

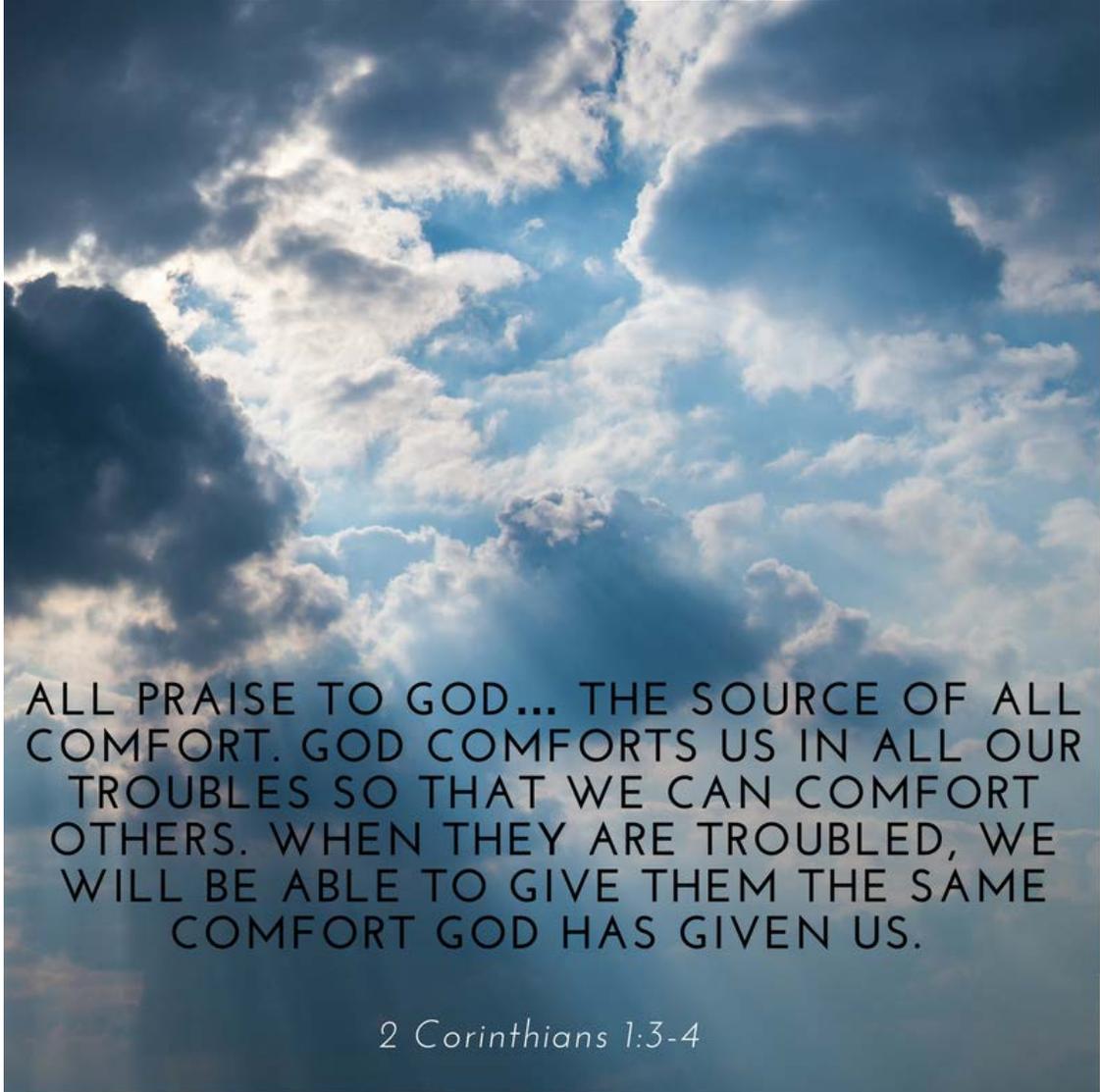
Have an idea of what you want to see at the Gathering? Let us know!  
[Download gNews](#) (under the Promotional Items tab). [View in your browser.](#)



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.



NEWS FROM THE 2018 ELCA YOUTH GATHERING + HOUSTON, TX



ALL PRAISE TO GOD... THE SOURCE OF ALL COMFORT. GOD COMFORTS US IN ALL OUR TROUBLES SO THAT WE CAN COMFORT OTHERS. WHEN THEY ARE TROUBLED, WE WILL BE ABLE TO GIVE THEM THE SAME COMFORT GOD HAS GIVEN US.

*2 Corinthians 1:3-4*

**Houston**

As the sun starts to shine again in the Houston area, people, businesses and churches start the initial wonderings and workings of thinking what's next. Many of you have asked questions and shown concern about Houston and the Gathering.

**Here's what we know now:**

- The 2018 Gathering is on! Registration opens Sept. 15.
- The Gathering WILL happen in Houston.
- NRG Park did not sustain damage.
- Water is receding from downtown and other areas.
- The hospitality/tourist industry is one of the first to bounce back after storms like this.
- We will continue to walk alongside the people of Houston and help in the ways they need us most.

