

WESTERN STATES
YOUTH GATHERING

+ **BALANCE** IN THE **ANCE** +



CALIFORNIA LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY
THOUSAND OAKS, CA JULY 1-5, 2011

“So what do you think? With God on our side like this, how can we lose? If God didn’t hesitate to put everything on the line for us, embracing our condition and exposing himself to the worst by sending us his own Son, is there anything else he wouldn’t gladly and freely do for us? And who would dare tangle with God by messing with one of God’s chosen? Who would dare event to point a finger? The One who died for us- who was raised to life for us! – in the presence of God at this very moment sticking up for us! Do you think anyone is going to be able to drive a wedge between us and Christ’s love for us? There is no way! Not trouble, not hard times, not hatred, not hunger, not homelessness, not bullying threats, not backstabbing, not even the worst sins listed in Scripture... I am absolutely convinced that nothing – nothing living or dead, angels or demonic, today or tomorrow, high or low, thinkable or unthinkable – absolutely nothing can get between us and God’s love because of the way that Jesus our Master has embraced us.” Romans 8:31-38

So, you have a lot going on in your life? Sometimes in the middle of school and work, family and friends, expectations and hopes don’t you just scream out for a break? Google “balanced life” and see what you come up with. There are dozens of voices ready to tell you how you can keep your life in balance. How is one to keep it together?

So, what is “in the balance?” where are your hopes and dreams, your efforts and expectations taking you? What is at stake and in the end what really matters? When the world seems to be pulling you in all directions at the same time the words of Paul are welcome. There is NOTHING that can separate from the love of Christ.

We are so glad that you have come here to be with us in this the 8th Western States Youth Gathering. We have come a long ways since 1990. Many of you remember the first Western States. Some of you are new to this event. In our time together we will hear great speakers, worship with praise and thanksgiving, hear fabulous musicians, experience great learning and participate in service to the World. It is our prayer that as we are family to one another over the next five days that we all will be blessed by the love of God in Jesus Christ who is our balance and who calls us to lead lives that make a difference.

Peace be with you,
Pastor Larry Wagner & Pastor Arne Bergland
co-directors of the 2011 WSYG

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SCHEDULE

Friday, July 1

- 2:00 pm Registration begins
- 4:00 Adult orientation (attendance mandatory) - Chapel
- 5:00-7:00 Dinner
- 7:15 Doors open for main session
- 7:30-9:15 Main Session Gilbert Sports Arena
- 9:30 Late adult orientation - Gilbert Sports arena
- 9:30-11:30 Night life options
- 12:00 Church devotions
- 1:00 am Lights out

Saturday, July 2

- 7:00-8:30 am Breakfast
- 8:30 – 9:30 Morning worship - Gilbert Sports Arena
- 10:00-11:00 Learning #1
- 11:00-1:30 pm Outdoor barbecue lunch
- 1:30 – 2:30 Learning #2
- 3:00 – 4:00 Learning #3
- 4:00 - 5:00 CLU Scavenger Hunt - meet at the Might Luther Statue
- 5:00- 7:00 Dinner
- 7:15 Doors open for main session
- 7:30-9:15 Main session Gilbert Sports Arena
- 9:30-11:30 Night life options
- 12:00 Church devotions
- 1:00 am Lights out

Sunday, July 3

- 7:00 – 9:00 am Breakfast
- 9:30- 10:45 Morning worship Servant event commissioning
Gilbert Sports Arena
- 11:00-5:00 pm Servant Event
- 5:00- 7:00 Dinner
- 7:15 Doors open for main session
- 7:30-9:15 Main session - Gilbert Sports Arena
- 9:30-11:30 Night life options
- 12:00 Church devotions
- 1:00 am Lights out

Monday, July 4

- 7:00 - 9:00 am Breakfast
- 10:00-11:45 Main session Gilbert Sports Arena
- noon - 5:00 pm Fourth of July Celebration on campus
- 5:30 Transportation begins to Oaks Mall
- 6:00 - 12:00 am Fourth of July Celebration at Oaks Mall

Tuesday, July 5

- 7:00 - 8:30 am Breakfast
- 9:30 Doors open for main session - Gilbert Sports Arena
- 10:00-11:45 Closing worship - Gilbert Sports Arena
- Box Lunch (pick up on your way out)
- Checkout

GENERAL INFORMATION

Entrance to the Gilbert Arena

Due to the construction of the new Football Stadium you are invited to cross the bridge over Olsen road, turn right up the walkway toward the swimming pool, turn left before you get to the pools and follow the signs into the Gilbert Arena.

