



DIOCESE of NEW ULM

Offices of Religious Education & AFF

Youth & Young Ministry

Gatherings

Reflections

Dear PCLs (DREs) and Youth Ministers,

March 10, 2016

From the Religious Education &
Adult Faith Formation Office

Bryan Reising

breising@dnu.org 507-233-5323

<http://www.dnu.org/religious-education/>



**Blessed Triduum &
Happy Easter!**

**TASKS OF CATECHESIS:
PREPARING THE CHRISTIAN TO
LIVE IN COMMUNITY
AND TO PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY IN
THE LIFE AND MISSION
OF THE CHURCH**

by Bryan Reising

Community

An important aspect of our Church is that we do not have to be alone with this faith of ours. In fact, we do need each other as we make our journey of faith. Yes – we can have a personal relationship with God, but always in the context of a community centered in Christ. In the book of Acts, after Pentecost, and after St. Peter proclaimed the Good News, it goes on to say that those who responded in faith “devoted their lives to the apostles’ instructions, to the

breaking of bread, and the communal life” (Acts 2:42ff), and it goes on to say how they cared for those with any need. These four dimensions of communal life are key: prayer (which includes the Sacraments), catechesis (the apostles’ instruction), the communal life (*koinonia* – Greek word meaning a close-knit community or guild), and serving all who are in need.

Church

Body of Christ, Bride of Christ, the People of God are just some of the descriptions of the word, Church. The Church is the people of faith. We each share important roles in this entity called Church. Yet it is also the hierarchical structure, which includes the Vatican; national offices in places like Washington, DC; archdiocesan offices like we find in Minnesota; and diocesan offices like our own, Diocese of New Ulm. The Church is also our Area Faith Communities, our parishes, small Christian communities within our parishes, and at a very basic level, our families.

Mission of the Church

The Church’s mission is the very mission Jesus gave to his followers during the great Commission. “Go out to all the world and proclaim the Good News to all creation” (Mark 16:15) and “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19). In other words, the Church’s mission is to evangelize, and we do this through our action, words, and our attitudes. All of the work of the Church is permeated with this mission to evangelize. As

Alleluia!
HE IS ALIVE!

Blessed Paul VI wrote, “She exists in order to evangelize.” (Evangelii Nuntiandi, 14). In other words, we, the Church, exist in order to evangelize.

Family

In Lumen Gentium, one of the major constitutions of the Second Vatican Council, it describes the family as the domestic church. “The family is, so to speak, the domestic church. In it parents should, by their word and example, be the first preachers of the faith to their children...” (Lumen Gentium, 11).

So the home is a holy place, a place where faith is practiced and nurtured and the family is the church, the domestic church. From praying as a family, to the family rituals and traditions that connect the family to the faith, these are to be encouraged. And with that, cultural traditions linked to the faith are encouraged as families represent a spectrum of various cultures in our country and in our diocese. Parents, as primary teachers of the faith can literally preach and teach the faith to their children. With that, they become collaborators with official catechists of the parish and of Catholic schools.

Small Christian Communities

Small Christian communities had its beginnings in the early Church. Even in the New Testament, it describes households of faith (for example, the house of Lydia in Acts 16:14-15). The Church had many house churches in the first three centuries since they worshiped in hiding because of persecution and even martyrdom of those early Christians. And these communities helped keep the early Church strong and even grow through these troubled times.

Today, small Christian communities that are connected to the parish are effective means for people to pray together, learn the faith together (catechetical formation), build one another up in the faith, and care for each other as well as care for others who are in need (charity and justice). Further structured communities that can help facilitate more involvement can include the neighborhood community or a particular area sector within a parish.

The Parish Community

The parish community is the community that is united because of the Sunday Eucharist. The Eucharistic community asks for mercy from God, listens to and is inspired by the Word of God, professes the faith as they recite the Creed,



share the needs of the community and the world when offering to God their prayers during the general intercessions, prays together as the gifts on the altar are being prepared and consecrated, prays together the prayer that our Lord Jesus taught us, offers peace with one another, receives together the Body and Blood of Christ, and together is sent forth on mission to do God’s work. The parish pastor is the shepherd, servant leader of this parish community. Other parish-wide opportunities include catechetical formation, community building activities such as parish festivals, parish missions, parish missionary outreaches, and social outreach activities.

