

Youth Ministry Report 2017-2018

Winter Retreat was held December 1 -3, 2017 at Camp Mount Luther. The theme was "Prepare the Way, Follow the Path to Peace". It was a wonderful retreat and was enjoyed by all. The Rev. Canon Ken Wagner-Pizza joined us for the weekend and led us in renewing our baptismal covenants by the lake at CML. He led us with a beautiful service walking the labyrinth and having prayer under the stars. The Very Rev. Robyn Szoke-Coolidge led us on Sunday for our Closing Eucharist.

January Happening planning meeting was held at Christ Episcopal Church Coudersport. We had twenty-four in attendance. Karen DiPace made all the meals for the weekend. We were so welcomed by everyone at the church. It was a great planning and team-building weekend with the youth. We finalized all the plans for the Happening #11 weekend. We enjoyed Sunday Eucharist with the Rev. Janis Yskamp.

On February 15 – 18, 2018 a group of 53 youth, Young Adults and Adults from our diocese met at Camp Mount Luther for a weekend called Happening. The Happening "Experience" is a powerful instrument of Christian Renewal. During the three-day retreat, the participants listened to talks given by teenagers and adults. The presentation of the talks by youth used personal life experiences to offer Christ's message to attending Happeners on a level they can understand and to answer many of the faith questions youth struggle with on a daily basis. Talks about church teachings and their importance in the lives of youth attending the weekend were given. Each talk is a critical building block in the creation of the Happening message. The entire series of talks is given in a sequence that is intended to guide Happeners by opening an avenue of discussions to help them verbalize and internalize their faith questions in a safe environment, hopefully leading to a new or renewed relationship with Christ. Brooks Morgan served as Rector and Tierza Mendez as Assistant Rector.

The weekend started off very hard with a youth leader and two youth being in a car accident. Two other youth were not able to join us because of the flu. It turned out to be an amazing weekend. The youth learned how powerful prayer can be and shared in many "God Moments".

We had seventeen Young Adults as part of the Celebration Team #1. This is the first year we had a curriculum for the weekend and everyone enjoyed the weekend. They cooked and prepared their own meals over the weekend. They stopped each hour during the weekend and would pray for the Happeners, Happening staff and our youth that could not be with us. We ended the weekend with a wonderful closing Eucharist by our youth rector, Brooks Morgan and The Rev. Regina Bautista. Our Celebration Team also joined us for the service.

On March 17-19, 2018 a group of 32 youth, three young adults and twelve adults met at Camp Mount Luther for a weekend called New Beginnings. New Beginnings is a unique ministry that shares the love of Christ with middle school-aged youth of today. "New Beginnings" speaks, listens, and challenges middle school youth to be positive about themselves, their friends, families and their communities, in a critical time in their lives. This ministry reminds them that we are all children of God, we are special, we are loved, and there is nothing that we cannot overcome with Christ.

Leah Doyle from All Saints Episcopal Church in Coudersport was the Rector for New Beginnings. Our Young Adults and Sr. High Youth led the retreat with assistance from the adults. They gave wonderful talks on self, families, friends, peer pressure and many other topics. We had a great turn out of Jr. high youth and they seemed to enjoy the weekend. They grew spiritually with without realizing it. Many new friendships were formed and old ones reunited. The talent show was lots of fun with some amazing talents. There was a lot of positive energy during the weekend with so many boys in attendance.

August 17 – 19, 2018 we had a great weekend at Camp Small Valley in Halifax with 31 youth and adults . (It changed from North Bay Retreat Center because of cost). It was a fun weekend with swimming, hiking, team building and playing games. We had planning meetings during the weekend with the different aged youth to plan for the retreats that will be happening 2018 – 2019.

I will be attending the Diocesan Youth Leaders Gathering September 24 – 27, 2019 in Kansas City, MO. It is a group of Diocesan youth leaders that connect leaders whose primary responsibility is youth ministry at the diocesan level. There will be sessions on Pastoral Care for Youth workers, research on mountaintop experiences, recruiting, training supporting paid and volunteer parish youth workers, break out sessions to share best practices and struggles plus much more. Province 3 helps with the cost to send me to this event. The leaders from Province 3 will have a meeting during the retreat to plan for an event for our youth to get together.

Respectfully submitted
Mary Ellen Kilp, Co-Chair Youth Committee