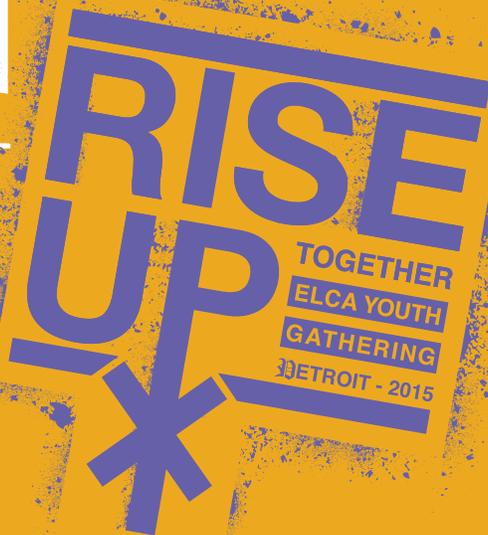


ELCA YOUTH GATHERING

Getting Ready
Materials

— 2015 —



LESSON SIX

RIISING UP AND STICKING TOGETHER
Leader Guide

#RiseUpELCA



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

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LEADER GUIDE

Please read this leader guide in its entirety before continuing on to the lesson plan. The leader guide is essential to prepare you to teach this lesson to your group.

OVERVIEW

This lesson will help participants create personal goals for the trip to Detroit. It will get them thinking about the change or growth they hope to experience. It will also help your group develop a covenant. Lastly, this lesson will cover important safety tips for your time in Detroit.

THIS LESSON IS DESIGNED TO BE ATTENDED BY PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR PARENTS OR GUARDIANS.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Participants will gain clarity of their personal goals for their trip to Detroit.
2. Participants will commit to a group covenant.
3. Participants will know what they need to do to stay safe while in Detroit.

BACKGROUND MATERIAL

Personal goals: Growth and transformation rarely happen by accident. We increase the Gathering's impact when we help the participants articulate their own goals and desires for the trip. They might not know how they want to grow or change on this trip, but it is an important task to help them realize these things. Many will simply say they want to have fun and make new friends. These are admirable goals. But it is also important to push them to explore other ways they hope to grow and change.

Group covenant: A list of rules developed by a team of adults and forced upon a group of youth is rarely effective. Covenants created by and agreed upon by the entire group tend to work better. It is important for your group to spend some time talking about how they want to behave and be treated while in Detroit. Covenants for trips like this don't hold much authority unless they are enforced. There are two important ways to enforce the covenant. First, review the covenant with the group on a daily basis while on the trip. Ask them how they are keeping it and how they are breaking it or bending it. The second way to enforce the covenant is to work with the group to develop consequences for breaking the covenant. You will notice that the youth are likely to be stricter than the adults when discussing consequences. This is an opportunity to talk about grace, forgiveness and Christian community.

Safety: Detroit has been in the national news for the last few years for being unsafe. The ELCA Youth Gathering's Safety and Security team has been working diligently with local law enforcement to ensure safety for all participants. They are confident it will be a safe Gathering. There are things we can all do as individuals to help keep our selves out of danger. This lesson will cover some of these things.

PREPARATION

The lessons in the Getting Ready Materials are not the type of lessons that allow you to “grab and go.” You cannot print these off and run into your group’s meeting. They will require you to spend some time preparing.



This month’s Getting Ready lesson was written by Jeremy Myers. Jeremy teaches in the Religion Department at Augsburg College in Minneapolis, where he oversees the college’s [youth and family ministry degree program](#).

Please follow these steps in preparing to lead this lesson.

1. Be sure to let parents and guardians know they are expected to attend this meeting.
2. Read over the lesson thoroughly. Consider the length of the lesson and the time you have available with your group. You might want to add to or subtract from the lesson provided.
3. Make the lesson work for your group. Every group is different, and it is impossible to write one lesson that will work for every group. Please feel free to rework this lesson to fit your needs.
4. Read over and familiarize yourself with the included resources – Goal Setting Exercise, Creating Group Covenants, Sample Covenant and Gathering Safety Tips.
5. Work with other leaders beforehand to brainstorm your non-negotiables for the covenant.
6. Print out a copy of all necessary handouts for each participant and parent.
7. Have writing utensils ready.
8. Have a chalkboard, whiteboard or a large easel pad and marker available.
9. Review the lesson once more. Imagine how it might go including transitions between activities.
10. Pray that God’s Spirit might inspire your group’s goal setting and covenant creating.

INTRODUCTION

(5 minutes)

1. RITUAL

Begin your time together in a way that is meaningful for your group. Maybe you have a song you like to sing together or a prayer you like to say.

