Lutheran Youth Organization

2026 LYO Assembly

Advice about bringing a Group to LYO

Child Protection Training for Adult Leaders

It is the expectation of the North Carolina Synod that all adult leaders in attendance would have completed some form of child protection training and have a recent background check on file with their congregation (current within the last three years). If you have folks needing to complete the Safe Gathering training, please have them complete this by February 1 in order to have time for their references to come in. It's also good for them to pick people for their references that are SUPER prompt.

To facilitate this expectation, we have contracted with Safe Gatherings to provide both the training and background checks. www.safegatherings.com
You do not need your congregational log-in to do the training. The login credentials sent to your pastor are for congregational administration only. To start, just click the red "get started" button and click Lutheran, North Carolina and then your congregation should appear when you start typing. If you need help getting started, please email Pastor Cassie Overcash (covercash@nclutheran.org)
If your congregation uses another system for training and backgrounds, please submit the form below for certification. Safe Gatherings is not the required system. It is one vehicle that we are recommending as simple, comprehensive, and online for easy access. If you use Safe Gatherings you do not have to submit names to the synod. We are able to see exactly who has completed their training and background checks online. http://tinyurl.com/zxr7d3j

Housing

We will do our best to honor housing requests. Please create your housing requests based on the following information:

- Double Room with Sleeper Sofa: 6 youth or 4 youth and 1 adult
- King Room with Sleeper Sofa: 4 youth or 2 youth and 1 adult
- PLEASE NOTE! We have a limited number of double rooms, the majority of your housing should be based on King Rooms
- For adults: there is an additional $100 cost per night for a single room; we recommend partnering with another congregation and sharing with their adults!
- Please put every person's first AND last name in the housing request.
- Tell your youth upfront that they are going to have to share a bed. We will not make them share a bed with someone outside of their youth group.

- Please mark on your housing sheet if there is extra room and if those youth would be okay sharing their room with youth from another church

Tip from a veteran adult leader: Unless your insurance or church requires it, there does not need to be an adult in every room. We have had to have a male adult in a room with our younger boys but otherwise they can be roomed together separately.

Navigating the Event

Before leaving, refresh parents on the cell phone policy for your church.

> Tip from a veteran adult leader: I require that each room has someone right by their phone when they go to bed in case there's an emergency, and I let them text me throughout the night if needed. Make sure that each adult has the cell phone numbers of everyone at LYO in your group.
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> Tip from Pastor James Demmel, LYO Board Advisor: If your youth are allowed to carry phones, create a group text for your youth attending LYO. Since they have some free time to roam this is helpful to re-gather them and to ensure they are on time to the main sessions.

If you arrive before 7:00 p.m. you will likely have time for the kids to take their stuff to their rooms and then join the whole group. If you arrive after 7:00 p.m., you may just want to leave their stuff in the bus/cars or in the designated ballroom and get it after programming.

At check-in Friday night, you will receive a sheet with all of the room numbers for your group as well as the congregational time devotions for each night (candlepower).

> Tip from a veteran adult leader: I usually take a picture of it and text to my small group leaders. I also encourage the adults that if they get off track or are intimidated by the material or whatever, just to use the time to talk about the experience thus far. How they feel about the theme, what is their small group like, and so on.

The rooms have refrigerators and often people get hungry. Let adults and youth know that they can bring snacks with them. Also, the synod orders pizza for everyone on Saturday night, two cheese pizza slices per person in a congregational group.

During the event, there will be “free time.” Decide on your expectations for free time: congregational check-in, games to bring, and so on. This year we are being more intentional and offering some options for free time activities!

> Tip from a veteran adult leader: If your adults feel comfortable with it, I would recommend that each adult take 5-7 kids as their small group for whom they are responsible. This is the adult that those kids would go to for questions, band-aids, feminine hygiene products, hurt feelings, etc. This person would also be responsible for making sure their group is in their rooms on time, up on time, etc.

When you leave Sunday morning, you can load the stuff before worship or after, just decide on one and make sure the kids know what’s going on.

Youth Meeting BEFORE the Event

Go over the Behavioral expectations/covenant – on the LYO Event page. It covers all the basic expectations. Challenge your youth to push a little more and commit to being fully engaged.

Phone use—Everyone is encouraged to keep phone use to a minimum during programming to be present and engaged. Save the scrolling and texting for breaks!

> Tip from a veteran adult leader: We do a lot through the event and have long days. Encourage them to pack snacks (especially for Friday night). Each room does have a refrigerator.

High School Small Groups are led by other youth and while these youth are super brave and stretching themselves to lead these small groups, they’re not always the best leaders due to lack of experience and confidence so please be patient with them and help them by being fully present and participating.

The dinner on Saturday is a “banquet” and the theme is congregational choice. As a group you can decide to dress up a certain way or just let your youth be wacky.

After the Saturday dinner, there is a dance and games time period of about two hours. Unless you are very ill, you are required to stay downstairs in either the dance room, game room, or quiet room. If for some reason you do NEED to go up to your room, an adult leader is required to go with you.

> Tip from a veteran adult leader: Before this time starts, tell the kids to bring their phones, or HW, or a book, and definitely earbuds to entertain themselves. Last year they had a quiet room set up. But they cannot just hang out in their rooms.