The Area Faith Community

The Area Faith Community is a collaborative organization of neighboring parishes so that resources can be spread over a greater area so that we can be more effective in a variety of ministries. For example, the Area Faith Community can pull resources to hire a professional catechetical leader and a youth minister for the AFC so that even the smaller parishes can benefit. Community building activities can be an AFC-wide mission, an AFC-wide festival, AFC-wide Hispanic Ministry events, and an AFC-wide social outreach for people in need.

The Diocese of New Ulm

The diocesan Church is the greater geographical area consisting of our parishes, AFCs, schools, Catholic Charities offices, centralized



diocesan offices and other entities. The diocesan leader is the bishop who governs, teaches, and sanctifies the diocesan Church, otherwise known as the local Church. Community building activities include opportunities like the upcoming Day of Mercy on Sunday, April 3, 2016, at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity; ordinations; diocesan synods; the Advent Prayer Day; Pastoral Leader Days for parish and diocesan leadership; and diocesan festivals like our 50th anniversary as a diocese back in 2007.

The Province of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

A province consists of an archdiocese and all the dioceses within a particular region. For example, the province we are in is called the Province of Saint Paul and Minneapolis. It includes the dioceses in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Community building activities within a province could be things like a Eucharistic Congress, a convention for various ministries, and smaller

gatherings of leadership such as when the bishops themselves meet and representatives of dioceses meet regarding Catholic schools, catechetical formation, Catholic Charities, youth ministry, finance officers, Hispanic Ministry, and so on.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

National offices are helpful organizations that can provide resources and meetings for leadership. Our national office is the United States Conference for Catholic Bishops (USCCB). They hold bishop meetings periodically to discuss internal Church issues like how to best serve our youth, catechist formation, and liturgical norms. They also discuss external societal issues that impact the country and even the world. External issues can include entertainment, policies and laws, elections, communications, disasters, and cultural trends. National community-building events include the National Encuentro in September of 2018, for Hispanics, co-sponsoring or participation in national conferences such as the National Catholic Youth Conference and the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL), and national outreach efforts like the CRS Rice Bowl effort.

The Americas

In preparation for the Great Jubilee Year of 2000, the pope at that time, St. John Paul II, gathered bishops and other representatives from the various continents around the world: Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania, and instead of separating South America from North America, he combined them as the Americas. These gatherings were called synods. At these meetings, they discussed internally Church matters as well as externally societal issues. The product of these gatherings were documents by St. John Paul II. His document for the Americas is called *Ecclesia in America*. The following is the document link: http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_22011999_ecclesia-in-america.html

There is another organization within the Americas called CELAM (*Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano* or *Latin American Episcopal Conference*), which meets every few years or so. Many of their outcomes and documents have relevance upon how we do things in North America as well as the Church as a whole. Their last gathering was in Aparecida, Brazil. Here is the Aparecida Document link: <http://www.celam.org/aparecida/Ingles.pdf>

These gatherings are very important as they address how we can effectively evangelize and catechize in a variety of ways in various cultures.

The Universal Church – The Vatican

Of course the Catholic Church internationally is headquartered at the Vatican. Here we have the pope, currently Pope Francis who is the bishop of the Diocese of Rome, who is the vicar of Christ, who is the servant of servants, who is the shepherd of our universal Church. The heads of the various offices or Congregations as they are called help and guide the pope in all areas of the Church and external issues dealing with society.

Community building activities include international gatherings either held at the Vatican or with pastoral visits that Pope Francis makes periodically. Two good examples of this was his international gathering of catechists at the Vatican in September of 2013 and the upcoming World Youth Day in July of this year in Krakow, Poland, gathered by millions of young adults (and their older friends) from all over the world. Six young adults (and their older friends) will represent the Diocese of New Ulm at this worldwide gathering.

So as you can see the opportunities are there to build the Body of Christ, the People of God at all levels. With this task, the more we can center our communities in Christ and involve our members with these communities of faith, the stronger our faith will be and the more effective will be our efforts to evangelize.



MOMENTS OF MERCY...

