

2009 ELCA Youth Gathering Evaluation Congregation Pastor and Synod Bishop Feedback

ELCA Research and Evaluation

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Introduction

The 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering took place in New Orleans, LA, in July 2009. Prior to the 2009 Youth Gathering, the 2009 Definitely-Abled Youth Leadership Event (DAYLE) and the 2009 Multicultural Youth Leadership Event (MYLE) were also held in New Orleans. To help assess the impact of these three events, as well as the impact of the Youth Gathering ministry in general, ELCA Youth and Young Adult Ministries/Gathering staff collaborated with ELCA Research and Evaluation staff to develop an extensive evaluation strategy. Through a variety of questionnaires, feedback was solicited from synod coordinators, youth participants (from DAYLE, MYLE, and the Youth Gathering), adult participants (from DAYLE and MYLE), pastors of congregations with youth that attended the 2009 Youth Gathering, and synod bishops.

Some aspects of this evaluation strategy were implemented for the first time as part of the 2009 Youth Gathering, including a post-Youth Gathering questionnaire for pastors of congregations that attended the Youth Gathering and a questionnaire for synod bishops. In addition, ELCA Youth and Young Adult Ministries/Gathering staff and ELCA Research and Evaluation staff collaborated with staff of Trinity Lutheran College in Everett, WA, to conduct research about the impact of service learning as experienced within the context of the 2009 Youth Gathering. Participation in this research project helped to shape another new aspect of evaluation for the 2009 Youth Gathering: a matched pre- and post-questionnaire with a focus on faith development and discipleship of youth participants at the 2009 Youth Gathering.

The Congregation Pastor Questionnaire focused primarily on pastors' experiences and observations related to the 2009 Youth Gathering, including its purpose and value. The Synod Bishop Questionnaire focused primarily on synod bishops' experiences and observations related to the purpose and value of the Youth Gathering ministry in general, across the years, and not solely the 2009 Youth Gathering. This report summarizes responses and analyses from the these two questionnaires.¹

About the Respondents

For the Congregation Pastor Questionnaire, a random sample of 880 pastors was chosen from the approximately 2,680 congregations that attended the 2009 Youth Gathering. In cases in which the congregation had more than one pastor, the senior pastor was asked to complete the questionnaire.² From this sample, 504 pastors responded, for a response rate of 57 percent. A majority of respondents, 56 percent, indicated they attended the 2009 Youth Gathering with their group. Of the 43 percent who did not attend the 2009 Youth Gathering with youth from their congregation who did attend, 36 percent indicated they have never attended an ELCA Youth Gathering.

¹ Responses and analyses from the other questionnaires are included in other reports completed by Research and Evaluation, ELCA.

² In a few instances, the senior pastor asked another pastor on staff to complete the questionnaire.

For the synod bishops, all 65 were invited to respond to the Synod Bishop Questionnaire. A total of 22 synod bishops responded for a response rate of 34 percent. Because of the small number of synod bishop respondents, the total number of respondents will be reported together with the percentage of respondents. Seventy-three percent (16) of responding synod bishops indicated they attended the 2009 Youth Gathering. Of the 27 percent (6) who did not attend the 2009 Youth Gathering, 50 percent (3) indicated they have never attended an ELCA Youth Gathering.

Overall Findings

Overall, both pastor and synod bishop respondents indicated a relatively high level of positive feedback about the 2009 Youth Gathering and the Youth Gathering, in general. A high percentage of responding pastors indicated the youth from their congregation had a positive experience participating in the 2009 Youth Gathering (87%). A high percentage also indicated they believe the benefits to individual youth and congregations were worth the cost of attending the 2009 Youth Gathering (74%). Finally, a similarly high percentage of responding pastors indicated they believe the Youth Gathering has a missionally compelling purpose (77%).

Among responding synod bishops, 59 percent (13) chose the phrase ‘An essential, defining ministry of this church’ to describe their current perspective on the Youth Gathering. In addition, 82 percent (18) replied ‘yes’ that the Youth Gathering is worth the investments of time, energy, and resources to carry out. A similarly high percentage of responding synod bishops indicated they believe the Youth Gathering has a missionally compelling purpose (82%, 18).

With respect to the 2009 Youth Gathering theme related to justice and service, responding pastors indicated the following as benefits to individual youth who attended:

- ‘An understanding of how God calls them to serve others’ (77%) and
- ‘Increased awareness of justice and advocacy’ (66%).

Pastors were asked whether the 2009 Youth Gathering emphasis on service and compassionate justice increased the desire within the congregation they serve to participate in a servant opportunity. A majority of responding pastors (62%) responded ‘yes’ with 32 percent indicating ‘Yes, among all age groups of members’ and another 30 percent indicating ‘Yes, only among youth’.

Some of the responding pastor and synod bishop feedback also indicates areas in which either specific experiences or the overall ministry of the Youth Gathering could be strengthened. For example, on a scale of ‘1’ to ‘5’ (with ‘1’ representing ‘not at all effective’ and ‘5’ representing ‘very effective’), responding pastors gave their lowest overall average rating of 3.6 to the effectiveness of the 2009 Youth Gathering for each of the following purposes:

- ‘Inspiring youth concerning ELCA ministries’ and
- ‘Stimulating conversation on God’s call’.

Using a different scale of ‘1’ to ‘5’ (with ‘1’ representing ‘no influence’ and ‘5’ representing ‘a lot of influence’), responding pastors gave an average rating of 3.5 to how much influence the activity of ‘participating in the learning and discovery opportunities provided at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering’ had on creating or strengthening youth identity with the ELCA.

Finally, the lowest percentage of responding pastors indicated ‘leadership development’ as a benefit to individual youth attending the 2009 Youth Gathering (36%). Similar percentages of responding pastors indicated ‘increased interest in ELCA ministries’ and ‘integration of youth within multiple ministries of the congregation’ as benefits to congregations for attending the 2009 Youth Gathering (32% and 38%, respectively).

Fewer than half of the responding synod bishops chose ‘imparting new ministry ideas for youth leaders’ as a significant impact of the Youth Gathering for congregations (41%, 9). In addition, fewer than half of the responding bishops chose the following as significant impacts of the Youth Gathering for the synod:

- ‘Cultivating the synod’s adult youth ministry leadership cadre’ (46%, 10);
- ‘Sharing mission conversation in the synod around important themes’ (46%, 10); and
- ‘Promoting participation in other synod youth ministries’ (41%, 9).

Finally, many responding pastors and synod bishops expressed concern about the high cost of attending the Youth Gathering.

What follows is a more detailed examination of some of the responses from both pastors and synod bishops. In some instances, the pastor responses differ significantly³ based upon certain factors:

- The size of the congregation (based on average worship attendance) in which the responding pastor serves;
- Whether the responding pastors attended the 2009 Youth Gathering; and
- The region in which the responding pastor serves.

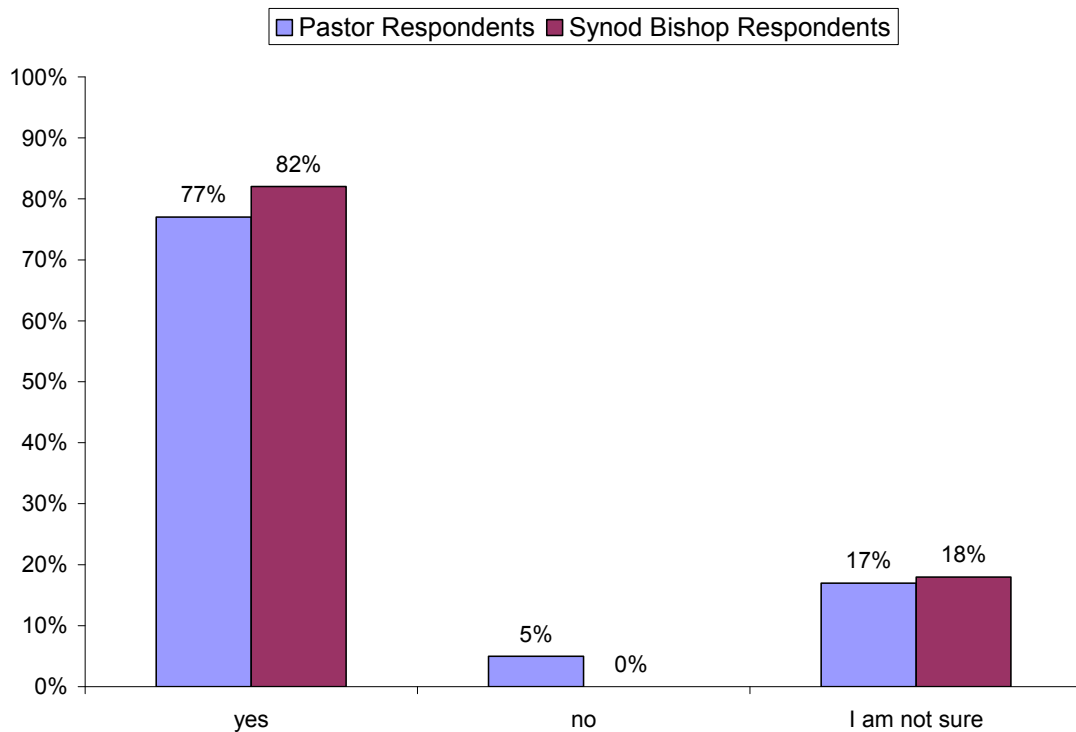
All responses to both questionnaires are included at the end of this report. In addition, summaries of the differences among the pastor respondents by the three factors listed above are included at the end of this report.

