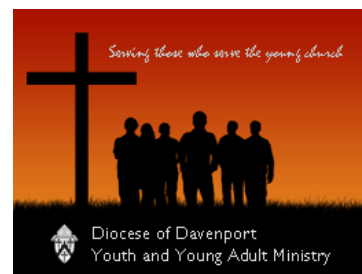


# Youth Ministry Leaders' Monthly Gathering Agenda

## August 3, 2021 – Virtual Online Meeting



Present: Brett Adams, Mary Barnum, Deb Barry, Gail Bates, Brenda Bertram, Jeri Bollwitt, Evan Brankin, Sharon Crall, Sr. Cheryl Demmer, Crystal DeNeve, Luke Gregory, Julia Jones, Joyce Kloft, Allie Lundstrom, Kelley Tansey, Jasmin Tone, Fr. Joe Wolf, Don Boucher, Barb Butterworth

I. Opening Prayer, led by Don Bouher

II. In-Service and Discussion: *The Corona Virus Delta Variant – Implications for Ministry Programming*. Guest Presenter: Deacon Frank Agnoli, Director of Liturgy for the Diocese of Davenport, and MD

- Deacon Frank gave a presentation on the Delta variant of the Corona virus and the current state of virus in the country and in Iowa. The group also engaged in a Q&A with Deacon Frank and a discussion of possible implications for ministry programming.
- The presentation and discussion was recorded, and the recording can be accessed [here](#).
- Questions that came during the Q&A/Discussion and responses:
  - i. Can we ask employees, volunteers, kids enrolled in programs, and their parents about their vaccine status (as long as we don't ask why)? Can we exclude persons because of vaccine status or impose conditions on participation (re: masking)? My understanding is yes to both. *We can only ask employees about the vaccination status. All we can say to others are if you are not vaccinated, you have to wear a mask and social distance.*
  - ii. Can church (not school) programs require masking? Are there limits on what we can require, on allowing participation, or other restrictions? *We can require masks by CDC guidelines.*
- More information gathered by Deacon Frank after his presentation:
  - i. At least prior to Delta, most cases among children were pretty mild. Nearly 4 million children in the US have been infected with COVID-19 as of May 2021. While most children have had mild or no symptoms, thousands have been hospitalized and several hundred have died.
  - ii. On July 21: Dr. Jennifer Lighter, a pediatric infectious disease specialist at NYU Langone Health, said the delta variant, while it is "certainly more contagious," doesn't appear to be more dangerous to children than other variants. As of Thursday, more than 4 million children had been diagnosed with Covid-19, about 14.2 percent of all cases, according to the AAP. Versalovic also said, "We have no firm evidence that the disease severity in children and adolescents is any different with the delta variant."
  - iii. Analysis of pediatric COVID-19 hospitalization data from 14 states found that although the cumulative rate of COVID-19–associated hospitalization among children (8.0 per 100,000 population) is low compared with that in adults (164.5), one in three hospitalized children was admitted to an intensive care unit.
  - iv. Is this changing?
    - More kids are getting infected with the delta variant (# infections are going up); which means the absolute number of kids getting severely ill is going up. For example, a recent report out of LA: 18 kids in hospital in June; jumped to 62 in July. Half of those needed ICU care / ventilators.

- But is the % of those ending up in the hospital, in the ICU, on a vent going up? That's (as of the writing of this e-mail) still an unanswered question. I am awaiting more information from contacts at the university. But as of now, it doesn't look that way.
      - v. The best thing parents can do is to make sure that they are vaccinated.
      - vi. A good summary is found here: <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/children-and-covid-19-state-level-data-report/>
    - And then there's this:
      - i. No evidence so far that delta is more severe in kids ("My understanding is that younger people are infected and as a result affected by the delta variant. I do not know of any special predilection to infect children or cause worse disease.")
      - ii. Vaccines are being tested against 5-12 year olds and then 6m-5 year olds. The testing is being done by immunobridging. Additional numbers have been added to the trials because the mRNA vaccines are in the lead and heart problems rarely but significantly occur. I suspect that we will have data by the late fall/early winter for the 5-12 year old children.
      - iii. *This makes considerations for keeping schools and faith formation programs much more palatable. My worry is less for the kids themselves (though risk is not zero – and we have no data on long-term consequences) but their bringing it home to unvaccinated parents and grandparents.*
- III. Group Sharing around the following questions: *What's your approach to ministry programming for this coming year? What will be different from your pre-pandemic approach? What will be similar? What do the people you serve need most coming out of the past 17 months? What will you pay most attention to in the year ahead?*
- The discussion was recorded, and the recording can be accessed by contacting [Don Boucher](#) and requesting the link. NOTE: This recording will be shared only with regular attendees to the monthly gatherings.
- IV. Announcements
- Reminder about the upcoming *Lingering Effects – A "Convo-flect-ation" with Mike Patin*, July 17 at St. Ann-Long Grove, and July 19 at St. Alphonsus-Mt. Pleasant. Open to all leaders in ministry and their volunteers serving in those ministries. Register [here](#) by August 13.
  - Webinar: Getting Ready for the New Normal: Preparing for Ministry Changes Post-Pandemic – Wednesday, August 11, 1-2 PM CT – register [here](#).
  - Next meeting: September 7, location TBD.