2. GOALS

Tell the group that today's lesson is designed to get them talking about three things – (1) their own goals for the trip, (2) how we will behave together as a group on the trip, and (3) how to stay safe on the trip.

SETTING GOALS

(30 minutes)

Before leading this session (perhaps through email the week before), have all the adult leaders use the Goal Setting Exercise handout to brainstorm the top five things they hope the group will get out of their trip to the ELCA Youth Gathering in Detroit. You will have the participants work with their parents or guardians on this section. If a participant came without a parent or guardian, then you or another leader will need to work with him or her. If you are aware of this possibility prior to the meeting, consider inviting one of your congregation's leaders to accompany the young person with parental/guardian involvement.

LESSON PLAN

1. TEACH

Distribute the Goal Setting Exercise handout to the group.
Read the quote by Thoreau at the top of the page.

2. DISCUSS

Spend just a few minutes discussing what the group thinks Thoreau meant in this quote. (Help participants understand that the reward for achieving a goal is not a material thing but is found in the change that happens to us by achieving that goal.)

3. TEACH

Tell the group that there are three key reasons why it is important for the group to work on setting goals.

Clarity: They will help us get a clearer understanding for why we are going to Detroit.

Focus: They will help us notice when an opportunity to achieve a goal presents itself on our trip.

Insight: They will help us explain the change that happens to us when we return from our trip.



SETTING GOALS

(continued)

4. TEACH

Use the handout to explain that when setting goals it is helpful to think about the types of changes you want to see happen. And it is helpful to think about these changes in three ways — change in what you know, change in what you can do, and change in what you care about, or your attitude.

5. FAMILY WORK

Ask them to work through the worksheet together.

- First, ask them to take about 5 minutes as a family to complete the “**Knowledge Goals**” section, identifying up to three goals and experiences that might help them achieve this goal on the trip. It might not take them 5 minutes, so monitor their progress and move on as needed.
- Second, ask participants to take another 5 minutes as a family to complete the “**Skill Goals**” section, identifying up to three goals and experiences that might help them achieve this goal on the trip. Again, it might not take them 5 minutes, so monitor their progress and move on as needed.
- Third, ask participants to take another 5 minutes as a family to complete the “**Attitude Goals**” section, identifying up to three goals and experiences that might help them achieve this goal on the trip. If it doesn’t take them 5 minutes, monitor their progress and move on as needed.
- Lastly, ask participants to take a final 5 minutes as a family to figure out how they will **celebrate** the accomplishment of any of these goals and get the necessary signatures. Again, if this doesn’t take them 5 minutes, monitor their progress and move on as needed.

6. PROCESS

Ask for a few volunteers to share either one goal or a celebration plan. Collect these *Goal Setting* sheets while the volunteers share.

As a leader, you will make three copies of these sheets. You will keep one, mail one to the family, and give one to each participant at some point early in your trip to Detroit to help keep these goals in front of them. You may want to accomplish this task electronically.

LESSON PLAN

COVENANTING

(30 minutes)

LESSON PLAN

Before leading this session make sure all adult leaders consult the Creating Group Covenants document, the Sample Covenant and the Gathering Safety Tips document and have a conversation about what your non-negotiables will be for your group's covenant. The purpose of this exercise is to help you generate some input that you will then use to create the final covenant.

1. TEACH

Setting goals will help strengthen your trip experience and so will a group covenant, which is what you will work on next.

2. DISCUSS

Ask the participants to define the word "covenant." Let them do most of the thinking and contributing, but be ready and able to help them understand a covenant as an agreement between two or more parties that is intended to define the nature of the relationship and sustain the relationship between these parties.

3. DISCUSS

Now ask the participants to share examples of covenants they are involved in. (Examples might include curfews at home, a class syllabus at school, rules for participating in sports, etc.). After they've shared their examples, ask them how the covenants they shared benefit all parties involved. For example, how does a curfew benefit **all** parties involved? Help them see that a covenant is not one party exerting its power over the other party, but an agreement that is mutually beneficial.

4. SMALL GROUPS

Divide the participants into small groups of about three participants (with parents/guardians) each. Tell the parents/guardians they can help, but the ideas should mostly be coming from the participants. Give them 5 minutes to brainstorm some things they think should be in the group's covenant. These should be things the group would want to agree to that would benefit everyone in the group. While they are working on this, tape a large sheet of paper on the wall to write their ideas on. If you have the capacity, you can do this exercise electronically.