Gathering Offering

At our Tuesday closing worship an offering will be received. The offering will be sent to the ELCA Malaria Campaign, The ELCA Malaria Campaign enables our church to join with African companion churches in the global effort to prevent, treat, and contain malaria by 2015. The ELCA Malaria Campaign has a \$15 million goal. Funds raised will benefit our Lutheran companion churches and companion organizations in ten African countries: Angola, Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Meals

Most of our meals will be served in Kingsman park along the creek. A box lunch will be served on Sunday. Our evening meal on the Fourth of July will be at the Oaks mall parking lot where we will gather to view the fireworks. Please note meal times. No meals will be served before or after listed times.

Keys and Wristbands.

Each participant will receive a wristband and a key on a lanyard. The wristband needs to be worn at all times. If the wristband breaks it may be brought to the Gathering office (in the Gilbert sports arena) broken wristbands will be replaced for free. Lost wristbands will be charged \$25.00 Each participant will have a key to their room. If you lose your key you will be billed \$50.00.

Dorm Access

The dormitory doors are locked from midnight to 6 a.m. each night. Each group will be issued one electronic access card. It is assumed that everyone will be in their dorms by midnight. Campus security must be contacted for after hours access.

Emergency Information

In the case of an emergency dial 911. As nearly as possible inform 911 where you are on campus. When you are able contact Campus Security. For other needs there are two options listed below. For specific directions to either facility from where you are on campus contact Campus Security (numbers listed below)

Los Robles Emergency Room

On the corner of Janss Road and Lynn/Olsen Road

Non-Emergency Healthcare

Urgent Care and Family Practice is available after hours at Thousand Oaks Urgent Care located at 620 E. Janss Road near the corner of Moorpark Rd. and Janss Rd. (805) 495-6866. Please check with them to make sure they take your insurance.

Campus Security

x3911 (from on-campus phone) or (805) 493-3911 (from off-campus phone)

Being a Good Neighbor

The university is located in a residential neighborhood and we like to be good neighbors. The neighborhood really likes it when we are not too noisy between the hours of 10p.m. and 6 a.m. We are planning activities that allow us to do that. As you travel about campus during those hours please help by keeping the noise down.

During the summer time skateboards are not allowed on campus.

Please observe the 1:00 am. Lights out. The Fourth of July we will be arriving back at campus late so do your best at this one!

There will be other groups on campus, please be respectful of others.

Gathering Office

The Gathering office will be open ½ hour before and ½ hour after each main session. It is located in the concession stand at the Gilbert Sports Arena. Please note that Linda will be accepting gifts of chocolate and/or licorice.

FOURTH OF JULY - NOON TO 5:00 PM

Following our morning session join us in Kingsman Park for a 4th of July Barbecue and then head back to the dorms. The pool will be open, there will be a beach volleyball and also a 3 on 3 basketball tournament. Look at the 2nd volleyball court for water balloon volleyball. We will have more inflatables (including some wet ones!) a dunk tank (get your adults to sign up to be dunked) popcorn, cotton candy, sno-cones. It's a PARTY!

FOURTH OF JULY EVENING EVENT

We'll enjoy the Fourth of July in a reserved area of the parking lot of the Oaks Regional Shopping Center. This specially designated area will be the site of our evening meal, some recreational activities as we wait for dusk to set in, and it will offer the prime viewing area for the annual community fireworks show of the Conejo Valley. A special activity is being planned for the parking lot as we wait for traffic to clear following the fireworks spectacular. Bring a jacket or sweatshirt with you because it can cool down once the sun has set.

Again, if you traveled to the Gathering in a church van or vehicle that can transport your group, you will be invited to drive your group to the Oaks Mall. Directions will be provided. Two buses from Ascension Lutheran Church and one bus from Bethel Lutheran Church will provide shuttle service for groups who have traveled by air and/or who would prefer not to battle the traffic surrounding the fireworks show in your own vehicle. Groups will be picked up at a designated area near the residence halls at CLU, and returned to the same locations.

