

# Starting A Lutheran Pioneer Program

## LUTHERAN PIONEERS



[www.lutheranpioneers.org](http://www.lutheranpioneers.org)  
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# LUTHERAN PIONEERS



## OUR MOTTO

Lutheran Pioneers - Preparing Boys for Life in God's Creation and Eternity.

## OUR MISSION

Lutheran Pioneers exists to assist congregations in nurturing and training boys in the Lord so that they will remain faithful to Him and faithfully serve Him throughout their lives.

## OUR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

To achieve our mission, Lutheran Pioneers provides materials and training that assists in conducting a ministry under the direction of the Pastor and congregation that:

- ◆ Through devotions and interaction, proclaims the gospel of Jesus Christ and teaches obedience to all He has commanded
- ◆ Is of interest to preteen and adolescent youth.
- ◆ Teaches useful skills (both historical and modern) for living in God's world.
- ◆ Teaches an understanding of God's creation and our role within it.
- ◆ Cultivates Christian leadership skills.
- ◆ Encourages fellowship with Christians.
- ◆ Encourages serving our Lord by providing opportunities to serve our fellowman in our family, neighborhood, church and community.
- ◆ Seeks to keep boys involved in the church by faithful service to our Lord through their teen and adult years.



## **Lutheran Pioneer Prayer** *(Traditional Format)*



Jesus, help our eyes to see,  
Our salvation earned by Thee.  
Jesus, help our ears to hear,  
Calls for help from far and near.  
Jesus, help our feet to go,  
In the way that Thou wilt show.  
Jesus, help our hands to do,  
All things loving, kind and true.  
Jesus may we helpful be,  
Growing every day like Thee. *Amen*

## **Lutheran Pioneer Prayer** *(Contemporary Format)*

Jesus, help our eyes to view  
Our salvation earned by you.  
Jesus, help our ears to hear  
Calls for help from far and near.  
Jesus, help our feet to go  
In the way that you will show.  
Jesus, help our hands to do  
All things loving, kind, and true.  
Jesus, help us, great and small,  
Share your love with one and all. *Amen*



## **Lutheran Pioneers**

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Thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to look at and study the Lutheran Pioneer program of youth ministry. This program for boys, established in 1951, has continued to serve the Lord for more than 60 years. During that time we have been blessed with the opportunity to touch the hearts of well over 75,000 boys, parents and men and women volunteers. We praise and thank our Lord for that opportunity and pray that He will continue to guide us as we seek to help our boys "put God's Word into action" as they travel the "Godly road to Christian adulthood."

Congregations that participate in the Lutheran Pioneer Ministry are chartered and called Trains (we needed to call them something rather than just group and Train relates to our heritage). Trains are assigned a Train number that is theirs from then on. Should the program become dormant for a time and then reactivate the same Train number is used as before. Membership in the Lutheran Pioneer Ministry involves a maximum fee of \$200 annually, Trains that are getting started or restarted after a long hiatus will have the fee waived for the year that they start up. The fee is \$20 per boy up to the maximum of \$200. The fee is purely to pay the expenses of program development and distribution via the internet, hosting our website and maintaining the program as a whole. Lutheran Pioneers is an all-volunteer organization with no employees. Your continued financial support is very important.

In the materials included in this document and in other items included we will attempt to answer the questions you may have about the feasibility of the Lutheran Pioneer program for your congregation and situation. We have a program that is constantly changing, updating and developing new ideas and methods while continuing to remain true to our main purpose of sharing the wonderful Gospel message of salvation.

LP was started as an organization that mirrored scouting, but had Christianity and the inerrant Word of God at its core. As society changes so do the needs and situations of our many congregations, and the interests of the boys within them. For that reason we continually strive to offer new materials and methods that may better serve the ministry plans of a variety of congregations. Your congregation can choose to use any or all of the materials, although our plan is to require that a few core subjects be covered. Following is an explanation of what we now offer or are developing for future use:

## How it works....

All of the program materials and the instructions are found directly on the website. Please check the section called Program Materials and all of its sub-pages for a complete list.