On Sunday, April 3, a Day of Mercy is sponsored by the Diocese of New Ulm. It will be held at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity. It will begin at 10:00 a.m. and run through 4:00 p.m. Activities include open games for children and others who are young at heart, working on a Catholic Relief Service Project, a viewing of the film documentary called *The Original Image of Divine Mercy*, and a holy hour with the Sacrament of Reconciliation. For more information, go to the following Web site: <https://www.dnu.org/diocesan-events/dayofmercy>

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

Gathers for the Year

9:30 gather; 10 a.m. start – 3 p.m.
St. Aloysius Jubilee Center in Olivia
302 S 10th St. (unless otherwise noted)

Monday, March 14 – Olivia; no presenter – we will continue our journey through the Parish Catechetical Leader Workbook. Please RSVP Cindy by Friday, March 11 in the morning.

Monday, April 11 – Curriculum Day, New Ulm

Monday, May 9 – Spring Fling Noon-4 p.m.
Max's Grill in Olivia – *Bishop LeVoir will present*

RCIA Gathering

On Tuesday, April 12, 2016, RCIA coordinators and teams are invited to gather from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Church of St. Catherine in Redwood Falls. Issues important to you may include:

- How to create an evangelizing environment in your parish so that more parishioners are more apt to invite their friends, family, and neighbors
- How to make public the various rites within your AFC and parish
- How to involve the people of your parish and AFC more with the RCIA process
- Considerations for year round RCIA
- How each stage of the RCIA can be done more effectively
- Consideration for those who are baptized in another ecclesial community and joining us in the fullness of the Catholic Church

Please RSVP to Cindy by Thursday, April 7.

Riverbend TEC

Together Encountering Christ retreats for adults and youth: July 30-August 1 in New Ulm at Cathedral
To sign up, contact: riverbendtec@gmail.com to receive an application.

Parish Visits

Bryan Reising is on the road again this catechetical year starting in September of 2015 for some parish visits (twice a month). He will visit on the day of your Faith Formation. This will run through May of 2016.

Please contact him to figure out a date that will work for you or he may contact you for that visit as he lines up his schedule. He will not get to all places during the catechetical year, but he would like to get to all regions and most area faith communities. Keep

in mind, that Bryan recognizes that this is a very busy day for you. So don't feel you have to give him special treatment. If you have time to meet with him that afternoon, that would be great, but don't feel obligated. He can always meet with you on another day or through a phone call. The main idea for this is to look at what is happening that can benefit other parishes and area faith communities.

What will happen with these visits? The following are some possibilities: an observation of your faith formation during the time of instruction, perhaps an in-service with your catechists, or even a catechetical presentation as a guest catechist for adults, youth, or children.

Keep in mind that this is not an audit, but a visit to observe and be of service. He will have an assessment tool to benefit your catechetical ministry. Discuss with your pastor or pastoral administrator a good time to arrange a visit.

Contact Bryan to arrange a date and time: breising@du.org or call the Office of Religious Education and Adult Faith Formation, 507-233-5324.

Scheduled Parish Visits:

September 23 – Holy Cross AFC, New Ulm
October 14 – Christ the King AFC, Tyler, Ivanhoe
October 28 – St. Joseph in Lamberton
December 6 – St. John in Appleton (Micronesian Community), Marshall (Hispanic community)
December 9 – St. Peter in Canby
January 13 – St. Edward in Minneota

I have openings for more future visits!

University of Dayton's Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF)

Be a part of these online learning opportunities! This is a great gift for your catechists!

Cycle 3: April 3 – May 7, 2016

(Registration: Opens Mar 2; Closes Mar 30)

- [Autism in Faith Formation \(SN 4\)](#)
- [Bible Basics](#)
- [Catechetical Methodology: Archdiocese for the Military Services Only](#)
- [Catholic Beliefs](#)
- [Catholic Teaching on Chastity, Family Life, and Human Sexuality Education](#)
- [Christology](#)
- [Church History 2](#)
- [Conscience](#)
- [Creative Methodologies: ADHD in Parish Life - Pastoral Implications \(SN 3\)](#)