SERVANT EVENT

Our Servant Event for this Western States Youth Gathering will be a major food drive for Manna, the local food bank serving the needs of the 135,00 residents of the Conejo Valley. Manna serves a growing number of individuals and families who live in the margins of life in the communities of our valley.

The community has been alerted to our presence this week, and been told that we will be going door to door, inviting people to donate canned goods, boxed goods, paper goods, etc. This is our opportunity to give something back to our host city, which has become a “best practice” of all ELCA Youth Gatherings. Each church group will be assigned a specific neighborhood, with map in hand, to go door to door asking for donations. Groups who have come to the Gathering with their own transportation, are encouraged to use their own “wheels” to get to their work site. Groups that flew to the gathering, will either be assigned to neighborhoods adjacent to the CLU campus, or will be transported to their assigned neighborhood. Support vehicles will cruise those neighborhoods to pick up bags of food as you gather them and fill them. You will have “flyers” in hand identifying our group, and Manna as the recipient of our gathered goods.

NIGHT LIFE

A variety of activities fill our time between evening sessions and group devotions. Night life is planned between 9:30 and 11:30 p.m. Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The chapel will host a concert each evening and in the circle around the chapel a variety of inflatable games. In the Preus-Brand forum Friday and Sunday night is the WSYG minute to win it contest. On Saturday we have a magician show from the famous Hollywood Magic Castle. Friday and Sunday there will be a dance with DJ at a to be announced location. All of this adds up to a lot of FUN so dive in.

BOOKSTORE HOURS

The CLU bookstore will have a table at Registration on Friday. Their hours on Friday and on Tuesday are 9-5.

JULY 1

Well we made it! Let's hope that travel to CLU was uneventful, that everyone has a dorm room and is able find Kingsman park for supper!

Our theme verse for our opening mass gathering is Psalm 139:13-16.

Our speaker will be Rachael Marie Manzo a 23 year old native of Santa Barbara and possesses an extraordinary amount of energy which always rubs off on others and loves to meet new people. She is completing her Masters at California Lutheran University in their Teacher Preparation Program. She has always wanted to be a teacher and remains constant in this dream while looking into seminaries for further religious education. In her spare time, Rachael, cooks with her friends, laughs a ton, and makes new discoveries about where God is guiding her. She wouldn't be the person she is today if it weren't for prayer and a lot of sunshine! While the culture around us would tell us that 'image' is everything, Rachael has fresh and transparent insights regarding self image especially as it relates to being created in the image of God."

Most of you have heard or know about our Musician Agape an old friend of youth ministry and the Western States. Tonight will be your first opportunity to rock the house led by our house band.

Each day we will have different hosts as each synod of Region 2 of the ELCA represents. Tonight Bishop Dean Nelson from the Southwest California Synod will be with us. Bishop Nelson is joined by our emcees for the evening, Owen Miller and Caleb Arndt.

Now it is time for NIGHT LIFE a number of really fun activities are planned. Enjoy your time experiencing what is offered!

Remember as the night runs down to spend some time in conversation with your group. Reflecting on our experience together helps us to get the most out of the Gathering! You might spend time planning your choices for the learning activities tomorrow.

JULY 2

The day begins with worship. The staff from one of our Southern California Bible camps, El Camino Pines is planning worship today and tomorrow. It is a great way to start the day. Following worship it is a learning day. You will have three opportunities to choose from a wide variety of offerings. New to the WSYG this year is the chance to hear from the youth of each of the synods of Region 1. They will be sharing about what they are up to in youth ministry. There are a number of other excellent opportunities planned in addition, so it will be a full day.

Our evening program theme verse is Proverbs 3:5-6. Tonight we are looking at how it can be difficult for us to find balance in the midst of our busy lives. Our hosts tonight come to us from the Pacifica Synod. Joining us will be Bishop Murray Finck and youth emcees Kari Scheer and Billy Kropp. The house band will be with us and also a WSYG favorite Rachel Kurtz! Tonight we will get to experience a local band Van Nuys. There also will be some time for street poetry with Matt Soto

Our speaker tonight is Paula Sturgeon. Paula was born in Kansas in the 1950's; walking and talking at a very early age. This 'picture perfect' beginning was derailed when, at the age of 14 months, she was diagnosed with polio. Two months later an additional diagnosis of Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis meant that life would never be 'picture perfect'. Since then Paula has had over thirty major surgeries; the most recent of which was an above-knee amputation. Whether it's keeping all four wheels of her power chair on the ground at the same time or staying upright on her computer-connected prosthetic device Paula has learned how to 'balance' matters of mobility. Her deep connection to God (and His gift of a quirky sense of humor) helps balance her life.