Perspectives on the Youth Gathering Ministry

Both the congregation pastor and synod bishop questionnaires asked whether the respondents believe the Youth Gathering has a missionally compelling purpose. As shown in Figure 1, a relatively high percentage of respondents indicated ‘yes’, and a low percentage of respondents indicated ‘no’.

³ All reported differences are statistically significant at the .05 level.

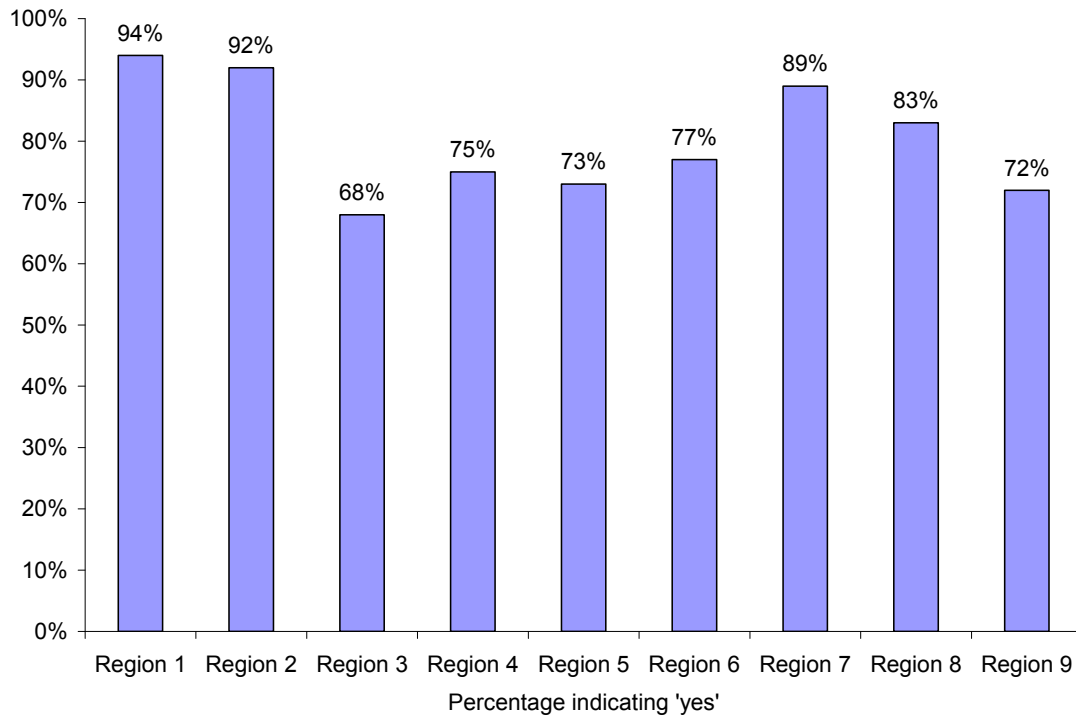
Figure 1: Belief About Whether the ELCA Youth Gathering Has a Missionally Compelling Purpose



Further analysis of the pastor respondents shows there is no difference in responses based on whether they attended the 2009 Youth Gathering or the size of the congregation in which they serve. Differences do exist, though, based on the region in which the responding pastor serves. (Appendix, Table 32) As shown in Figure 2, a majority of pastor respondents from all nine regions indicated ‘yes’ to whether they believe the Youth Gathering has a missionally compelling purpose. However, the percentage indicating ‘yes’ ranges from 68 percent of the pastor respondents in Region 3 to 94 percent of the pastor respondents in Region 1. Pastor respondents from Regions 2 and 7 were more likely to indicate ‘yes’ than pastor respondents from Regions 3, 4, 5, and 9.⁴

⁴ Pastor respondents from Region 1 were also more likely to indicate ‘yes’ than pastor respondents from Region 3. However, because of the small number of pastor respondents from Region 1, the differences between Region 1 and Regions 4, 5, and 9 are not statistically significant at the .05 level.

Figure 2: Pastor Respondents Who Indicated the ELCA Youth Gathering Has a Missionally Compelling Purpose, by Region



When asked to describe their response, 219 pastor respondents (44%) provided additional written comments. A high percentage of these comments, 89 percent, were positive in nature, affirming and describing a missionally compelling purpose for the Youth Gathering. Many of the positive comments were general; however, some pastor respondents provided specific comments that could be categorized as follows:

- The Youth Gathering provides an opportunity to experience the larger, wider church or the big picture (66 pastor respondents);
- The Youth Gathering has ministry, service, and/or a justice component (46 pastor respondents); and
- The Youth Gathering has a mission aspect (30 pastor respondents).

Two percent of the written comments by responding pastors were negative in nature, indicating there is not a missionally compelling purpose for the Youth Gathering. These pastor respondents indicated disappointment with the service opportunity (2 pastor respondents), a desire for more focus on Jesus and God (1 pastor respondent), or being unsure of definite change in participants (1 pastor respondent).

Finally, eight percent of the written comments by responding pastors shared mixed feelings about whether there is a missionally compelling purpose for the Youth Gathering. Some of these comments were general. More specific comments included:

- Provide more in terms of theology, the Bible, and God (6 pastor respondents), and
- This is a good start, but more is needed (3 pastor respondents).

For the responding synod bishops, nine provided additional written comments about whether they believe there is a missionally compelling purpose for the Youth Gathering. Five responding synod bishops provided positive comments including the importance of its focus on the development of discipleship and leadership among the youth. One synod bishop respondent provided a negative comment, expressing concern over the minimizing of the message of repentance and forgiveness. Three synod bishop respondents provided mixed comments, agreeing there is a missionally compelling purpose, but also indicating there could be even more focus on mission.

Synod bishops were also asked to choose from a list of four phrases the one most closely representing their perspective on the ministry of the Youth Gathering. None of the synod bishop respondents chose the phrase, ‘A ministry in need of reassessment’. The other responses were as follows:

- ‘An essential, defining ministry of this church’ (59%, 13);
- ‘A potent ministry with many strengths’ (36%, 8); and
- ‘A valuable ministry, yet presenting significant challenges’ (5%, 1).

2009 Youth Gathering Theme Related to Justice and Service

Pastors were asked about possible benefits to individual youth for attending the 2009 Youth Gathering. The highest percentage of responding pastors, 82 percent, indicated ‘Learning about specific situations of people undergoing hardship’. There are no differences in this response based on whether the pastor respondent attended the 2009 Youth Gathering or the size of congregation in which the responding pastor serves. As for regional differences, even though a high percentage of responding pastors from all regions indicated this is a benefit, pastor respondents from Region 8 are more likely to indicate this is a benefit (92%) than pastor respondents from Region 4 (72%) or Region 7 (74%). (Appendix, Table 25)

The Congregation Pastor Questionnaire lists other possible benefits to individual youth including ‘an understanding of how God calls them to serve others’ and ‘increased awareness of justice and advocacy’. Overall, 77 percent and 66 percent of responding pastors, respectively, indicated these were benefits for attending the 2009 Youth Gathering. As shown in Table 1, those responding pastors who attended the 2009 Youth Gathering are more likely to choose these as benefits than those who did not attend. (Appendix, Tables 10 and 11)

Table 1: Benefits to Individual Youth for Attending the 2009 Youth Gathering

Benefit	Percentage of Responding Pastors Who Attended the 2009 Youth Gathering*	Percentage of Responding Pastors Who Did Not Attend the 2009 Youth Gathering*
An understanding of how God calls them to serve others	80%	72%
Increased awareness of justice and advocacy	70%	60%

*Percentages represent the percentage of responding pastors who chose the response thereby indicating it as a benefit to individual youth.

‘Enthusiasm for service learning’ was listed as a possible benefit to congregations, and was chosen by the second highest percentage of responding pastors (63%). Pastor respondents differed in their responses based on all three factors of size, attendance at the 2009 Youth Gathering, and region. (Appendix, Tables 1, 12, and 28) Responding pastors from medium-sized congregations⁵ are more likely to indicate this was a benefit (71%) than those from small-sized congregations⁵ (55%). In addition, responding pastors who attended the 2009 Youth Gathering are more likely to indicate this was a benefit (70%) than those who did not attend (55%). Finally, responding pastors from Region 8 are more likely to indicate this was a benefit (75%) than those from Region 4 (53%).