Boys are encouraged to study and learn in various ways including, demonstration, lecture, field trip, and guest speaker; but mostly through a program of self study. When a subject lesson is mastered, the boys are certified by a Leader, or other designated person.

Boys are motivated to continue learning new and more advanced subject matter, by a system of rank and knowledge concentration awards. There are core subjects and levels within those subjects that are required for rank advancement, along with a set number of electives. This system allows for uniformity throughout all of Lutheran Pioneers, but also allows even individual boys to tailor the program to their own personal interests. There are no specified age or grade groupings within the program. Boys may proceed at their own pace without limitations except as controlled by you or applicable law. (i.e. the completely elective subject of shooting)

The subject matter is diverse and has been specifically chosen, both from the heritage of Lutheran Pioneers and a focus on newer material that is not necessarily taught in school. We continue to add new subject material that are either fun things to learn about or things everyone should know before they reach adulthood and set out on their own.

We have also strived to make it easy to be a Lutheran Pioneer Leader. Although the more leaders you have the easier it gets, we have developed the program so that trains with only one leader are possible. Utilizing other members of your congregation or community for single subject teaching or testing, makes it much easier. For instance, you may have an EMT in your congregation that would be happy to either teach or test a first aid element, once a year, but it is likely he is unavailable to be a full time leader. A leader does not have to know it all or even do it all. Another example - A boy gets certified as a lifeguard at the local pool, this certainly would mean that he has met the LP swimming requirements, and the leader does not have to test him.

Because of the self-study and test method; it is likely that your meetings can be more about having fun, doing projects, and sharing God's word. You may still choose to teach a particular subject in a classroom style if you wish, in fact we will have lesson plans available for that purpose. This method also makes it easier for those trains with limited resources, or those who choose to meet jointly with Lutheran Girl Pioneers.

Keep checking the website, we plan to remain in a state of growth and change.

There is also a program of National level activities - continue reading .....

## **Adventure Activities (Participation grades vary depending on the activity)**

Lutheran Pioneers has developed and conducts a variety of activities open to participants and to their friends, neighbors and relatives. Currently there are 5 activities being regularly conducted and several others that are on hiatus or dormant for now. Following is an overview of the various activities:

### **Pine Car Derby**

This is a one day activity currently held in the spring of the year. Local groups can participate in the program by building the Pine Car racers from kits purchased from Lutheran Pioneers. The cars are then raced at a local race. Various Districts and Regions of our program conduct District races. Boys who finish in the top levels of those races move on to the International Pine Car Derby. In Districts where there is not race, individual Trains are able to send cars to the International Derby to participate. Boys are able to participate in either speed or craft competition at the International level. At local and District levels they often compete in both categories. Trophies and ribbons are awarded at the International level. Boys do not need to be present to participate. Cars may be sent to the race if it isn't possible for the boy to attend.



### **Camp LP**



Camp LP is a week-long resident camp for boys who have completed 3<sup>rd</sup> grade or higher. A volunteer camp staff instructs the boys in a variety of topics and provides a variety of activities during the week. Boys can choose topics that are of interest to them. Each day includes Bible Study time. A kitchen staff provides meals. Boys sleep in cabins except for one overnight off sight activity (bike trip, canoe trip, hiking trip or campout). Site of the camp varies but is generally in the upper Midwest.

### **Voyageur Canoe Trip**

This is a week long canoe trip in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area of northern Minnesota. Participants need to be able to paddle a canoe for longer periods of time, carry a pack on portages and help out with cooking meals and setting up camp sites. Generally boys in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and older can participate.



### **Ranger Backpacking Trip**



The Ranger Trip is conducted in the odd number years and alternates between two locations (San Juan Mountains of Colorado and Paria Canyon of Arizona and Utah.) Participants must be able to hike the distances involved carrying their equipment in a backpack. Generally boys need to be 15 or older to participate.