JULY 3

We begin the day with worship. Today we will be commissioned for our Servant project. Pastor Larry Wagner will have all the details about how we go about our food drive. Following worship we will get box lunches. (important...everyone needs to pick up their own lunch.) Then we will spend the afternoon canvassing Thousand Oaks gathering donations for Manna, a local food bank. How much food can we bring in? What would a pile of a couple thousand bags of groceries look like?

This evening our hosts come to us from the Rocky Mountain Synod. Linda Staats will be representing the Rocky Mountain Synod office joined by Abby Elston, Randi Schuler and Jacob Haslor.

Our theme verse for the evening is 2 Corinthians 4: 8-18

Paul Benz is our speaker tonight. Born in Oakland, California while his parents attended Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, Paul grew up a few miles from the Ohio River in Eastern Kentucky before moving to South Whidbey Island, Washington. Paul moved to Southern California in August 2001 where he earned a BA in Theatre Arts from California Lutheran University. He currently works as a clerk for Trader Joes, a Clinical Assistant for a drug and alcohol rehabilitation center in Malibu and has had Co-Star appearances on television shows: Criminal Minds, House, and The Event. He is a member of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church and lives in Thousand Oaks. Paul's work with the Malibu Rehab center provides him keen insights into the 'imbalance' delivered when one engages in drug and alcohol use.

As always our house band will be with us to lead us in music. Very special musical guests this evening are the members of the New City Parish Choir from Los Angeles.

JULY 4

It is the Fourth of July! We have a very special day planned as this great big family, the WSYG has a party.

We begin the day with our mass gathering. Today we have two theme verses; Isaiah 65:25 and John 15:15

Joining our Emcess today will be the Grand Canyon Synod Bishop Stephen Talmadge.

Rachel Kurtz will be here as will be the house band.

Our speaker is a popular speaker at youth events in California. Mr. Aaron Tidwell is a life-long Lutheran, and a life-long youth director. He simply cannot remember a time when matters of youth ministry were not at the front of his concern. Having served parishes in the southern California area, Aaron is most certainly drawn to the interior conversation shaped by the question, "what does this mean?" While he can play with the best, his listening and interactive skills set him apart as one of God's gifted children. Aaron will help us balance the interior life of the Christian in the community of faith. Following the mass gathering we will celebrate with a Fourth of July barbecue and a host of activities, including basketball, volleyball, swimming, inflatables, popcorn and cotton candy.

Around 5:30 will move the gathering off campus to the Oaks Mall. We have been given a private area to enjoy the best view of the fireworks show. There will be food and fun. Following the fireworks we have activities planned so that the parking lot can clear out. Then we have another chance to serve. As we help on the clean up of the Thousand Oaks Fourth of July celebration. It will be a late night and be sure that you bring a jacket as it can cool off at night here in Southern California.

JULY 5

Our final day together, we pray it has been a great event for you and that your youth group has had fun, worshipped and served well and grown in faith.

The theme verse for today is Revelation 21:5-7

Our closing event will be hosted by the Sierra Pacific Synod. Bishop Mark Holmrud will be joined by emcees Dylan King and Dominique Sims. Rachel Kurtz, the house band and Van Nuys will be with us as well.

Our final speaker is Manuel Retamoza. In his sixth year at St. Andrews San Diego, the parish cannot remember a time when he wasn't there. . Pastor Manuel was raised in Northern California, received his BA from Seattle Pacific University in 1994, taught preschool in San Joaquin Valley for three years and graduated from Luther Seminary in St Paul, Minnesota in the spring of 2004. Pastor Manuel is Associate Pastor of Youth and Family ministry. He is currently serving on the Multicultural Youth Leadership Event planning team, on the board for Third World Opportunities which organizes educational and service trips into Mexico, and a vital team player with the ELCA Youth Ministry Network Extravaganza Hospitality Team.