Congregation pastors were asked to rate the effectiveness of the 2009 Youth Gathering at ‘instilling new attitudes of service’. Among a number of purpose statements for the 2009 Youth Gathering, this statement had the highest average rating at 4.2 on a five-point scale (‘1’ representing ‘not at all effective’ and ‘5’ representing ‘very effective’). There are no differences in this response based on whether the pastor respondent attended the 2009 Youth Gathering or the size of congregation in which the responding pastor serves. As for regional differences, even though a high percentage of responding pastors from all regions indicated the 2009 Youth Gathering was effective⁶ at this purpose, pastor respondents from Region 8 or Region 2 were more likely to indicate the 2009 Youth Gathering was effective⁶ at this purpose (94% and 92%, respectively) than pastor respondents from Region 4 (73%). (Appendix, Table 15)

Another purpose for which congregation pastors were asked to rate effectiveness by the 2009 Youth Gathering was ‘teaching about justice as presented by Jesus’. Overall, responding pastors rated this as a 3.9 on a five-point scale (‘1’ representing ‘not at all effective’ and ‘5’ representing ‘very effective’). There are no differences in responses based on size. However, responding pastors who attended the 2009 Youth Gathering are less likely to indicate the 2009 Youth Gathering was effective⁶ at this purpose (64%) than those who did not attend the 2009 Youth Gathering (75%). As for regional differences, responding pastors from Region 2 are more likely to rate the 2009 Youth Gathering as effective⁶ at this purpose (81%) than those from Region 4 (60%). (Appendix, Table 16)

Pastors were also asked whether the 2009 Youth Gathering emphasis on service and compassionate justice increased the desire within the congregation they serve to participate in a servant opportunity. A majority of responding pastors (62%) responded ‘yes’ with 32 percent indicating ‘Yes, among all age groups of members’ and another 30 percent indicating ‘Yes, only among youth’. Conversely, 19 percent responded ‘I am not sure’ and 16 percent responded ‘no’. Responding pastors who attended the 2009 Youth Gathering were less likely to choose ‘no’ (13%) than the pastor respondents who did not attend (21%). (Appendix, Table 14)

⁵ Small-sized congregation refers to an average weekly worshipping attendance of 1-150, medium-sized congregations refers to an average of 151-350, and large-sized congregations refers to an average of 350 or more.

⁶ ‘4’ or ‘5’ on the five-point scale with ‘1’ representing ‘not at all effective’ and ‘5’ representing ‘very effective’.

Impact and Benefits of the 2009 Youth Gathering

Individuals

Pastors were asked to rate the effectiveness of the 2009 Youth Gathering at ‘nurturing personal faith in Christ’. Overall, responding pastors gave this an average rating of 3.8 based on a five-point scale (‘1’ representing ‘not at all effective’ and ‘5’ representing ‘very effective’). Responses differed based on whether the responding pastor attended the 2009 Youth Gathering. (Appendix, Table 6) Those who did attend were less likely to say the 2009 Youth Gathering was effective⁷ at this purpose (63%) than those who did attend (73%). (Appendix, Table 6)

Pastors were also asked to rate the effectiveness of the 2009 Youth Gathering at ‘stimulating conversation on God’s call’ and ‘strengthening youth for ministry in the congregation’. Responding pastors provided average ratings of 3.6 and 3.8, respectively (based on a five-point scale with ‘1’ representing ‘not at all effective’ and ‘5’ representing ‘very effective’). These responses differ by region. For ‘stimulating conversation on God’s call’, responding pastors from Regions 2 or 8 are more likely to indicate the 2009 Youth Gathering was effective⁷ at this purpose (69% for each region) than responding pastors from Region 6 (48%). (Appendix, Table 17) For ‘strengthening youth for ministry in the congregation’, responding pastors from Region 8 are more likely to indicate the 2009 Youth Gathering was effective⁷ at this purpose (87%) than those from Regions 3, 4, 5, 6, or 7 (55%, 67%, 66%, 67%, 61%, respectively). (Appendix, Table 18)

A relatively high percentage of responding pastors indicated ‘growth in faith’ as a benefit to individual youth for attending the 2009 Youth Gathering. Again, responses differed by region. (Appendix, Table 24) Responding pastors from Regions 2, 3, or 8 are more likely to indicate this is a benefit (87%, 78%, 81%, respectively) than those from Regions 7 (60%) or Region 9 (61%).

The lowest percentage of responding pastors, 36 percent, indicated ‘leadership development’ as a benefit to individual youth for attending the 2009 Youth Gathering. Responding pastors from Region 2 are more likely to indicate this is a benefit (59%) than pastor respondents from nearly all other regions (Region 3-33%, Region 4-38%, Region 5-36%, Region 6-39%, Region 7-29%, Region 9-21%). (Appendix, Table 26)

Congregations

Pastors were asked about possible benefits to congregations for attending the 2009 Youth Gathering. The highest percentage of responding pastors, 71 percent, indicated ‘increased support for youth ministry’. There were no differences in this response based on congregation size. However, responding pastors who attended the 2009 Youth Gathering are more likely to indicate this is a benefit (77%) than pastor respondents who did not attend (64%). (Appendix, Table 13) In addition, responding pastors from Region 2 are more likely to choose this as a benefit (82%) than pastor respondents from Region 4 (58%) or Region 9 (61%). (Appendix, Table 29)

Another possible benefit to congregations is ‘integration of youth within multiple ministries of the congregation’. Overall, slightly more than one-third of pastor respondents indicated this was a benefit (38%). There are no differences in responses based on attendance. However, pastors

⁷ ‘4’ or ‘5’ on the five-point scale with ‘1’ representing ‘not at all effective’ and ‘5’ representing ‘very effective’.

serving large-sized congregations⁸ are less likely to indicate this is a benefit (20%) than pastors serving small- or medium-sized congregations (44%, 38%, respectively). (Appendix, Table 2) As for regional differences, responding pastors from Region 7 are more likely to indicate this is a benefit (48%) than those from Region 3 (27%) or Region 6 (28%). (Appendix, Table 30)

Nearly three-quarters of the pastor respondents (74%) responded 'yes' that the benefits to individuals and congregations of the 2009 Youth Gathering were worth the cost of attending in terms of time and resources. Conversely, 18 percent said 'I am not sure' and 7 percent said 'no'. There are no differences in this response based on whether the pastor respondent attended the 2009 Youth Gathering or the size of congregation in which the responding pastor serves. However, responding pastors from Region 8 are more likely to say 'yes' (87%) than pastor respondents from Region 3 (62%), Region 4 (68%) or Region 9 (69%). (Appendix, Table 31)

When asked to further explain their response, 205 pastor respondents (41%) provided additional written comments. Cost was the largest, specific category of comments (27 percent of comments), with 28 pastor respondents affirming the benefits despite the high costs, 20 pastor respondents indicating it was a high cost for a somewhat uncertain outcome, and 8 pastor respondents indicating the cost is too high.

Overall, the highest percentage of written comments, 64 percent, were positive in nature, affirming the benefits are worth the cost. Many comments were general; however, some pastor respondents with positive comments provided specific comments about the benefits, including:

- Increased awareness of the world outside the walls of the congregation (18 pastor respondents);
- The experience is a seminal, life changing, or watershed moment for participants (15 pastor respondents);
- Increased focus on justice or service related issues (12 pastor respondents); and
- The experience builds up the youth ministry group (12 pastor respondents).

Overall, 11 percent of written comments were negative in nature, indicating the benefits are not worth the cost. In addition to general comments, three pastor respondents indicated that Christ was missing from the Youth Gathering, and another two pastor respondents indicated the Youth Gathering provided entertainment only.

Finally, 25 percent of written comments expressed general uncertainty or a combination of both positive and negative responses. Specifically, eight pastor respondents indicated they liked the service component, but it could be improved. Six pastor respondents discussed tension between the short-lived enthusiasm and the desired long term changes of participants.

⁸ Small-sized congregation refers to an average weekly worshipping attendance of 1-150, medium-sized congregations refers to an average of 151-350, and large-sized congregations refers to an average of 350 or more.

Impact and Benefits of the Youth Gathering Ministry in General

Individuals

Synod bishops were asked for what proportion of youth participants they think the Youth Gathering effectively fosters significant faith development. A majority of responding synod bishops, (59%, 13), indicated the Youth Gathering fosters significant faith development for over 50 percent of youth participants.

Congregations

Synod bishops were asked what they think are significant impacts of the Youth Gathering for congregations in the synod they serve. Nearly all synod bishop respondents indicated ‘Providing concrete experiences of the church’s many kinds of diversity’ (96%, 21) and ‘Deepening faith of youth’ (91%, 20). The lowest number of responding synod bishops (41%, 9) indicated ‘Imparting new ministry ideas for youth leaders’.

