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## **2009 Twin Cities Gathering of Young Rostered Leaders**

Vocation of First Call Congregations Project (2005-2009)

ELCA Vocation & Education Unit

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The "TCG: Affirming Young Leaders" event gathered over 80 young rostered leaders for the beginning days of the August 2009 Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis, Minn. Following is a summary of responses from the evaluation forms.

### **TWIN CITIES GATHERING: AFFIRMING YOUNG LEADERS**

#### **Evaluation Comments**

Question 1 asked for comments about how helpful the pre-gathering materials were in preparing for the Twin Cities Gathering (TCG). Comments by 49 % of those who completed the evaluations were critical of the following areas (listed by frequency of response of **24 comments**):

- a. Agenda of TCG sent late [*ed. This was an unfortunate snafu, as staff thought it had been sent earlier.*]
- b. Registration confusing
- c. Communication about goals and invitations to TCG unclear
- d. Connection of TCG to Churchwide Assembly unclear

Question 2 asked for comments about their experience with the main elements of TCG. There were **51 separate comments** which are listed below by frequency of response:

- a. Connect more to the Churchwide Assembly
- b. Small groups need: better facilitation, more time, more ways to network
- c. Other critiques: time to relax, T-shirt a negative image, hotel critique
- d. Improving TCG time: Bible studies linked to daily themes, not so rushed, connect better to small group topics
- e. A good balance of everything
- f. Board of Pensions positive and negative comments
- g. Resource Fair ideas for improvement

Question 3 asked for responses to "In your opinion, what have been the strengths of this gathering?" Categories from **92 comments** are listed in order of frequency:

- a. Being with young leaders; receiving mutual support
- b. Experience of the CWA – worship and plenary
- c. Networking and sharing ideas
- d. TCG discussions, open mic, feeling valued
- e. Small group discussions
- f. Reasonable cost of event



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Question 5 asked, “What are at least two ideas or insights you will take home from this gathering?” Categories from **75 comments** are listed in order of frequency:

- a. Leadership needs, gifts, models
- b. Connected and Resourced
  - Wellness ideas, esp. SMART, Laughing Club
  - Community organizing
  - Mission ideas
  - Continuing Education
  - DVD on First Call Congregations
  - SPARK Bible Study
  - Taking Sabbath time
- c. TCG Themes and Process
  - Realization I am not alone
  - Similarities among young rostered leaders
  - Having an important place in the church
- d. Contextual Issues; e.g., clergy couples/families; multi-point parishes
- e. Appreciation for ELCA
  - Respectful dialogue at CWA
  - Lutheran heritage
  - Bigger church picture
  - Global Mission
  - Diverse worship styles in CWA
- f. Financial Learning; e.g., Mission Investment Fund; Repayment of student loans
- g. Pastoral Skills and Identity

Question 6 asked, “Please suggest any changes or modifications of the format or the process of the TCG that you think would strengthen this kind of gathering in the future.” Categories of the **74 comments** are listed in order of frequency. *[Note: The first category received twice as many comments as the next highest category.]*

- a. Interact more with the CWA; e.g., worship every day; longer event parallel to CWA; opportunity to address CWA
- b. Small group process – go deeper
  - More time
  - Less issues or topics
  - Less program time
  - Have prayer partners
- c. Issues to include in event:
  - Bible study
  - Talk about visions for the ELCA
  - Incorporate CWA issues into event
  - Social justice



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- Sharing ministry stories
  - More breaks
  - Exercise times
- d. Plenary time of event:
- Have speakers; e.g., pastors
  - Debrief more of CWA issues
  - More time with other “Partners” or sponsors (than mainly Board of Pensions)
- e. Presenting ourselves more professionally; e.g., not dress like youth groups
- f. Thanks for the event!
- g. Expand invitational list; e.g., those awaiting a call under 31; another event for the 30-35 cohort