**Here's what we don't know yet:**

- How many of our hotel properties sustained damage and to what extent. We will start reaching out to our hotels next week. We are expecting that most damage will be limited to the first floor and that hotels will be able to accommodate us in June.
- How this will affect our Service Learning opportunities. Our Service Learning team leader and Project Manager are Houston residents and will continue to work with partners in the city so that we can journey with the people of Houston and do the work they need us to do.

**Here's what we are hoping for:**

- That the ELCA shows up in a big way next summer in Houston.
- That you donate money to Lutheran Disaster Response.
- That you pray for all those along the Gulf Coast that will have to rebuild their lives after this storm.

## Registration

**Registration for the Gathering opens Sept. 15 at 12 p.m. Central!**

When registration opens, the primary adult leader will log in to the system via the congregational ID number and an email address and enter the information for each registrant. These two basic things – the congregational ID and the email address – become the key to accessing Gathering information for congregations. Housing assignments will be posted here and congregational payments will be applied as they come in, so you can always log in to see what your balance due is. All balances must be paid by May 15, 2018, before you arrive in Houston.



## How should you be preparing?

1. Hold an informational meeting with your youth and parents.
2. Hand out registration worksheets.
3. Start putting together your fundraising plan and payment plans.
4. Identify adult leaders for the Gathering.
5. Register for the [2018 ELCA Youth Ministry Network Extravaganza](#) (which will be in Houston!).
6. Start collecting registrations and deposits.
7. Know your congregational ID number.

## Registration costs

Registration costs are dependent on when you register. Early bird registration, Sept. 15-Nov. 15 is \$350. Regular registration, Nov. 16-Feb. 15, is \$390. Late registration, Feb. 16-May 15, 2018, will be \$440. A \$150 non-refundable, per person deposit is due at the time of registration and must be postmarked within the rate range you expect to pay. Registration fees are the same for youth and adult leaders.

## Registration worksheets

Registration worksheets are available on our [resources page](#). You can distribute these worksheets to your youth and adults who will attend. This is a great way to have all the information you'll need to register in one spot! Please take advantage of this great resource.

## Registration webinar:

Join us on Sept. 14 (the night before registration opens!) for a webinar hosted by the Gathering's own Donna Wiegel! She will be walking through the registration process and answering any questions you have! [Sign up](#).

## Registration incentives

Register during early bird registration and you not only get a lower registration rate, your congregation will be eligible to win some great prizes! Every Friday at 12 p.m. Central, the Gathering will select a registered congregation to win one of the following opportunities:

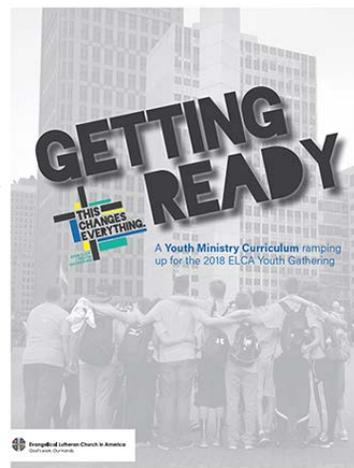
**GATHERING**  
**GIVEAWAYS!**

SEPT 22 + COMMUNITY LIFE **PRIORITY PASS**  
 SEPT 29 + INTERACTIVE LEARNING **PRIORITY PASS**  
 OCT 6 + **MEET AND GREET** WITH MASS GATHERING BAND  
 OCT 13 + **MEET AND GREET** WITH BISHOP EATON  
 OCT 20 + ONE FREE **GATHERING REGISTRATION**  
 OCT 27 + YOUR **CHOICE OF SEATS** FOR ONE NIGHT MASS GATHERING  
 NOV 3 + **PHOTO SHOOT** WITH YOUR YOUTH GROUP AT NRG STADIUM  
 NOV 10 + **DONUTS** ON YOUR SERVICE LEARNING BUS  
 NOV 15 + **EMCEES** WILL WEAR YOUR GROUP OR CONGREGATION T-SHIRT ONE NIGHT

@elcagathering

## Getting Ready materials

Have you gotten your Getting Ready materials yet? Download your copy of this great resource today! The Gathering's Getting Ready resources are based on group building, Bible study and faith-based conversation for use with congregational groups before and after the Gathering. Twelve lessons will be developed – nine for use in the months leading up to the Gathering and three for taking your experience home. Eight of the nine pre-Gathering lessons are [available now!](#) The ninth lesson will be for use in the final weeks leading up to the Gathering. Because it will contain last-minute details, it will not be posted until the spring of 2018. The three post-Gathering lessons will be available shortly after the Gathering. It is our goal to create most of the Getting Ready curriculum with themes that could be used for your entire youth ministry group, not just those attending the Gathering.



## Houston reflection

As we continue to pray for Houston and the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod, here's a reflection from Cody Miller, Houston resident and ELCA Youth Gathering's Service Learning

Project Manager:

On Tuesday, Aug. 29, rain started to let up and streets and highways started to drain. Houston's main downtown convention center, George R. Brown, was opened for evacuees to seek shelter. I went early that morning to see how I could help, as did thousands of other people. We saw acts of heroism from regular citizens with their boats rescuing stranded people. I got emotional again. It was incredible to see stranger helping stranger, neighbor helping neighbor, and people helping people.



## 2018 Gathering timeline at a glance

July 15, 2017 – Financial assistance application opened

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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