Synods

Synod bishops were asked what they think are significant impacts of the Youth Gathering for the synod’s youth ministries. The highest number of synod bishop respondents (68%, 15) indicated both ‘Cultivating the synod’s youth [as opposed to adult] leadership cadre’ and ‘Strengthening ties among youth and adults across the synod’. The lowest number of responding synod bishops indicated:

- ‘Cultivating the synod’s adult youth ministry leadership cadre’ (46%, 10);
- ‘Sharing mission conversation in the synod around important themes’ (46%, 10); and
- ‘Promoting participation in other synod youth ministries’ (41%, 9).

A high number of responding synod bishops, (82%, 18) responded ‘yes’ the Youth Gathering is worth the investments of time, energy, and resources to carry out. There were no synod bishops who responded ‘no’, and 4 (18%) who responded ‘I am not sure’.

Youth Gathering, Other Ministries of the ELCA, Identity with the ELCA

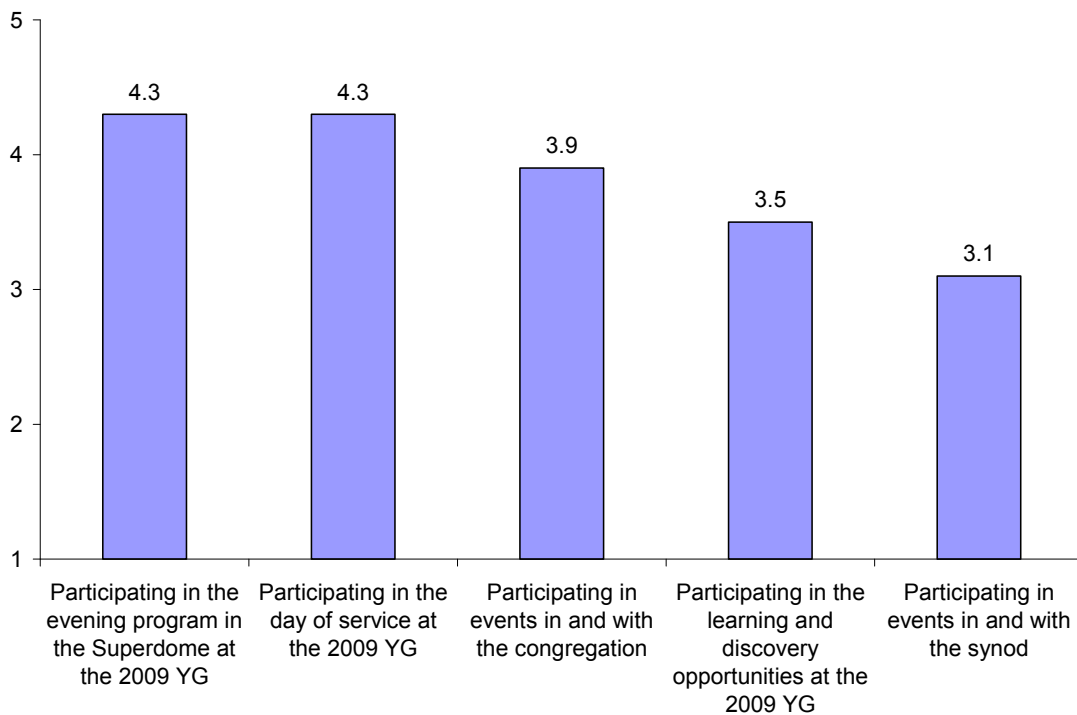
Both the congregation pastor and synod bishop questionnaires asked questions about connections to other ELCA ministries or ELCA identity the Youth Gathering may influence. Congregation pastors were asked about an ‘increased interest in ELCA ministries’ as a possible benefit to the congregation for attending the 2009 Youth Gathering. Although nearly one-third of pastor respondents indicated this was a benefit for the congregation (32%), this response had the lowest percentage of the four possible responses.

In a separate question, congregation pastors were asked to rate the effectiveness of the 2009 Youth Gathering at ‘inspiring youth concerning ELCA ministries’. Among a number of purpose statements for the 2009 Youth Gathering, this statement was tied for the lowest average rating at 3.6 on a five-point scale (‘1’ representing ‘not at all effective’ and ‘5’ representing ‘very effective’). There are no differences in responses based on the congregation size or the region in which the

pastor respondent serves. Differences do exist, though, based on whether the pastor respondent attended the 2009 Youth Gathering. (Appendix, Table 7) Those who attended the 2009 Youth Gathering were less likely to indicate it was effective⁹ at ‘Inspiring youth concerning ELCA ministries’ (52%) than the pastor respondents who did not attend the 2009 Youth Gathering (63%).

As shown in Figure 3, two activities of the 2009 Youth Gathering were rated by responding pastors as having a relatively high degree of influence on youth for creating or strengthening their identity with the ELCA. These two activities, ‘Participating in the evening program in the Superdome’ and ‘Participating in the day of service’, each received an average rating of 4.3 on a five-point scale (‘1’ representing ‘no influence’ and ‘5’ representing ‘a lot of influence’). Participating in these activities was rated as having more influence, on average, than participating in congregation events, in the learning and discovery opportunities at the 2009 Youth Gathering, or in synod events.

Figure 3: Level of Influence for Creating or Strengthening Youth Identity with the ELCA
 (‘1’ representing ‘no influence’ and ‘5’ representing ‘a lot of influence’)



For each of these five activities, there are no differences in responses based on the size of congregation in which the responding pastor serves. However, the responding pastors who attended the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering are less likely to say participating in the learning and discovery opportunities was influential¹⁰ on creating or strengthening youth identity with the ELCA: 44 percent of those who did attend, compared to 63 percent of those who did not attend. (Appendix, Table 9)

⁹ ‘4’ or ‘5’ on a five-point scale with ‘1’ representing ‘not at all effective’ and ‘5’ representing ‘very effective’.

¹⁰ ‘4’ or ‘5’ on the 5-point scale with ‘1’ representing ‘no influence’ and ‘5’ representing ‘a lot of influence’.

In addition, those from differing regions had different opinions about the level of influence four of these five activities had on creating or strengthening youth identity with the ELCA. (Appendix, Tables 19-22) Table 2 shows that Activity #1 has no significant differences among pastor respondents from the nine regions, with a high percentage of all pastor respondents indicating this activity was influential¹¹. However, for each of the other activities, those regions with ‘▲’ and those regions with ‘▼’ are significantly different from each other. Overall, pastor respondents from Region 2 are more likely to indicate these activities are influential on creating or strengthening youth identity with the ELCA, while pastor respondents from Region 9 are less likely to indicate these activities are influential. The exception for pastor respondents from Region 9 is Activity #5, for which pastor respondents are more likely to indicate the activity is influential.

Table 2: Level of Influence on Creating or Strengthening Youth Identity with the ELCA, By Region

Activity	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Region 6	Region 7	Region 8	Region 9
#1	87%	87%	76%	82%	80%	83%	89%	89%	86%
#2	81%	92% ▲	78%	84%	85%	73% ▼	86%	87%	73% ▼
#3	53%	51%	54%	46%	57%	36% ▼	63% ▲	63% ▲	38% ▼
#4	63%	79% ▲	70%	71%	71%	62%	69%	79% ▲	59% ▼
#5	50%	56% ▲	42%	31% ▼	27% ▼	39%	45%	46%	54% ▲

Activity #1 – Participating in the evening program in the Superdome at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering. There were no significant differences among pastor respondents serving across the nine regions.

Activity #2 – Participating in the day of service at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering. Pastor respondents from Region 2 were more likely to say this activity was influential (‘4’ or ‘5’) than pastor respondents from Regions 6 or 9.

Activity #3 – Participating in the learning and discovery opportunities provided at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering. Pastor respondents from Regions 7 or 8 were more likely to say this activity was influential (‘4’ or ‘5’) than pastor respondents from Regions 6 or 9.

Activity #4 – Participating in events in and with the congregations. Pastor respondents from Regions 2 or 8 were more likely to say this activity was influential (‘4’ or ‘5’) than pastor respondents from Region 9.

Activity #5 – Participating in events in and with the synod. Pastor respondents from Regions 2 or 9 were more likely to say this activity was influential (‘4’ or ‘5’) than pastor respondents from Regions 4 or 5.

The synod bishops were asked how strongly they think the Youth Gathering supports each of the ELCA churchwide organization’s five strategic directions and its four implementing strategies. All nine statements received ratings of 3.3 or higher on a five-point scale (‘1’ representing ‘Youth Gathering support for this is weak’ and ‘5’ representing ‘Youth Gathering support for this is strong’). Statements receiving the highest average ratings, 4.4 each, were:

- ‘Step forward as a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love for all that God has created’ and
- ‘Pursue ardently the ELCA’s commitment to becoming more diverse, multicultural, and multi-generational in an ever-changing and increasingly pluralistic context, with special focus on full inclusion in this church of youth, youth adults, and people of color and people whose primary language is other than English’.