5. LARGE GROUP

After the 5 minutes, ask the groups to share their ideas with the large group. Write down all of their ideas on a sheet of paper in front of the group so everyone can see all the ideas. If there are duplicate ideas, simply add tally marks behind the first time you wrote it down.

6. DISCUSS

Spend 5 minutes letting the participants discuss which items seem most important to them. Then spend a few minutes adding what (if anything) is still missing

COVENANTING

(continued)

LESSON PLAN

7. CONSEQUENCES

Ask the group what they think the consequences should be for breaking this covenant. Spend 5 minutes writing down their ideas on a second large sheet of paper taped to the wall.

(Note: During exercises like this, youth tend to become stricter than adults. Remind them of grace and forgiveness while also working to maintain serious expectations and consequences for the well-being of your community.)

As the leader, you will take all that your group generated and use it along with the Creating Group Covenants, Sample Covenant and Gathering Safety Tips resources to create your group's final covenant some time after this meeting. Each participant will receive a final covenant that he or she will need to sign and have a parent or guardian sign. You will collect these, keep a copy of everyone's signed covenant to bring with you on the trip and give a signed copy to each participant's parent or guardian.

STAYING SAFE

(20 minutes)

1. DISCUSS

Ask participants and parents to share their biggest safety concerns about your trip. Spend about 5 minutes allowing them to express their concerns.

2. TEACH

Assure them that the Gathering team has been working for a couple years with the city of Detroit on important safety measures; and they are completely confident that all participants will be safe as long as they are wise and take certain precautions.

3. DISCUSS

Nothing fancy here; simply distribute the Gathering Safety Tips list and read through it with all participants and parents/guardians. Field questions and concerns as you work through the list.

FINAL FIVE

(5 minutes)

Stand in a circle and join hands. End with a squeeze prayer. As the leader, you will start this prayer by lifting up whatever you'd like to pray for. When you are finished you squeeze the hand of the person on your right, signaling to that person it is his or her turn to pray. He or she can pray out loud or silently. When finished, he or she should squeeze the hand of the next person and so on until the squeeze comes back to you. At that time you simply end the prayer with one final petition and an "amen."

SOCIAL MEDIA

Once you have completed your group's covenant, share it on [the ELCA Youth Gathering Facebook page](#).

SAFETY TIPS

SAFETY ON THE STREETS OF DETROIT

- Know the best and safest route to your destination. Follow suggested walking routes.
- Always travel in groups of at least three or four people, including an adult leader, for safety reasons. Never travel alone!
- After dark, walk in well-traveled/busy and well-lit areas and in groups if possible.
- Keep all bags or purses close to your body.
- Walk with confidence.
- Don't text or read email or wear headphones while walking, especially at night.
- Just because you have the right-of-way does not guarantee a bus or vehicle will stop or that the driver is paying attention.
- Carry your cellphone and keep it within easy reach at all times.
- Don't hesitate to approach a police officer, security officer or Gathering staff for help.
- Always let your adult leaders know where you are going. Designate a meeting spot for your group in the event someone becomes separated from the others.
- Each Gathering participant should carry photo identification at all times. A designated adult should also carry a copy of each group member's medical release form.
- Hydration, light-colored clothing, balanced diet and sleep are the best prevention for heat exhaustion in Detroit. It is recommended that participants carry water bottles and drink the equivalent of between 8 – 10 glasses of water daily.
- All participants should wear proper footwear. "Flip flops" or other open-toe footwear are not recommended for the servant events, walking around the city or inside Ford Field.
- Each group should possess a basic first-aid kit that includes Band-Aids for unexpected blisters.
- Notify the Detroit Police Department (911) and the Gathering Info Line 888-411-ELCA (3522) if you become the victim of a crime.
- Call the Gathering Info Line 888-411-ELCA (3522) to report ANY unsafe condition in addition to an actual crime or injury.

CURFEW

- The city of Detroit has the following curfew in effect: It is unlawful for a minor to be on a public street, sidewalk, playground, vacant lot, or other unsupervised public place, during the following restricted times:
 - a. For minors age 15 and under: From 10 p.m. through 6 a.m.
 - b. For minors ages 16 and 17: From 11 p.m. through 6 a.m.
- The Detroit RiverWalk and Dequindre Cut Greenway is open from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., with the following curfew in effect:
 - a. After 6 p.m., all children under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian 21 years of age or older.
- Since Gathering activities end later than these hours, it is of utmost importance that group leaders accompany their groups at all times when traveling back to your hotels.
- Violations of this curfew could result in summonses for both the participant and group leader.