## Bike Trip



This activity has been a week-long ride across southern Wisconsin, but will likely be changing to bike ride legs from and back to a base camp. Participants provide their own bikes. T

## ABOGIALC Canoe Trip (Currently on hiatus)

The ABOGIALC trip is not currently being conducted. It is possible that in the future we may once again offer this activity. The weekend trip involves traveling one of several larger rivers in a 24-30 foot voyageur style canoe. 12-16 participants are in each canoe along with their gear.



## REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

National also assists in making arrangements for various regional activities. Examples include a fall, weekend-long archery camp in Wisconsin, and a regional klondike sled derby attended by trains from southern Wisconsin and Northern Illinois.

We hope to continue to develop these regional style activities in more regions across the country and elsewhere, with the help of trains like yours.

## **Program Costs -**

### **How much?**

The annual fee is \$20 per boy but is capped at \$200 per year per Train .

Our feeling is that no congregation should be without Lutheran Pioneers; and certainly no congregation should be without it due to cost. If cost is an issue, CALL US.

### **Start up costs?**

The annual fee is waived in a train's first year or even their first year after a prolonged period of inactivity.

Our feeling is that no congregation should be without Lutheran Pioneers; and certainly no congregation should be without it due to cost. If cost is an issue, CALL US.

### **Rationale For Fees**

Lutheran Pioneers is an ALL-VOLUNTEER ministry organization, as such we have no physical office location and no employees. This has not always been the case. In 2014, we returned this leadership model in our efforts to keep cost from being a prohibitive factor in a congregations decision to have a Train. However, there are still costs associated with developing and maintaining what we offer. There are costs to host a website, have a post office box, insurance, house and maintain our computer server, etc. These costs are what the fees pay.

Individual events like all of the National Activites are self sufficient entities that are funded by the registration fees for each individual event.

The \$200 fee is not used for any other purpose, other than the actual costs of program benefits utilized by every Train.

### **Length of International Membership Year**

Your membership is for a full 12 months of the year and begins for currently active groups on September 1.

### **Payment Plans for International Program Fees**

We offer two payment methods to assist you. They are:

1. A one time payment at the beginning of your membership year.
2. A two payment plan with the initial ½ payment at the beginning of your membership year and the second payment at the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> month of your membership year.



## **How you generate the Fee Amount:**

The way in which you gather your program fees can be set at the local level in whatever way works best for your Train. Your congregation may choose to fund the total cost through the church budget much as it may fund the Sunday School or other outreach efforts. You may assess a fee to each boy attending. You may choose to have fund raisers or donations to offset the costs involved or you may use some combination of funding ideas. Whatever way you choose will be up to your congregation. Because the fees are not based on individuals you may find that your program better meets the needs of today's busy families. Boys can attend for part or all of the year, they can join later or right at the beginning.

### **Local Train Fees** (money that you need, keep, and use locally)

Each group may set their local fees based on their projected expenses and the amount of additional support available from their congregation budget, fund-raising activities and gifts.

The local fees can be set based on what the Train plans to do. Some Trains will charge a set amount and then from that amount provide each boy with the needed program or project materials. Other Trains will charge a lesser fee and then have each boy purchase their own materials or awards, etc.

## **Cost Summary**

Based on the information supplied in this section you should discuss what would work best for your congregation.

Keep in mind that your Lutheran Pioneer programs can serve as an outreach into your community much the same as your Vacation Bible School and Sunday School do. In fact, we encourage you to use the program, in that way. It is the main reason we set our fees in the manner we have. We do not want "numbers" to be a deterrent to the program usage.

Another benefit of utilizing technology in the way we have, and returning to all-volunteer leadership; is that our costs remain relatively flat, regardless of the number of trains. This means that the more trains we have, the less the fee will have to be in the future.

Our leadership is 100% committed to keeping Lutheran Pioneers affordable, and relevant.