¹¹ ‘4’ or ‘5’ on the 5-point scale with ‘1’ representing ‘no influence’ and ‘5’ representing ‘a lot of influence’.

Conclusions

As described, overall, both pastor and synod bishop respondents indicated a relatively high level of positive feedback about the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering and the Youth Gathering, in general. A high percentage believe the benefits of attending the Youth Gathering (at least the 2009 Youth Gathering) are worth the costs. Similarly, a high percentage of responding pastors and synod bishops believe the Youth Gathering has a missionally compelling purpose.

Areas which did not rate as high among responding pastors included the 2009 Youth Gathering's effectiveness at 'inspiring youth concerning ELCA ministries' or 'stimulating conversation on God's call'. In addition, responding pastors did not give a high average rating to the level of influence 'participating in the learning and discovery opportunities provided at the 2009 Youth Gathering' had on creating or strengthening youth identity with the ELCA. The smallest percentage of responding pastors chose 'leadership development' as a benefit to youth attending the 2009 Youth Gathering. In addition, the smallest percentage of responding pastors chose 'increased interest in ELCA ministries' and 'integration of youth within multiple ministries of the congregation' as benefits to congregations for attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering.

Some differences exist among the responding pastors. With respect to congregation size (based on average worship attendance), the small-sized congregations are less likely than medium-sized congregations to indicate 'an enthusiasm for serving learning' as a benefit to the congregations; but, more likely than large-sized congregations to indicate 'integration of youth within multiple ministries of the congregation' as a benefit to the congregation. It could be helpful to learn more about how congregations of varying size view the benefits of the Youth Gathering, to inform both future planning and marketing of the Youth Gathering.

With respect to pastor attendance at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering, pastor respondents who attended are less likely than those who did not attend to rate various purposes or activities as either effective or influential in creating or strengthening youth identity with the ELCA. Conversely, pastor respondents who attended are more likely than those who did not attend to see benefits for individuals and congregations for attending. It is important to remember that youth from all of the responding pastors' congregations attended the 2009 Youth Gathering, even if the responding pastor did not attend. Therefore, these differences may raise questions about whether youth or congregation experiences are different, or perhaps youth communication with the pastor is different, depending on whether the pastor attends the Youth Gathering.

Finally, many regional differences exist among responding pastors. There are likely several factors explaining these differences. Again, it could be helpful to learn more about these differences for future planning and marketing of the Youth Gathering.

**2009 ELCA Youth Gathering
 Congregation Pastor Questionnaire
 October - December 2009
 Final Version - February 2010**

*There were 504 responses out of 880 possible responses, for a response rate of 57 percent
 All percentages are based on the 504 responses, unless otherwise noted*

1. Did you attend the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans with your group?

56% Yes

43% No → **If no, have you ever attended an ELCA Youth Gathering?** (N=216)
 (Choose all that apply)

25% Yes, more than 10 years ago

40% Yes, less than 10 years ago

36% No

2. Overall, how would you characterize the experience of young people of your congregation who participated in the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering?

87% Positive 12% A mixture of positive and negative

0% Negative 1% I am not sure

3. How effective do you think the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering was with respect to the following purposes?

	<u>Not at all effective</u>				<u>Very effective</u>	<u>I am not sure</u>	<u>Mean</u>
	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>		
a. Instilling new attitudes of service	2%	2%	13%	38%	43%	3%	4.2
b. Teaching about justice as presented by Jesus	2%	5%	22%	38%	25%	7%	3.9
c. Nurturing personal faith in Christ	3%	5%	24%	41%	23%	4%	3.8
d. Inspiring youth concerning ELCA ministries	2%	9%	29%	35%	16%	9%	3.6
e. Modeling many kinds of diversity in the ELCA	0%	5%	15%	35%	37%	8%	4.1
f. Stimulating conversation on God's call	2%	9%	27%	35%	16%	11%	3.6
g. Strengthening youth for ministry in the congregation . .	1%	6%	23%	43%	23%	3%	3.8
h. Empowering youth to identify new mission challenges .	2%	4%	23%	41%	22%	8%	3.8

4. For the youth in your congregation, how much influence do you think the following activities have on creating or strengthening their identity with the ELCA?

	<u>No</u> <u>Influence</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>A lot of</u> <u>influence</u>	<u>I am</u> <u>not sure</u>	<u>Mean</u>
	<u>1</u>				<u>5</u>		
a. Participating in the evening program in the Superdome at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering	1%	4%	11%	31%	46%	5%	4.3
b. Participating in the day of service at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering	2%	5%	10%	26%	53%	3%	4.3
c. Participating in the learning and discovery opportunities provided at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering	3%	10%	30%	34%	12%	9%	3.5
d. Participating in events in and with the congregation	2%	3%	25%	44%	23%	3%	3.9
e. Participating in events in and with the synod	13%	17%	23%	24%	12%	10%	3.1

5. Which of the following, if any, do you view as benefits to individual youth for attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering? (Choose all that apply)

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 77% An understanding of how God calls them to serve others | 72% Growth in faith |
| 82% Learning about specific situations of people undergoing hardship | 36% Leadership development |
| 66% Increased awareness of justice and advocacy | 63% Making new friends |
| 12% Other (please describe): | |

6. Which of the following, if any, do you view as benefits to the congregation for attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering? (Choose all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 63% An enthusiasm for service learning | 32% Increased interest in ELCA ministries |
| 71% Increased support for youth ministry | 38% Integration of youth within multiple ministries of the congregation |
| 7% Other (please describe): | |

7. Are the benefits you identified in Questions 5 and 6 worth the cost (in terms of time and resources) of attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering?

74% Yes

7% No

18% I am not sure

Please further explain your response:

8. How likely is your congregation to participate in a servant opportunity in your local community sometime within the next 12 months?

2% Not likely

15% Somewhat likely

83% Very likely

9. Did the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering emphasis on service and compassionate justice increase the desire within your congregation to participate in a servant opportunity?

32% Yes, among all age groups of members 30% Yes, only among youth

16% No 19% I am not sure

10. Do you believe the ELCA Youth Gathering has a missionally compelling purpose?

77% Yes

5% No

17% I am not sure

If yes, please describe:

Thank you for completing this questionnaire!



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

2009 ELCA Youth Gathering
Bishop Questionnaire
January/February 2010
Final Version – February 2010

*22 of the 65 synod bishops responded for a response rate of 34 percent
All percentages are based on the 22 responses, unless otherwise noted
After each percentage, the total number of responses is included in ()*

1. Did you attend the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering?

73% (16) Yes 27% (6) No

If not, have you ever attended an ELCA Youth Gathering? *(choose all that apply) N=6*

0% (0) Yes, more than 10 years ago
50% (3) Yes, less than 10 years ago
50% (3) No

2. Please choose the phrase that most closely represents your current perspective on the Youth Gathering: *(choose only one response)*

59% (13) An essential, defining ministry of this church
36% (8) A potent ministry with many strengths
5% (1) A valuable ministry, yet presenting significant challenges
0% (0) A ministry in need of reassessment

Please further explain your response:

- The timing was great. I have used it as a reason that we are stronger together than we are separate.
- These experiences leave lasting impressions. Such highs are needed, especially when they are effectively grounded in worship and service, like this Gathering.
- I have been a participant, pastor, and now bishop attending since the 1960s. It is a rite of passage for our youth. It has also evolved from a slumber party atmosphere to a growing experience which changes lives.
- We should do an event like this for clergy. It is one of the best things we do as church!!!
- This allows many people to experience the church in a more complete way than their local setting.
- The cost of the event is a concern. Secondly and more importantly, does this event become the tail that wags the dog of too many of our youth ministries. How could we use it to deepen faith of participants and grow leadership even more. I wish it would happen in a central location to reduce expenses.
- This is the largest gathering of this church, providing an unforgettable experience in the faith life of the young.
- There are only two opportunities that brings much of this church together in one place: churchwide assemblies and the youth gathering. The absence of a youth gathering would be deeply felt in this synod.

- I believe that our National Gatherings are unique, representing a rich heritage of successfully gathering a huge number of our youth for what can be a significant spiritual experience. However, the 2009 Gathering missed a number of opportunities to make explicit connections to Christian faith, life and mission. In short, the gathering was strong on justice, so-so on jazz, and deficient on Jesus.
- Youth have a life changing experience. For those from the Northwest the fact of seeing so many other Lutheran Youth is a real plus. Servant projects were the key strength.
- This was no ordinary event, but extraordinary. One that will be remembered by all who attended because on site work with hands and hearts was major, not incidental.
- Groups were not always sure where to go and when. For example, a room was declaring my presence for a synodical gathering when I had been informed of a different location and site that took place several days earlier with the result that some who would have liked to attend the session were not given appropriate information.
- It is one of the places I point to for the ELCA at its best. Yet I know that behind the scenes there are lots of things to take into account.
- Contributes significantly to raising up youth leaders to serve in congregations, synods and the greater church. Also great opportunity to reinforce discernment for full time work within the Church.