While he strives to communicate through contextual preaching with great emphasis in the liberating word of the Gospel of Christ, this becomes most evident in his day to day living. In his free time, Pastor Manuel spends time with his family enjoying San Diego and the Border. He also likes to golf whenever possible and enjoys listening to inane radio programs.

OUR LEARNING DAY OPTIONS

Most of our offerings will be in the Humanities building. One will be in Nygreen and one in the Gilbert Sports arena. You will receive more detailed descriptions after the Friday night main gathering in the Gilbert Sports arena.

“You Better Believe It” Mission Trip

Kimmy Sandfort 1:30 and 3:00 Room 107

Multi-Cultural Ministry

Pastor Craig Minich, Rosie Ellis-Falik, Dominique Sims, Kamila Jerrigan,
Amanda Briggs 10:00 Room 107
3:00 Room 108

The Sierra Pacific Youth Committee: Youth led and adult sponsored youth leadership in our Synod

Pastor Craig Minich, Rosie Ellis-Falik, Dominique Sims,
Kamila Jerrigan, Amanda Briggs 10:00 Room 110
1:30 Room 108

“I am the Change” Youth led Malaria Initiative

Linda Staats and the youth of the Rocky Mountain Synod
1:30 and 3:00 Room 109

Interactive Prayer Chapel and Labyrinth

Patty Erickson 10:00 / 1:30 / 3:00 Room 114

Meditation, Prayer, Devotion and Extreme Prayer

Azariah Parente, Zach Mennell, Billy Kropp, Brandon Delona, Kris Gerkins
10:00 Room 108 1:30 Room 111

One Salvation Youth Led Worship

Stephanie Myers, Belinda Karge, Betty Reaney, Nicole Sevcik, Zach Zeller,
Stephen Gomory 10:00 Room 109 1:30 Room 110

Joyful Noise Summer Camp

Stephanie Myers, Belinda Karge, Betty Reaney, Nicole Sevcik, Zach Zeller,
Stephen Gomory 3:00 Room 110

Rancho Milagro Mission Trip

Pastor Manuel Retamoza,, Jillian Beland, Tyler Duval, and Isabel Retamoza
10:00 and 3:00 Room 110

Christian Yoga S.O.S. "Save our Souls"

Korra Looschen 10:00 and 1:30 Room 112

"Citizens with the Saints" New Orleans 2112

Birgit Webster and Terri Robertson 10:00 Room 113 3:00 Room 112

Mission to Mexico

Jessica Webster and Birgit Webster 1:30 and 3:00 Room 113

Youth Band

Tom Hoegel and The House Band 10:00 Gilbert Sports Arena

Youth Ministry: Standards and Guidelines for Professionals and other Youth Ministry leadership tools.

Pastor Rick Schowalter 10:00 1:30 3:00 Room 116

Surprising Women of the Bible and Church History

Pastor Gloria Espeseth 1:30 Room 117

Peter and Cornelius

Pastor Gloria Espeseth 3:00 Room 117

Climate Change

Allis Druffel 10:00 and 3:00 Room 120

Lutherans and Criminal Justice

Mark Carlson 10:00 and 1:30 Room 119

Spirituality in the On and Off Position

Colleen Windham Hughes 1:30 Room 120

3:00 Room 119

College Admissions for Youth Leaders

Jenny Charrett 3:00 Nygreen 6

CLU ADMISSIONS SCAVENGER HUNT: SATURDAY 4:00 starts at the Mighty Luther statue.

Wear your running shoes. We will divide into teams to search the campus for clues learning about CLU on the way. Great prizes for the teams that complete the course first! **Not to be missed**

WSYG 11 THANKS!

Many Thanks to all who worked so hard to see the WSYG a reality. First of all a huge thank you to President Chris Kimball who never hesitated to open up the campus to this event. Second of all thanks to Dan, Vanessa and Dennis from Event Services as well as Martin and Debbie from Sodexo food service for their hard work supporting the ministry that is the Western States Youth Gathering. iSpecial thanks to our Bishops and Synod staff, the youth who emceed, provided learning opportunities, serves as Servant Corps, and local volunteers who helped with the Servant project

Finally, thank you to the Gathering team: Linda Leblanc, Scott Maxwell Doherty, Tom Hoegel, Tim Huff, Rick Schowalter, Ashley Zook, Janet Rennick, Michael Sladek, Larry Wagner and Arne Bergland.

