

STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION

The granola bar pastor



Jonathan Hemphill always had a passion for young-adult ministry. “I just love young people,” he says. “I think they make the world go around.” But he had a hard time getting a young-adult ministry off the ground as the youth and young-adult pastor at an ELCA congregation in Los Angeles.

Finally, his senior pastor came to him and said that a young-adult ministry “doesn’t really feed into the church.” Jonathan wondered, “What if the church fed into them?” So he started making trips to El Camino College, a community college across the street from the church. He started the “Christian club,” an on-campus Bible study, a community of young adults who would come and read God’s word together.

It was by chance that someone gave him a whole pallet of granola bars. From that point on, he gave students granola bars, pens and pencils, and an invitation to his Bible study. “I became the granola pastor. People would come and get the granola bars, and we would talk and build community.” The Christian club grew and Another Level Ministries was born, an ELCA worshipping community supported in part by the Sunday offerings of ELCA members, the ELCA Southwest California Synod, and the ELCA churchwide organization. And they are still growing!

To read the full story visit www.LivingLutheran.com/granola.



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