# STEPS TO STARTING A LUTHERAN PIONEER MINISTRY

Listed below are steps you should follow as you consider chartering or reactivating a Lutheran Pioneer Program of Youth Ministry in your congregation. You may have already completed some of these steps. Others may not be appropriate for your congregation. The steps are meant to be a guide. We realize that as you begin the excitement is high to get going and start right in but a word of caution here. Unless you have someone who is experienced in the Lutheran Pioneer Ministry, you can run into problems if you don't spend some time planning. That is why we suggest some early meetings that are not centered on the program giving volunteers an opportunity to look over the materials and lay out a plan for the coming year.

If you have any other questions please contact the Membership Team Leader at 888-214-8225 or 920-342-2612, or [membership@lutheranpioneers.org](mailto:membership@lutheranpioneers.org).

Read through this booklet and the website ([www.lutheranpioneers.org](http://www.lutheranpioneers.org)) and share the information with other interested members of your congregation

Get the permission and support of your Pastor and responsible congregation board or committee.

You also may want to find out if there are other nearby WELS/ELS congregations who might be interested in joining in your Lutheran Pioneer program.

Contact your Train Advisor.

If one is assigned to your congregation, you will be emailed his contact information.

Hold an information meeting for interested adults and boys.

Publicize the meeting using the brochures found in the appendix

Have your Train Advisor present if possible.

Show "Back to Adventure" video.

You can use the included sign-up sheets to find out the interest. (See appendix for copies.)

Assess the interest of the boys and adults.

- Recruit adult help for the program

Hold a second meeting of adults willing to serve on the leadership team for your program.

- Have your Train Advisor present if possible.
- Make a decision on whether to proceed with chartering or reactivating a program.
  
- Decide on a method of funding your program. Possible methods would be funding through the congregation budget, a door offering, some type of fund raising project, support by a group from the congregation, assessing each boy a certain amount or a combination of several of these ideas. Your decision depends on your congregation's policies.

Submit "Registration Information" to the International Office. This is done online.

Meet with the program volunteers to plan your program for the coming year.

- Choose a meeting night and the number of meetings you will have each month.
  - Decide on how long your meetings will last.
  - Decide on how many and what special activities (parties, picnics, field trips, etc) that you will have.
  - Develop your year long calendar using the forms and suggestions provided in your program's leadership materials.
  - Plan your first several meetings and activities.
  - Share the information with the leadership team
- D Publicize your meetings and activities.
- Let parents know about your meeting and activity plans.
  - Inform the congregation board or committee that oversees your program.
  - Customized brochures are available from the International Office (See the appendix or Publicity file on the CD for samples)
- D Hold your first meeting with the boys.
- D Inform the International Office of any changes in your leadership.
- D Continue your meetings and begin planning future meetings and activities.
- Use the provided program materials.

*May God bless your Lutheran Pioneer ministry that with His help you will lead your boys on the Godly road to Christian adulthood.*

# GETTING YOUR MEETINGS OFF AND RUNNING



## Informational Meeting for Adults and Boys

### Purpose:

Introduce the Lutheran Pioneer Program of Youth Ministry to boys, parents and congregation members.

Assess the interest in beginning or reactivating your Lutheran Pioneer Train.

### Attendees:

Boys, parents and interested congregation members.

### Presenter:

Train Advisor, Regional Director or other International representative, if available.

District representative if available.

Pastor of congregation.

Person responsible for requesting information from the International Office.

### Possible Agenda Items:

Opening Devotion

Given by Pastor if possible

Note: At this time you may want to split the group into the adults and boys and have someone meet separately with each group.

For the boys some type of activity might be a good idea

Give a short overview of the program structure at a local level

Can be done by International Officer if he is present or by person who has looked through the materials.

Answer questions from those in attendance.

Explain the need for assistance from parents and congregation members.

Funding of program, help as council members, leaders and helpers.

