

In Youth we Learn, in Age We Understand



Nigerian youth group witnessing Christ in their village

The young people of our two sister synods in Nigeria are key components of the lifeblood of the Church. They put their energy, fervent faith, and idealism to work for their faith. As everywhere, young people of our Lutheran synods are the future of their churches. But in Nigeria, the youth play critical roles right now.

To clarify, “youth” means everyone from about 14 to 35 years of age. A new communicant member remains in the youth wing until he or she desires more mature participation. Unfortunately, young women frequently leave their faith to join their husband’s church automatically when they marry. Conversely, young women becomes Lutheran by marriage. This is one of those areas where culture and faith are at odds.



The Youth Fellowships of both Christ the King Lutheran Church of Nigeria (LCN) and All Saints LCN are highly organized. The youth leaders in each synod meet monthly. The members meet on an area level every month too. Youth representatives are included on various synod committees.



At least once a year the Youth Fellowships have synod-wide rallies. On a chosen weekend 100 to 300 youth gather in a village or city chosen by synod leaders. They start arriving on Friday. They spill out of cars or hired vans in amazing numbers. The host congregation connects participants to member and non-member neighbor homes for beds or even floor sleeping space. All weekend there are lectures, Bible studies, worship, praise dances, Bible and choir competitions, health and personal development lessons, and a general celebration of their Savior and one another.



Youth working on witnessing books to hand out

On Saturday afternoon they fan out through the streets drumming, singing, and inviting everyone to the big finale on Sunday. When I asked why strangers come to a Youth Sunday gathering, they answered, “Because our church tells them that they are saved by the grace of God alone without any works.” In a culture plagued by demanding false prophets spouting false promises, this is refreshing news. In fact, the Youth Fellowships do nearly all of the organized preevangelism outreach for both our Nigeria synods. They fervently believe that this is their purpose.



In congregations the youth are key players on a weekly basis. Young instrumentalists and the Youth Choirs provide the musical backbone for worship services, Sundays and during the week. Service begins when the youth and women' choirs sing in procession. Instruments support the hymns. Youth sing anthems and lead the congregation in praise songs. Youth Choirs sing for member funerals in their parish or district.



Nigerian youth leaders are “men in black”

At the close of one annual youth rally, I observed a key truth. When the Youth handed out awards to honor their past leaders, I noted that those past youth leaders are now lay leaders in our synods, parishes, districts, and synods.

All Saints LCN and Christ the King LCN Youth Fellowships – what blessings for their synods and the Kingdom of Christ!

Missionary Em. Doug Weiser, Nigeria

Please pray for those working in fields that are ripe for harvest. Share their story, engage with future news and receive updates. Go to this link to learn more about our mission fields in Africa and how the Holy Spirit is working faith in people’s hearts
<https://wels.net/serving-others/missions/africa>