3. Which of the following, if any, do you think are significant impacts of the Youth Gathering for congregations within your synod? (choose all that apply)

- 91% (20) Deepening faith of youth
- 64% (14) Developing adult youth ministry leadership
- 91% (20) Helping young people identify with the mission of the ELCA
- 41% (9) Imparting new ministry ideas for youth leaders
- 96% (21) Providing concrete experiences of the church's many kinds of diversity
- 64% (14) Specific formation around the Youth Gathering theme (2009: servanthood and compassionate justice)
- 9% (2) Other (please describe):
 - Bonding with "Lutheran" heritage/relationships
 - Invitation to understanding service as mission

4. Which of the following, if any, do you think are significant impacts of the Youth Gathering for your synod's youth ministries? (choose all that apply)

- 46% (10) Cultivating the synod's adult youth ministry leadership cadre
- 68% (15) Cultivating the synod's youth leadership cadre
- 55% (12) Increasing the participation of young people in all of the synod's ministries
- 41% (9) Promoting participation in other synod youth ministries
- 46% (10) Sharing mission conversation in the synod around important themes
- 68% (15) Strengthening ties among youth and adults across the synod
- 9% (2) Other (please describe):
 - It provides a focus to work toward that many colleagues share
 - I'd like to hope that many of these were achieved

5. For what proportion of youth participants do you think the Youth Gathering effectively fosters significant faith development?

- 0% (0) Zero (0) percent
- 14% (3) 1 to 25 percent
- 23% (5) 26 to 50 percent
- 36% (8) 51 to 75 percent
- 23% (5) 76 to 100 percent

Please further explain your response:

- I would put higher...but there will always be some who simply refuse to be touched
- Most of our youth attend looking for a good time and come away transformed. Some look for a good time and that's all they come home feeling.
- I am not sure. I am glad you are working on some kind of evaluation of this question.
- I hope that my estimate is low, but I truly believe that the evening mass gatherings really missed the chance to knock the ball out of the park--helping participants see service in God's world as integral to their faith and life in JESUS. There were some excellent speakers at the mass gatherings--but way too many failed to develop the ways that Christian faith unfolds in witness and service. I am more confident that the small group experiences and late-night conversations/devotions make up for what I felt was lacking.
- That represents the number of youth who have had contact with me to express the positive feelings about the event. If youth will seek out the bishop to tell him about their experience, it had an effect.
- No one, in my estimation who participated could have not had effective faith development unless they were actually opposed to having it happen
- This is a tough one. My own children were impacted by this event. Much depends upon how such an experience is followed up.

6. How strongly do you think the ELCA Youth Gathering supports each of the ELCA churchwide organization’s five strategic directions and four implementing strategies?

	Youth Gathering Support for <u>This is Weak</u>		Youth Gathering Support for <u>This is Strong</u>			Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	
a. Support congregations in their call to be faithful, welcoming, and generous, sharing the mind of Christ	0%(0)	9%(2)	18%(4)	32%(7)	41%(9)	4.1
b. Assist members, congregations, synods, and institutions and agencies of this church to grow in evangelical outreach	0%(0)	14%(3)	41%(9)	27%(6)	18%(4)	3.5
c. Step forward as a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love for all that God has created	0%(0)	5%(1)	14%(3)	23%(5)	59%(13)	4.4
d. Deepen and extend our global, ecumenical, and interfaith relationships for the sake of God’s mission	0%(0)	9%(2)	36%(8)	46%(10)	9%(2)	3.6
e. Assist the church to bring forth and support faithful, wise, and courageous leaders whose vocations serve God’s mission in a pluralistic world.	0%(0)	0%(0)	5%(1)	59%(13)	36%(8)	4.3
f. Encourage, welcome, and depend upon the lively and creative exchange of resources and ideas throughout the ELCA	0%(0)	5%(1)	18%(4)	50%(11)	27%(6)	4.0
g. Recognize and encourage the vital contributions and deepening relationship with institutions and agencies of this church and with Lutheran, ecumenical, and interfaith partners	0%(0)	18%(4)	41%(9)	36%(8)	5%(1)	3.3
h. Confront the scandalous realities of racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, age, gender, familial, sexual, physical, personal, and class barriers that often manifest themselves in exclusion, poverty, hunger, and violence	0%(0)	5%(1)	5%(1)	46%(10)	46%(10)	4.3
i. Pursue ardently the ELCA’s commitment to becoming more diverse, multicultural, and multi-generational in an ever-changing and increasingly pluralistic context, with special focus on full inclusion in this church of youth, young adults, and people of color and people whose primary language is other than English	0%(0)	0%(0)	9%(2)	46%(10)	46%(10)	4.4

7. How do you think the Youth Gathering might engage more congregations across the ELCA, particularly in your synod? (A point of reference: Approximately 26 percent of congregations across the ELCA attended the 2009 Youth Gathering.)

- More intentional connections across sister synods
- Central and affordable locale, promotion among adult members of the church
- More intense synodical push for attendance; planning ahead for next event
- I’m not sure you can do more than you can...you offer an excellent experience...the adults and youth back home do the selling.
- Well, cost can be prohibitive.
- Please keep in mind that we have congregations that are more mature and have no youth. For others it may be the issue of cost. Our youth groups begin saving and raising money for the next event as soon as they get home from the last one.

- I think that this is a local issue. I don't think that there is much that churchwide can do about it.
- 1. There could be two or three sites spread across the country that would allow the big trip or the more modest trip. 2. The focus could be on discipleship and leadership development. It would be different, but helping people think about the gifts God has given them and how to live their vocations would be powerful.
- Have a portion of the Gathering be intentionally interactive, so that individuals and small groups back home and in other congregations might be engaged, perhaps in the evening program live, with a lead-in Bible study from the morning part of that gathering.
- I am not certain but I suspect cost is a major factor in preventing many of our congregations from participating.
- We need to continue to connect congregations with others who are sending youth to the gathering. Small congregations may have only 1 or 2 youth who would be interested but are hesitant to attend without interpersonal connections with youth and adults from other congregations.
- We can never under-estimate the importance of seizing every opportunity to lift up Jesus Christ, provide basic faith formation for our youth, and assist budding Christians in embracing the full-range of faith practices that undergird discipleship. The 2009 gathering was great in terms of the call to service in the world....but I believe that our gatherings can pursue a more comprehensive and balanced menu of Christian faith practices. That's what I'd shoot for, and I believe that that would be very attractive to the congregations of the synod that I serve.
- Seek ways to engage smaller congregations with no professional youth staff.
- For us travel will always be an issue. Having local advocates will help, but for those who have not traveled across the country before, this is an additional hurdle.
- Not really sure, except to say that the excitement and word of mouth coming from New Orleans will no doubt engage more congregations in the future!
- Cost is a huge factor, especially for participants and congregations in our economically challenged neighborhoods. We need to work on developing synod-wide fund-raising events. The ELCA needs to do everything possible to keep costs down.
- Those who have attended need to tell the story of their involvement to others. The matter of affordability is huge. Almost by definition, participation is shaped by middle/middle upper class Lutherans, at least that's my suspicion.
- I don't know.
- Provide access to financial support for struggling congregations that are not able to support youth to such gatherings, or assist/encourage congregations linking up to sponsor groups of youth from several congregations.

8. From your perspective as a synod bishop, is the Youth Gathering worth the investments of time, energy, and resources to carry out?

82% (18) Yes 0% (0) No 18% (4) I am not sure

Please further explain your response:

- I think it is a transformative experience for those who go, and something we can point to. It does not reach all youth, nor can it.
- I do think we need a new model for the Arena events...this model is getting tired, predictable.
- It is a very public witness both within and outside this church of who we are and the impact we can make.
- Especially this past year with the service component, people never quit talking. As I said earlier, I have watched this event be transformed from a party time to a real growth experience.
- As noted earlier it is one of the best things we do as church!!!!!!
- There is nothing that we do synodically that can match this. It is the best thing around for connecting congregations with churchwide vision.
- I lean Yes. But as a pastor working with youth I wondered at times. The last gathering was different so I did not see it working. You may have made significant improvements. I see this event as a serious dilemma. It has great up sides but some significant issues, too.
- I can think of almost nothing else that generates the support and positive feeling that the youth gathering does-- other than disaster response and world hunger.
- Despite my critical comments (above) I am very supportive of our National Gatherings and will continue to be so. I just believe that we can keep improving them.
- I have never seen such camaraderie, joy, intentional discipleship formation and deeds of mercy and love done on a large scale organized youth ministry situation
- I think that much is to be gained through these experiences. I also find myself frequently missing the Christ Connection.
- I have only a small idea of the investment of time, energy and resources necessary. I do think it's a great event. I don't know how else we might touch so many lives.
- It is perhaps the best thing that we do to expose younger members of our church to the mission and vision of the whole church.