Have a sign-up of interested boys and potential leaders/helpers.

See the sample sheets in the appendix.

Announce dates for next meeting of potential leaders and for interested boys.

# Meetings for Potential Program Volunteers

**First meeting for all interested adults** (These would be the volunteers who will work with the boys directly or carry out administrative duties.)

## Purpose:

Assess potential for chartering or reactivating a Lutheran Pioneer Program of Youth Ministry.

Complete a registration form and submit it to the International Office.

Organize your leadership team  
Administration, leaders and helpers.

Plan 1 or 2 activities for the boys to build interest.  
(See the suggested meetings for the boys listed following the leader meetings.)

Set the next leadership meeting.

## Attendees:

Potential coordinator, leaders and helpers

## Presenters:

International representative if possible.

District Representative if possible.

Person responsible for requesting information from the International Office.

## Possible Agenda Items:

Opening Devotion  
Given by Pastor if possible

Discussion of interest at informational meeting held previously.

Review of sign-up sheets.

Decide on whether to go ahead or not.

Decide on which programs you will use

Choose a Trainmaster/Coordinator for your Train.

Assign responsibility for completing and submitting the Registration Form  
Form is included with this packet or on the CD in the Registration Form file. Registration can be done online (beginning in September of 2010)

Decide on duties of potential leaders (Both administrative and program)

Plan several activities (1-2) for the boys to build interest.

Set next meeting dates for leadership team planning  
Your program materials should arrive shortly after your registration information is received.

**Meeting for Program Leaders and Helpers** (These would be the volunteers who would work directly with the boys on a regular basis.)

Purpose:

Set program meeting dates and times

Plan year of activities

Attendees:

Trainmaster/Coordinator

Potential leaders

Potential helpers

Presenters:

International representative if possible.

Trainmaster/Coordinator

Possible Agenda Items:

Opening Devotion

Given by Pastor if possible

Look over program materials.

If International representative is present they should go through the materials.

Choose meeting day and time

Plan registration night meeting

Lay out yearly program plan

Separate into various programs (Buckaroos, Boy Pioneers, Adventures in Christian Living, Faith Full Fathers)

Use planning materials provided

General plans set up.

Do specific plans for first 3 months of meetings.

Assign duties and responsibilities.

Set next leader planning meeting to plan 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of meetings.

Set next monthly leader planning meeting

**Meeting for Administrative Volunteers** (This meeting could be held at the same time as the organizational meeting for the Program Leaders and Helpers. They could meet together as needed and then separately as needed.)

Purpose:

Organize administrative arm of the program and elect officers

Set up method for funding program

Set up publicity

Attendees:

Administrative volunteers

Pastor

Program Coordinator/Trainmaster

International representative if possible

Presenters:

International representative if possible.

Person responsible for requesting information from the International Office.

Possible Agenda Items:

Opening Devotion

Given by Pastor if possible

Organize administrative arm

Elect officers; Chairman, V. Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.

Establish funding methods

Possible per boy fee

Congregation support

Fund-raiser policy

Assign responsibility for setting up method of paying bills.

Assess need for leaders and helpers

Assign responsibility for recruitment as needed.

Coordinator/Trainmaster makes group aware of planned program

Assign responsibility for publicizing program

Set up chain of command and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

Set up schedule for future council meetings.

Should be monthly

## Meetings for boys

### Purpose:

To build interest in the program.

To give boys an idea of Lutheran Pioneers

### Attendees:

Boys

Interested parents

### Presenter

Leaders and helpers

### Possible Agenda Items:

Opening Devotion

Given by Pastor or leader

Following are some possible ideas for these activities.

A picnic with games

An ice cream social with a speaker or performer

A presentation on first aid

A fire safety presentation

An archery day

A nature hike and picnic

A camp day with instruction in fire building, cooking, knots, compass, etc. The day could begin early with breakfast and end with a campfire program that evening.

A Sailboat Racer building day and race. (kits are available from the International Office)

A Frog Jumping contest

A Minnow race

Your great ideas!!



