

PARTNERS IN
the spirit
JANUARY 2005



The Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod

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Experiencing LYO in Our Partner Synod



By Emily Bender, New Jerusalem, Hellertown

The e-mail came in mid-September: I was invited to visit the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin for their Lutheran Youth Organization's annual assembly (Godstock), to be held in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Immediately, I was excited — not only to escape Pennsylvania for a little while, but also to look at another way of gathering youth together from across a synod.

Our Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod LYF assemblies have always been special to me, and the opportunity to participate in two gatherings in one year was definitely something I looked forward to.

Thankfully, I had the help of Greg Kaufman, an adult advisor to their LYO, who helped me figure out flight schedules and the logistics of getting myself to Godstock on time.

It took almost an entire day of traveling, but I got there in one piece. As I stepped out of the terminal with Mary Toufar, an advisor to the NW Synod of Wisconsin's LYO and the mother of Josh (see the March 2004 issue of Partners), I got a little nervous. This was my first time traveling alone, and I was a pretty good distance from home.

But in no time I was having a blast. Everyone there was so kind to me and all of them took me under their wings. I soon learned that their LYF board and assemblies are set up differently from ours, but the end result was still the same —



Lutheran youth coming together to worship God and have a great time doing it.

I also got to witness some very diverse styles of praise. Peder Eide led a contemporary worship service for most of the weekend, and Agape brought in an energetic hip-hop vibe for Saturday night and Sunday morning.

The experience was one I will never forget and I thank everyone from both synods who helped me take this journey.