9. Do you believe the Youth Gathering has a missionally compelling purpose?

82% (18) Yes 0% (0) No 18% (4) I am not sure

Please further explain your response:

- The danger is being an end unto itself.
- I think it's an essential bonding experience for kids.
- The servant component in 2009 was a key part of keeping a missional focus. It was also well handled given the number of youth.

- I think it could have more focus on mission. The meta-narratives this year sounded different than previous years. That had to do with tactics and location. I liked the focus on faith formation of the St. Louis gathering.
- The gathering encourages the development of the leaders in this church among the young.
- Yes, because in the ELCA we simply MUST seize every opportunity to foster a living faith and discipleship among the younger generations.
- Mission is doing the loving deed, and doing so for people you've never met is profoundly compelling
- From my above responses, you might guess my response here. I think we tend to minimize the message of the One who came in order that "repentance and forgiveness of sins might be proclaimed in his name to all nations." My reading of Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions suggests that is the chief purpose of the Church. We're pretty quiet on that one, preferring the "safer" territory of justice. But without grounding "justice" in the fulfillment of God's promises in Christ, we are left "under law", trying to do good but without the "power."
- This one did - much more so than in the past.

**2009 ELCA Youth Gathering Evaluation
 Congregation Pastor and Synod Bishop Feedback
 Appendix**

**Differences Among Pastor Respondents
 Based on Size of Congregation¹ in Which They Serve**

For each of the following tables, those columns with ‘▲’ and those columns with ‘▼’ are significantly different from each other at the .05 level. For example, in Table 1, pastors serving congregations with an average weekly worship attendance of 151-350 were more likely to choose ‘an enthusiasm for service learning’ as a benefit to the congregation (71%) than were pastors serving congregations with an average weekly worship attendance of 1-150 (55%).

Table 1: ‘An enthusiasm for service learning’ as a benefit to the congregation for attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering:

	<i>Average Weekly Worship Attendance</i>		
	<u>1-150</u>	<u>151-350</u>	<u>351 or more</u>
Percentage of responding pastors choosing this as a benefit	55% ▼	71% ▲	65%

Table 2: ‘Integration of youth within multiple ministries of the congregation’ as a benefit to the congregation for attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering:

	<i>Average Weekly Worship Attendance</i>		
	<u>1-150</u>	<u>151-350</u>	<u>351 or more</u>
Percentage of responding pastors choosing this as a benefit	44% ▲	38% ▲	20% ▼

Table 3: Likelihood of the congregation to participate in a servant opportunity in the local community sometime within the next 12 months:

	<i>Average Weekly Worship Attendance</i>		
	<u>1-150</u>	<u>151-350</u>	<u>351 or more</u>
Percentage of responding pastors indicating ‘very likely’	76% ▼	88% ▲	94% ▲

¹ Size of congregation is based on average weekly worship attendance.

**2009 ELCA Youth Gathering Evaluation
 Congregation Pastor and Synod Bishop Feedback
 Appendix**

**Differences Among Pastor Respondents
 Based on Whether They Attended the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering**

For each of the following tables, those columns with ‘▲’ and those columns with ‘▼’ are significantly different from each other at the .05 level. For example, in Table 4, pastors who attended the 2009 Youth Gathering were more likely to characterize the experience of young people from their congregation who participated in the 2009 Youth Gathering as ‘a mixture of positive and negative’ (15%) than were pastors who did not attend (8%).

Table 4: Characterizing the experience of young people from the congregation who participated in the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering:

	<i>Attendance at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering</i>	
	<u>Did Attend</u>	<u>Did Not Attend</u>
Percentage of responding pastors indicating ‘a mixture of positive and negative’	15% ▲	8% ▼

Table 5: Effectiveness of the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering at ‘Teaching about justice as presented by Jesus’:

	<i>Attendance at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering</i>	
	<u>Did Attend</u>	<u>Did Not Attend</u>
Percentage of responding pastors indicating effective*	64% ▼	75% ▲

*‘4’ or ‘5’ on 5-point scale with ‘1’ representing ‘not at all effective’ and ‘5’ representing ‘very effective’

Table 6: Effectiveness of the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering at ‘Nurturing personal faith in Christ’:

	<i>Attendance at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering</i>	
	<u>Did Attend</u>	<u>Did Not Attend</u>
Percentage of responding pastors indicating effective*	63% ▼	73% ▲

*‘4’ or ‘5’ on 5-point scale with ‘1’ representing ‘not at all effective’ and ‘5’ representing ‘very effective’

Table 7: Effectiveness of the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering at ‘Inspiring youth concerning ELCA ministries’:

	<i>Attendance at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering</i>	
	<u>Did Attend</u>	<u>Did Not Attend</u>
Percentage of responding pastors indicating effective*	52% ▼	63% ▲

*‘4’ or ‘5’ on 5-point scale with ‘1’ representing ‘not at all effective’ and ‘5’ representing ‘very effective’

Table 8: Influence of ‘Participating in the evening program in the Superdome at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering’ on creating or strengthening youth identity with the ELCA:

	<i>Attendance at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering</i>	
	<u>Did Attend</u>	<u>Did Not Attend</u>
Percentage of responding pastors indicating influential*	80% ▼	87% ▲

*‘4’ or ‘5’ on 5-point scale with ‘1’ representing ‘no influence’ and ‘5’ representing ‘a lot of influence’

Table 9: Influence of ‘Participating in the learning and discovery opportunities provided at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering’ on creating or strengthening youth identity with the ELCA:

	<i>Attendance at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering</i>	
	<u>Did Attend</u>	<u>Did Not Attend</u>
Percentage of responding pastors indicating influential*	44% ▼	63% ▲

*‘4’ or ‘5’ on 5-point scale with ‘1’ representing ‘no influence’ and ‘5’ representing ‘a lot of influence’

Table 10: ‘An understanding of how God calls them to serve others’ as a benefit to individual youth for attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering:

	<i>Attendance at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering</i>	
	<u>Did Attend</u>	<u>Did Not Attend</u>
Percentage of responding pastors choosing this as a benefit	80% ▲	72% ▼

Table 11: ‘Increased awareness of justice and advocacy’ as a benefit to individual youth for attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering:

	<i>Attendance at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering</i>	
	<u>Did Attend</u>	<u>Did Not Attend</u>
Percentage of responding pastors choosing this as a benefit	70% ▲	60% ▼

Table 12: ‘An enthusiasm for service learning’ as a benefit to the congregation for attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering:

	<i>Attendance at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering</i>	
	<u>Did Attend</u>	<u>Did Not Attend</u>
Percentage of responding pastors choosing this as a benefit	70% ▲	55% ▼

Table 13: ‘Increased support for youth ministry’ as a benefit to the congregation for attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering:

	<i>Attendance at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering</i>	
	<u>Did Attend</u>	<u>Did Not Attend</u>
Percentage of responding pastors choosing this as a benefit	77% ▲	64% ▼

Table 14: Did the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering emphasis on service and compassionate justice increase the desire within the congregation to participate in a servant opportunity?

	<i>Attendance at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering</i>	
	<u>Did Attend</u>	<u>Did Not Attend</u>
Percentage of responding pastors indicating ‘no’	13% ▼	21% ▲

**2009 ELCA Youth Gathering Evaluation
 Congregation Pastor and Synod Bishop Feedback
 Appendix**

Differences Among Pastor Respondents Based on the Region in Which They Serve

For each of the following tables, those regions with ‘▲’ and those regions with ‘▼’ are significantly different from each other at the .05 level. For example, in Table 15, pastors serving in Regions 2 or 8 were more likely to indicate the 2009 Youth Gathering was effective at ‘instilling new attitudes of service’ (92% and 94%, respectively) than were pastors serving in Region 4 (73%).