SAFETY TIPS

PANHANDLERS

- Politely and firmly decline anyone asking for money.
- Use a silent “no” headshake. Be direct without being needlessly rude.
- Do not confront a panhandler.
- Thieves posing as panhandlers want you to stop and open your wallet or purse.
- Do not leave any personal property unattended anywhere.
- Do not lay your smart phones or iPads on outdoor café tables near busy sidewalks.

CELLPHONES

- It is recommended that all participants who own cellphones bring them to the Gathering. Although cellphones can be a distraction, for safety reasons they can become an important tool in communicating with others should someone become separated from the rest of the group. Even though Detroit is a safe city, there are still areas that should be avoided, and cellphones offer a fast means of communication in the event of an emergency.

Maintain a printed list of cellphone numbers to distribute to members of your group. Program the group leader/s cell number and the Gathering Information Line number 888-411-ELCA (3522) — on all cellphones. In addition, the following should be programmed into all cellphones:

“ICE” (In Case of Emergency)

The cellphone number of the group leader.

- Include in the group’s covenant a statement regarding cellphone usage during the trip.

SAFETY TIPS



SAFETY AND BEHAVIOR IN FORD FIELD AND OTHER AREAS

- For your safety and security, all backpacks, bags, containers, purses, etc., may be inspected prior to your being admitted to the Ford Field. Laser pointers, glass containers, any type of weapon, or anything else that poses a safety or health risk will be confiscated. Do not joke about weapons, violent acts or terrorism.
- “Mosh pits” and “body surfing” are strictly prohibited. Anyone forming or participating in these activities could risk removal from the Ford Field.
- No open flames (lighters, candles, matches, etc.).
- No throwing items, such as beach balls, toilet paper, coins, etc.
- No saving seats.
- No laser pointers.
- No selfie sticks are allowed inside Ford Field.
- Soft drinks and food are not permitted to be brought into Ford Field.
- Before entering the Ford Field, have a realistic plan of where your group may sit, in case someone gets separated. To avoid injuries, refrain from running when the doors open.
- Designate a meeting spot for your group to meet after the program.

COVENANTING

CREATING GROUP COVENANTS

“If our relationships are strong, if we trust each other, if we expect everyone to contribute, if we know we all care and will act on our commitments – then we are well-prepared.”
—Margaret J. Wheatley

A covenant is an agreement, promise or contract between people. It is a proactive way to deal with group dynamics, behavior, expectations and issues of concern when traveling and living together. Effective covenants:

- are developed and agreed to by the group;
- describe expectations clearly; and
- state guidelines, boundaries and behaviors contributing to positive experiences for all.

Working together to create a covenant is one of the most important tasks your group will do before leaving for the Gathering — next to prayer and Bible study. Gathering planners expect each congregational group will have a group covenant.

Include negotiable and non-negotiable issues, behavior guidelines and rules at the Gathering, and agreed upon consequences. Samples of individual and group covenants are on page 14. Use them as guidelines to begin your process or personalize them to reflect your agreed upon individual and congregational priorities.

COPY, SIGN AND KEEP

Once you’ve arrived at an agreeable covenant, print three copies for each person to read, sign and date. One is returned to you, the individual keeps a copy, and the parents/guardians keep a copy. Include a place for parents to sign, acknowledging they are aware of the covenant and support their young person and the leaders in carrying it out. You could even invite parents to participate in the development of the covenant.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The Gathering risk management plan stipulates that all issues requiring discipline will be addressed within the congregational group between the adult leader(s) and the youth involved. If issues cannot be resolved at that level, Community Life team members are available to assist. If further assistance is required, Gathering staff will become involved. Gathering staff can be contacted by calling the toll-free InfoLine (1-888-411-3522 [ELCA]) which will be printed on participants’ wristbands.

ELEMENTS IN YOUR COVENANT

COVENANTING



NEGOTIABLE AND NON-NEGOTIABLE ISSUES

As you work with your group to develop a covenant, remember some issues or agreements are negotiable and some may be non-negotiable from your congregation's perspective. Clearly state the non-negotiables up-front. Share these issues in a way that communicates their importance from a safety, health or community well-being perspective.

Examples of non-negotiable issues may include, but are not limited to:

- No use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs.
- No inappropriate sexual activity.
- Seat belts must be worn while traveling.
- The group gathers and checks in at set times each day (specify times).
- Anything that is required by congregation policy, Gathering policy, your insurance company, or existing covenants.

Examples of negotiable issues may include:

- Ways to help one another.
- Commitment to language and action not based on stereotyping.
- Ideas for sharing your experience when you return.

ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE

Don't forget to talk about positive things you can do to help each other get the most out of the Gathering experience. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Meeting each day to talk about your experiences.
- Setting aside time for daily prayer or prayer partners.
- Identifying ways to care for and affirm each other.
- Intentionally making friends with someone new each day.
- Agreeing to try all activities at least once.

GATHERING BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

Expectations for behavior at the Gathering include:

- Observe Detroit's curfew and the Gathering curfew, 1 a.m. The city of Detroit has the following curfew in effect: It is unlawful for a minor to be on a public street, sidewalk, playground, vacant lot, or other unsupervised public place, during the following restricted times: For minors age fifteen (15) and under: From 10 p.m. through 6 a.m. For minors ages sixteen (16) and seventeen (17): From 11 p.m. through 6 a.m.
- No use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs.
- No inappropriate sexual activity.
- No firearms, knives, sharp objects, lasers or other weapons.
- Always move in groups of three or more.

Gathering rules for Ford Field and other meeting area can be found on page 11.

NOTE: The Gathering expects these behavior guidelines and rules will be included in your covenant planning.

SAMPLE COVENANT

COVENANTING

**Make three copies:
one participant copy,
one parent/guardian copy,
and one copy for your
primary adult leader.**

***The Gathering discourages groups from yelling out the name of their state during the main stage events. This seemingly simple act presupposes a hierarchy, with the largest/loudest being the best, that we don't want to model at the Gathering. We are church together! Our identity is in Christ, not our state or even our congregation.**

1. As members of God's family, we will treat each other in the following manner:

(Include comments or concerns of sexism, racism, prejudice, teasing, state pride, inclusion, language, etc.)*

2. We covenant to help one another in the following ways:

(Consider things like encouraging each other to fully participate, reaching out to others with special needs, taking the initiative to do your share, noticing the needs and feelings of others, slowing down enough to create space for relationships, etc.)

3. We covenant to bring this experience back home to those not able to participate by:

(Develop a plan for sharing your witness with your congregation. They sent you to Detroit as missionaries to the larger church and, like missionaries, you are returning with a witness to Jesus, alive and active in the world. You may also want to formally thank those who offered support and prayers. Finally, consider how you will actualize your learning and become leaders in your congregation.)

4. In our covenanting together, we expect our leaders to:

(Include a brief job description for the adult leaders.)

5. We covenant together to handle the following behavior issues in these ways:

(Address issues of relationships and couples, sexual relationships, smoking and chewing, drugs and alcohol, disagreements, going off alone, bullying, etc.)

6. In order to make our Gathering experience a safe and positive experience for all, we, the youth and adults of _____ congregation, covenant to abide by the behavior guidelines established by the Gathering.

(See Gathering guidelines in "Creating Individual and Group Covenants.")

7. In the event that someone breaks our covenant, we will address it in the following manner:

(Determine courses of action, such as holding a group discussion, calling parents, dealing with the problem in private, sending someone home at the parent's expense, etc. Don't forget to call upon the Community Life staff for support.)

Your signature _____ Date _____

Parent/guardian signature _____ Date _____

KNOWLEDGE GOALS

What knowledge would you like to gain on this trip or what would you like to learn — about faith, God, yourself, your group, Detroit or anything else? Try to list at least three things you'd like to learn more about on this trip.

1.

2.

3.

What experience(s) might help you learn each of the things you listed above while on your trip?

1.

2.

3.

GOAL SETTING

**“What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what you become by achieving your goals.”
—Henry David Thoreau**

When setting goals, it is helpful to think about the types of change you want to see happen. And it is helpful to think about these changes in three ways — change in what you know, change in what you can do, and change in what you care about, or your attitude.

SKILL GOALS

What skills would you like to gain on this trip? What would you like to learn how to do or get better at? Try to list at least three things you'd like to learn how to do or improve upon while on this trip.

1.

2.

3.

What experience(s) might help you develop these skills while on the trip?

1.

2.

3.

ATTITUDE GOALS

How would you like to see your attitude or values change on this trip? Are there certain things you would like to start caring about more? Or start caring about less?

1.

2.

3.

What kinds of experiences might help change these attitudes for you?

1.

2.

3.

How will you celebrate the achievement of any of these goals?

GOAL SETTING



Goals are generally best achieved when we share them with people whom we know will help us achieve them. Share your goals with one friend who is going on the trip with you, one adult who is going on the trip with you AND your parent(s) or guardian(s).

Have them sign this sheet.

Your signature *Date*

Signature of friend going on trip *Date*

Signature of adult going on trip *Date*

Parent/guardian signature *Date*