Jean Perry	Joan Erb, Jean Perry	Joan Erb, Jean Perry	Joan Erb, Jean Perry
Flower Delivery (LoC)	Need Volunteers	Need Volunteers	Need Volunteers	Need Volunteers
Sexton	Tony DeAngelis Jr.	Ron Frankenfield	Kim Frankenfield	Kenny Young
Nursery (LoC)	Need Volunteers	Need Volunteers	Need Volunteers	Need Volunteers