Table 15: Effectiveness of the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering at ‘Instilling new attitudes of service’:

	<u>Region 1</u>	<u>Region 2</u>	<u>Region 3</u>	<u>Region 4</u>	<u>Region 5</u>	<u>Region 6</u>	<u>Region 7</u>	<u>Region 8</u>	<u>Region 9</u>
Percentage of responding pastors indicating effective*	75%	92% ▲	84%	73% ▼	85%	77%	79%	94% ▲	88%

*‘4’ or ‘5’ on 5-point scale with ‘1’ representing ‘not at all effective’ and ‘5’ representing ‘very effective’

Table 16: Effectiveness of the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering at ‘Teaching about justice as presented by Jesus’:

	<u>Region 1</u>	<u>Region 2</u>	<u>Region 3</u>	<u>Region 4</u>	<u>Region 5</u>	<u>Region 6</u>	<u>Region 7</u>	<u>Region 8</u>	<u>Region 9</u>
Percentage of responding pastors indicating effective*	67%	81% ▲	71%	60% ▼	69%	64%	71%	73%	64%

*‘4’ or ‘5’ on 5-point scale with ‘1’ representing ‘not at all effective’ and ‘5’ representing ‘very effective’

Table 17: Effectiveness of the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering at ‘Stimulating conversation on God’s call’:

	<u>Region 1</u>	<u>Region 2</u>	<u>Region 3</u>	<u>Region 4</u>	<u>Region 5</u>	<u>Region 6</u>	<u>Region 7</u>	<u>Region 8</u>	<u>Region 9</u>
Percentage of responding pastors indicating effective*	60%	69% ▲	63%	56%	57%	48% ▼	54%	69% ▲	51%

*4’ or ‘5’ on 5-point scale with ‘1’ representing ‘not at all effective’ and ‘5’ representing ‘very effective’

Table 18: Effectiveness of the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering at ‘Strengthening youth for ministry in the congregation’:

	<u>Region 1</u>	<u>Region 2</u>	<u>Region 3</u>	<u>Region 4</u>	<u>Region 5</u>	<u>Region 6</u>	<u>Region 7</u>	<u>Region 8</u>	<u>Region 9</u>
Percentage of responding pastors indicating effective*	88%	77%	55% ▼	67% ▼	66% ▼	67% ▼	61% ▼	87% ▲	73%

*4’ or ‘5’ on 5-point scale with ‘1’ representing ‘not at all effective’ and ‘5’ representing ‘very effective’

Table 19: Influence of ‘Participating in the day of service at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering’ on creating or strengthening youth identity with the ELCA:

	<u>Region 1</u>	<u>Region 2</u>	<u>Region 3</u>	<u>Region 4</u>	<u>Region 5</u>	<u>Region 6</u>	<u>Region 7</u>	<u>Region 8</u>	<u>Region 9</u>
Percentage of responding pastors indicating influential*	81%	92% ▲	78%	84%	85%	73% ▼	86%	87%	73% ▼

*4’ or ‘5’ on 5-point scale with ‘1’ representing ‘no influence’ and ‘5’ representing ‘a lot of influence’

Table 20: Influence of ‘Participating in the learning and discovery opportunities provided at the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering’ on creating or strengthening youth identity with the ELCA:

	<u>Region 1</u>	<u>Region 2</u>	<u>Region 3</u>	<u>Region 4</u>	<u>Region 5</u>	<u>Region 6</u>	<u>Region 7</u>	<u>Region 8</u>	<u>Region 9</u>
Percentage of responding pastors indicating influential*	53%	51%	54%	46%	57%	36% ▼	63% ▲	63% ▲	38% ▼

*‘4’ or ‘5’ on 5-point scale with ‘1’ representing ‘no influence’ and ‘5’ representing ‘a lot of influence’

Table 21: Influence of ‘Participating in events in and with the congregation’ on creating or strengthening youth identity with the ELCA:

	<u>Region 1</u>	<u>Region 2</u>	<u>Region 3</u>	<u>Region 4</u>	<u>Region 5</u>	<u>Region 6</u>	<u>Region 7</u>	<u>Region 8</u>	<u>Region 9</u>
Percentage of responding pastors indicating influential*	63%	79% ▲	70%	71%	71%	62%	69%	79% ▲	59% ▼

*‘4’ or ‘5’ on 5-point scale with ‘1’ representing ‘no influence’ and ‘5’ representing ‘a lot of influence’

Table 22: Influence of ‘Participating in events in and with the synod’ on creating or strengthening youth identity with the ELCA:

	<u>Region 1</u>	<u>Region 2</u>	<u>Region 3</u>	<u>Region 4</u>	<u>Region 5</u>	<u>Region 6</u>	<u>Region 7</u>	<u>Region 8</u>	<u>Region 9</u>
Percentage of responding pastors indicating influential*	50%	56% ▲	42%	31% ▼	27% ▼	39%	45%	46%	54% ▲

*‘4’ or ‘5’ on 5-point scale with ‘1’ representing ‘no influence’ and ‘5’ representing ‘a lot of influence’

Table 23: ‘An understanding of how God calls them to serve others’ as a benefit to individual youth for attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering:

	<u>Region 1</u>	<u>Region 2</u>	<u>Region 3</u>	<u>Region 4</u>	<u>Region 5</u>	<u>Region 6</u>	<u>Region 7</u>	<u>Region 8</u>	<u>Region 9</u>
Percentage of responding pastors choosing this as a benefit	75%	82%	84%	70% ▼	75% ▼	74% ▼	72% ▼	89% ▲	74% ▼

Table 24: ‘Growth in faith’ as a benefit to individual youth for attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering:

	<u>Region 1</u>	<u>Region 2</u>	<u>Region 3</u>	<u>Region 4</u>	<u>Region 5</u>	<u>Region 6</u>	<u>Region 7</u>	<u>Region 8</u>	<u>Region 9</u>
Percentage of responding pastors choosing this as a benefit	88%	87% ▲	78% ▲	72%	67%	72%	60% ▼	81% ▲	61% ▼

Table 25: ‘Learning about specific situations of people undergoing hardship’ as a benefit to individual youth for attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering:

	<u>Region 1</u>	<u>Region 2</u>	<u>Region 3</u>	<u>Region 4</u>	<u>Region 5</u>	<u>Region 6</u>	<u>Region 7</u>	<u>Region 8</u>	<u>Region 9</u>
Percentage of responding pastors choosing this as a benefit	75%	85%	87%	72% ▼	84%	79%	74% ▼	92% ▲	86%

Table 26: ‘Leadership development’ as a benefit to individual youth for attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering:

	<u>Region 1</u>	<u>Region 2</u>	<u>Region 3</u>	<u>Region 4</u>	<u>Region 5</u>	<u>Region 6</u>	<u>Region 7</u>	<u>Region 8</u>	<u>Region 9</u>
Percentage of responding pastors choosing this as a benefit	44%	59% ▲	33% ▼	38% ▼	36% ▼	39% ▼	29% ▼	43%	21% ▼

Table 27: ‘Making new friends’ as a benefit to individual youth for attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering:

	<u>Region 1</u>	<u>Region 2</u>	<u>Region 3</u>	<u>Region 4</u>	<u>Region 5</u>	<u>Region 6</u>	<u>Region 7</u>	<u>Region 8</u>	<u>Region 9</u>
Percentage of responding pastors choosing this as a benefit	44% ▼	67%	64%	75% ▲	58% ▼	65%	53% ▼	62%	68%

Table 28: ‘An enthusiasm for service learning’ as a benefit to the congregation for attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering:

	<u>Region 1</u>	<u>Region 2</u>	<u>Region 3</u>	<u>Region 4</u>	<u>Region 5</u>	<u>Region 6</u>	<u>Region 7</u>	<u>Region 8</u>	<u>Region 9</u>
Percentage of responding pastors choosing this as a benefit	63%	67%	64%	53% ▼	67%	63%	62%	75% ▲	56%

Table 29: ‘Increased support for youth ministry’ as a benefit to the congregation for attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering:

	<u>Region 1</u>	<u>Region 2</u>	<u>Region 3</u>	<u>Region 4</u>	<u>Region 5</u>	<u>Region 6</u>	<u>Region 7</u>	<u>Region 8</u>	<u>Region 9</u>
Percentage of responding pastors choosing this as a benefit	88%	82% ▲	75%	58% ▼	72%	77%	69%	75%	61% ▼

Table 30: ‘Integration of youth within multiple ministries of the congregation’ as a benefit to the congregation for attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering:

	<u>Region 1</u>	<u>Region 2</u>	<u>Region 3</u>	<u>Region 4</u>	<u>Region 5</u>	<u>Region 6</u>	<u>Region 7</u>	<u>Region 8</u>	<u>Region 9</u>
Percentage of responding pastors choosing this as a benefit	38%	44%	27% ▼	45%	41%	28% ▼	48% ▲	45%	33%

Table 31: Are the benefits to individual youth and to congregations worth the cost (in terms of time and resources) of attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering?

	<u>Region 1</u>	<u>Region 2</u>	<u>Region 3</u>	<u>Region 4</u>	<u>Region 5</u>	<u>Region 6</u>	<u>Region 7</u>	<u>Region 8</u>	<u>Region 9</u>
Percentage of responding pastors indicating ‘yes’	88%	82%	62% ▼	68% ▼	74%	79%	77%	87% ▲	69% ▼

Table 32: Do you believe the ELCA Youth Gathering has a missionally compelling purpose?

	<u>Region 1</u>	<u>Region 2</u>	<u>Region 3</u>	<u>Region 4</u>	<u>Region 5</u>	<u>Region 6</u>	<u>Region 7</u>	<u>Region 8</u>	<u>Region 9</u>
Percentage of responding pastors indicating ‘yes’	94%	92% ▲	68% ▼	75% ▼	73% ▼	77%	89% ▲	83%	72% ▼