# HELP IS AVAILABLE

To assist you as you consider beginning a Lutheran Pioneer program in your congregation, there is help available from the International Organization. We have experienced volunteers in various areas of the country willing to answer questions, present information when possible and guide your group as they study and then begin our program of ministry. Because of distance we do not have a volunteer that can personally visit every congregation but we do cover most areas and in addition, we have men available to answer questions. Following is a listing of the various positions that can assist you and your congregation.

## **REGIONAL DIRECTORS**

To increase our assistance to Trains and congregations, Lutheran Pioneers has divided the country into 4 regions. Each region is headed by an experienced volunteer called the Regional Director. These men have been involved at various levels of the Lutheran Pioneer ministry. Over their years of service they have faced many of the same challenges that you may face. They will have suggestions for you to try and will also be able to guide you to others who may be able to answer your questions.

The Regional Director may not be able to personally visit your congregation but they will do all they can to help you by talking with leaders via phone or e-mail.

The name, address, phone and e-mail of your Regional Director is listed in the cover letter accompanying this information.

## **TRAIN ADVISORS**

To further assist congregations in their study and start-up of a Train, Lutheran Pioneers appoints volunteers to serve as Train Advisors (TA) for a specific area. These men work under the direction of the Regional Director in their area. The TA's are experienced volunteers who can guide a congregation through the first steps. They are also available to answer questions and help a program with the challenges it may face. They can train new leaders in the use of the materials available, instructional techniques and other skills.

When possible, the Train Advisor can make introductory presentations to congregations and answer questions that may come up. They may be able to help with leader recruitment and assist in publicizing your program throughout the year. Please contact them for assistance.

Not all of our congregations are served by a TA. At times vacancies exist and you may need to contact the Regional Director or the International Office for the help.

If a Train Advisor is available in your area, his name, address, phone and e-mail are listed in the letter that accompanied this information.

*If there is anything we can do to assist you, please contact us. The International Organization exists to serve the local congregations.*



# Items Available to Assist in Publicizing Your Lutheran Pioneer Program



Following is a listing and explanation of the various items available from the Lutheran Pioneer Office that can be used to publicize your program in your congregation and community. There is no cost for any of these items.

Adult Information Brochure (See appendix for sample)

*This is a 3 panel, 8.5 x 11 brochure suitable for use in explaining the Lutheran Pioneer program to parents and other interested adults. The International Office will personalize and print these for you or if you wish the form can be sent to you in an electronic format.*

Child's Information and Recruitment Brochure (See appendix for sample) This is a 3 panel, 8.5 x 11 brochure suitable for use in explaining the Lutheran Pioneer program to children. It can also serve as a recruitment tool for your Train. The International Office will personalize and print these for you or if you wish the form can be sent to you in an electronic format.

Bulletin Cover (See appendix for sample)

*An 8.5" X 11" sheet that publicizes both the Lutheran Boy and Girl Pioneer programs. The inside is blank and there is room for print on the back page. They are available in any quantity.*

Bulletin Insert (See appendix for sample)

*These half sheets publicize both the Lutheran Boy and Girl Pioneer programs. The information for the boys is on one side and for the girls on the other side. They are available in any quantity.*



# COMMUNICATION FROM THE LUTHERAN PIONEER INTERNATIONAL OFFICE



During the year, Lutheran Pioneers communicates with its membership in a variety of ways. This is done through mass and individual emails, on-line newsletters and through the Lutheran Pioneer web site, which includes a forum where you can get and share information with leaders from everywhere.

## Wagon Train News

This is a e-magazine published on-line at least quarterly. The magazine features articles written by adults and boys, cartoons, games, puzzles, contests and more. The magazine is in full color and downloadable.



## Lutheran Pioneer Web Site

The Lutheran Pioneer Web site can be found at [www.lutheranpioneers.org](http://www.lutheranpioneers.org).





