

Have an idea of what you want to see the Gathering? Let us know!
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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



Idea submission

Do you know a great band, an inspiring speaker, fun games, service learning experiences, or just have some great ideas that you think that Gathering should consider? Well, we want to hear from you! Let us know your thoughts by submitting your idea [through our website](#). These ideas will be sent off to our many planning teams for their consideration. There's no idea too big or too small, we want to hear them all.



Financial assistance

[Financial assistance](#) is available for the 2018 Gathering. Please read the following carefully to become familiar with the process.

- The application for financial assistance opens July 15, 2017, and closes when all funds have been disbursed.
- Assistance is given based on the financial need of an individual and their family. Adult leaders should apply on behalf of their young person, using the same congregational ID number that they will use when registering for the Gathering.
- Up to \$300 per person will be provided. The amount will be seen as a credit to that person's account upon registration.
- Financial assistance is available only to youth participants.
- In larger congregations (15 or more people), up to 10 youth per congregation may be given financial assistance.
- Those who receive financial assistance should register within 30 days of receiving notice or risk having the funding removed from the congregational account.
- Assistance is not available for MYLE and the tAble registration fees as those costs are

already highly subsidized. Those attending MYLE or the tAble can apply for Gathering registration financial assistance.

Please check with your synod office to see if synodical funds are available. Questions regarding financial assistance can be directed to gathering@elca.org.

Volunteer applications

Would you like to volunteer at the Gathering and help our young people grow in faith and encounter Christ? Serving the youth of this church is a vocational calling that requires careful discernment. Every volunteer must agree to follow the terms of a volunteer code of conduct and submit to a background check by the ELCA. The volunteer application process opens on May 15, 2017, via links from our website. There are four volunteer categories: Local Volunteers, Community Life, Gathering Volunteer Corps, and Servant Companions. The responsibilities vary, and all volunteers (except Local Volunteers) must commit to being in Houston for one week. Volunteers arrive on Sunday, June 25, and depart Sunday, July 1, 2018.



For more information on these opportunities, check out our [volunteer registration page](#). You can also view our volunteer information [webinar here](#).

Transportation

We have a few updates for you concerning transportation at the Gathering.

- Transportation Management System, TMS, will be offering airport shuttles for groups of any size from the airport to their hotels. Costs will be \$20 per person. Registration for this service will be available in the fall of 2017.
- NRG Park will be offering free parking for busses with church names on them. All other parking will be \$10 per vehicle per day.
- Please consider subletting your bus. Partnership between the Gathering and our attendees will help us to transport everyone to our programming. Your generosity helps keep the Gathering rolling.



[Watch this message](#) from our Transportation Team leader, Kim Adams, for more information on transportation at the 2018 Youth Gathering.

The Houston Food Bank

The Gathering is excited to announce that over the course of the Gathering, 2,970 students will have the opportunity to sort food, prepare meals, and prepare food bags as a service learning opportunity with the [Houston Food Bank](#). The Houston Food Bank was named the 2015 Feeding America Food Bank of the Year. It takes in about 73 million pounds of food each year, and in 2015-2016, was able to provide 79 million meals across the Houston area. Most of the food the Houston Food Bank collects is sent to community food banks throughout the Houston area. We're

excited to partner with this important ministry and Houston, and share this experience with the youth joining us.



The Holy Spirit comes at Pentecost: Acts 2:1-4

How do we trust that everything is in the hands of a God we can't even see? In a country and world more divided than ever, this passage is a beacon of hope for those despairing. In the preceding passages, the disciples, betrayed by Judas, are searching for a new leader now that Jesus has died and ascended into heaven. They seem to be wondering the same thing we are: What now? To continue their work, the disciples



seek to travel and spread the good news and story of Jesus, however, they are separated by language. How can they transfer their message if they don't speak the same language as people they are talking to? Just then, the Holy Spirit comes down, in "what seemed to be tongues of fire" and settles to a rest on their shoulders. Suddenly, they are all speaking different languages, yet they can still understand one another! As they go out to spread the good news in these new languages, many accuse the disciples of drunkenness, as it is impossible for these Galileans to speak so many different tongues. Again, doubt is confronted. The people in the Bible had doubts and so do we – we are all human. Today, how are we supposed to face doubts about our future when things seem so bleak? You see, when we are at our lowest, when we doubt the most, and when every door seems closed, the Holy Spirit comes down and beckons us toward God. By providing presence and hope, God changes everything.

Erin Darnell, North Carolina

2018 Gathering timeline at a glance

- May 15, 2017** – [Volunteer application](#) opens
- July 15, 2017** – Volunteer application closes;
financial assistance application opens
- Sept. 15, 2017** – [Registration opens](#) and early bird
rate begins
- Nov. 16, 2017** – Regular registration rate begins

- Feb. 16, 2018** – Late registration rate begins
- May 15, 2018** – Registration closes and all
payments are due
- June 24-27, 2018** – [MYLE](#) and the [tAble](#)
- June 27-July 1, 2018** – [ELCA Youth Gathering](#)





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Contact us

Please [contact us](#) with your ideas and comments. Please forward this email to others who may be interested.
Mail: ELCA Youth Gathering, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631.

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