



New Jersey Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Fall 2019

Dear Synod Youth Retreat Adult Participant,

We are glad you and your youth group are coming to the New Jersey Synod's new Synod Youth Retreat, combining the best of Among the Wolves for our 6th - 8th graders and Winter Youth Assembly for our 9th - 12th graders. We look forward to an exciting weekend of fellowship, learning, and fun with you and your youth November 15 - 17, 2019. This letter contains important information for your weekend at Fairview Lakes YMCA Camp, so please read it carefully and forward the appropriate details onto your youth participants and their parents.

Thank you for your willingness to be a part of this important event. This is not only an opportunity for our youth to enjoy a safe, healthy weekend away with friends, but it also can be a time to connect (or reconnect) with the church and come face-to-face with God in their lives.

We have many different types of adults at this event: parents, pastors, youth group leaders, confirmation mentors, and more. We ask that all adults serve in three capacities during the event.

1. As a safe, healthy adult "presence" for all of the youth attending. We need you to act responsibly and appropriately with each other!
2. As a participant. This event, and all of its activities, are for all participants - both young and old. For those of you are not serving as a Small Group Leader, you will be a part of our Adult Small Group. We want you to be spiritually fed and challenged, too! Please remember that the rules, including participation in all of the activities, are for us adults to follow as well.
3. As a faith model. Please know that we expect models to demonstrate a proper Lutheran Faith: someone that has doubts, is imperfect, and doesn't know everything, but who is a triple "A" Christian: authentic, available, and affirming.

***** Here are some things to keep in mind as you and your group prepare for the retreat*****

LOCATION

We are holding our retreat again this year at the Fairview Lake YMCA Camp, www.fairviewlakeymca.org. This is a beautiful camp in the northwest corner of the state, near Newton, NJ. It's about 30 miles north of our Cross Roads Camp. It's address is 1035 Fairview Lake Road, Stillwater, NJ 07875.

GETTING TO THE SYNOD YOUTH RETREAT

In planning your travel, please note that the Friday evening drive will be affected by rush hour traffic coming out of NYC. Please factor in this traffic when calculating your travel time.

HOUSING

We will all be sleeping in heated cabins with built in bunks, electricity, and bathrooms with showers. You'll need to bring your own bedding or sleeping bags. Cabins will be assigned by gender with at least one adult in each cabin. We'll make every effort to house your group (by gender) in the same cabin.

SAFETY

Safety is our top concern at this retreat. In addition to physical safety, we want to keep everyone's possessions safe as well. The cabins are **not locked** at any time, so we ask that the youth and adult participants try to leave as many of their valuables at home as possible (ipods, cell phones, cash, etc). You may wish to collect your group's valuables and keep them locked in your car during the retreat.

MEALS

Saturday breakfast, lunch, and dinner and Sunday breakfast are included at the retreat. Friday dinner and Sunday lunch are on your own (en route to and from the retreat).

FRIDAY DINNER

Friday dinner is NOT provided. Most groups eat dinner on the drive to Fairview Lake. If you would like to bring your dinner (either from home or picked up on the way) to Fairview Lake, your group can eat in the Dining Hall before the retreat begins.

SCHEDULE

The retreat schedule is attached separately. Please note that registration begins at 5pm on Friday and the retreat begins with Fun and Games in the Dining Hall at 7:30pm. The retreat ends approximately at 11:45 am on Sunday. Please plan on arriving in time to check in and settle into your cabins before the retreat begins at 7:30 pm.

OFFERING

Each year we collect a monetary offering and an "in-kind" offering. This year we are collecting supplies for Stamp Out Despair, a movement to help detainees communicate with their loved ones

High School Participants please bring:

Pocket Folders (may NOT contain any metal)

Forever Stamps

Global stamped envelopes. You have to get these at the post office.

Middle School Participants please bring:

Unstamped Business Sized Envelopes

Blank cards as well as greeting cards with envelopes.

Pre Stamped Business Sized Envelopes. You have to get these at the post office.

ADULT SCREENING PROGRAM

As a part of Fairview Lake Camp's commitment to safety, they use a screening program which is required for all adult guests on their property. We give them our registration list prior to the retreat, so that at registration all we'll need to do is confirm you are on the list and then you'll be given a bracelet to wear throughout the weekend. The program they use is called Raptor (www.raptortech.com), a well-known company that is used in many school districts and camps in NJ and around the country.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

In order to encourage greater physical activity during the retreat, there will be time for people to play outside, weather permitting. The camp has outdoor facilities for basketball, volleyball, touch football, Frisbee, tennis, and hiking. Please encourage your youth and adults to consider one of more of these activities and to bring appropriate clothing, shoes, and/or equipment.

WHAT TO BRING

- Casual, warm clothes, warm coat
- Two pairs of comfortable walking shoes
- Boots or other appropriate footwear
- Towel, toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, etc.
- Sheets, blankets, and pillow or sleeping bag
- Your Bible
- Snacks to share for Saturday night
- Sports, play equipment for free time
- Rain gear
- Items for the In-kind Offering
- Any prescribed medication
- A good flashlight (very important at night!)

FLASHLIGHT

One thing we have learned about Fairview Lake Camp is that at night it is very dark! Please make sure everyone brings a good flashlight. And remember that in the rain it is not a good idea to use your phone as a flashlight!

REMEMBER

ALL participants - youth, adult leaders, event staff - must stay on at Fairview Lake YMCA Camp the entire time. If someone must leave early, please inform and Event Leader as soon as possible.

Registration questions? Registrar, Dawn Roberts: 609-586-6800, droberts@njsynod.org

Payment questions? Bookkeeper, Lois Parrett: 609-586-6800, lparrett@njsynod.org

You can get directions to Fairview Lake on their website, www.fairviewlakeymca.org. If you have any other questions about the retreat, please contact Debra or Michael at the information listed below.

Youth and Family Ministry is an important part of our church's ministry, and we greatly appreciate the work that you are doing with your youth. Please keep the leadership team and participants in your prayers as we make the final preparations for this holy, wonderful weekend. You are in our prayers.

Sincerely

Debra Porowski and Pastor Michael Linderman

Event Coordinators

Email: youthmin@njsynod.org

Debra's Cell: 908-872-3482

Michael's Cell: 201-675-4591

Leadership Team:

Pastor Lee Zandstra, Chaplain

Alyssa Guatieri

Kathryn Schaefer

Tara Zigler

Jessica Clarke

JJ Keelan-Simpson

Victoria Thomas

Pastor Annemarie Cook

Pastor Sara Lilja

Madison VanHouten