- [Designing and Implementing Adult Learning and Faith Formation \(AFL 7\)](#)
- [Disabilities in Parish Life: An Overview \(SN 1\)](#)
- [Ecclesiology: Beginnings of the Church](#)
- [Ecclesiology: Pilgrim Church](#)
- [Evangelization and Discipleship](#)
- [Faith and Human Development](#)
- [Faith Formation for Adults with Special Needs \(SN 5\)](#)
- [Fundamentals in Deaf Faith Formation Methodologies \(SN 2\)](#)
- [History of Catholic Social Action](#)
- [Images of Jesus](#)
- [Introduction to Catechesis](#)
- [Introduction to Liturgy](#)
- [Introduction to Pastoral Care](#)
- [Introduction to Practical Morality](#)
- [Introduction to Prayer](#)
- [Introduction to Scripture](#)
- [Leadership in Ministry](#)
- [Leadership Roles and Skills for Adult Learning and Faith Formation \(AFL 5\)](#)
- [Mary in Scripture and Tradition](#)
- [Marianist Studies: Founders](#)
- [Marianist Studies: Prayer](#)
- [New Testament](#)
- [Old Testament](#)
- [Our Hearts Were Burning](#)
- [Planning Youth Ministry Events](#)
- [Praying With Children](#)
- [Principles for Addressing Diversity Issues in Youth Ministry](#)
- [Relational Ministry with Youth](#)
- [Sacraments](#)
- [Survey of Catholic Doctrine](#)
- [Theological Reflection: Key to Connecting Faith and Life](#)

For new students to register for VLCFF:

<http://vlc.udayton.edu/profile/agreement.php>

For returning VLCFF students to register for another course: <http://vlc.udayton.edu/register/>

VLCFF has certificates for catechists, for ministry leadership, for youth ministry, for adult faith formation, and social justice. Encourage your catechists to get the Certificate for Catechesis. If some of you want a closed course on a particular course, please contact Bryan Reising.

For further information and discussion of further ideas, call 507-233-5324; breising@dnu.org.

Cost for the three-week Seminar is \$40 and the five-week course is \$50. Certificates are \$20.

Scholarships are available: Web site for the Hilary and Elizabeth Mohr Catechist Fund for scholarships:

<http://static1.squarespace.com/static/55844033e4b0b4466f11c152/t/55db2f84e4b05c60e8774f35/1440427908543/MohrScholarship-CatechistFormationFund-ApplicationFo>

Office for Religious Education, Diocese of New Ulm:
<http://www.dnu.org/religious-education/>

Catechetical Planning

For those who are catechetical leaders, Bryan Reising can provide a closed course on “Designing a Parish Catechetical Plan.” Other catechetical leaders who have taken this three-week seminar found it very helpful in looking at all aspects of planning for catechesis for their AFC or parish. Please contact Bryan at breising@dnu.org if you are interested.

NIKA-another online learning opportunity for those in the Diocese of New Ulm

NIKA Catholic Catechetical Institute (NCCI) exists to make Jesus Christ better known and better loved. It offers faith-filled college level continuing education for non-traditional students and adults who are seeking to deepen their faith life. The course aims primarily at personal faith formation (intellectual and spiritual) and secondarily are helpful to those seeking classroom applications. Faith formation is the primary emphasis because the faith-filled person will be more effective in communicating faith and making Christian disciples than the unconvinced technician who has not developed a consistent prayer life - “A theologian is one who prays...” Enjoy continuing education from the convenience of your home. Free online presentations for continuing education as well as mini-courses have begun. For further information: <http://www.nikacatholic.com/>



Early Catholic Family Life (ECFL)

Please be reminded the Diocese of New Ulm has learning materials available to check out to area faith communities offering the Early Catholic Family Life program. Early Catholic Family Life (ECFL) is a wonderful program for parents with children 0-5 years old. ECFL is structured seven-session two-hour class patterned after the highly successful and popular Minnesota ECFE program (Early Childhood Family Education.) ECFL consists of a parent-child interaction component, a parent discussion time, and children’s learning and play time. This program emphasizes the importance of putting faith at the center of family life at the earliest ages. It is an opportunity to discuss faith education with Catholic parents and an opportunity for parents and preschools to have fun learning more about God

together. If you do not have parish staff trained to lead the program but want to learn more call one of our offices. To arrange for checking out of the lesson material bins please contact Cindy Blickem at cblickem@dnu.org

Religious Education Safe Environment Compliance Reminders

Thinking ahead to the summer, it is important to make sure your volunteers for Vacation Bible School and Mission Trips have all the safe environment requirements completed. Make sure they signed the Safe Environment Policies A and B. Make sure they completed a background check. And make sure they are signed up to receive the initial VIRTUS training. Thank you for your cooperation in our efforts to keep our children and youth safe!

VIRTUS Trainings

Protecting God's Children for Adults

A complete list with the most updated information can be found on the diocesan Web site:

https://www.virtusonline.org/virtus/reg_list2.cfm?heOrgID=25411&theme=0

Mohr Catechist Formation Fund...

A Gift for You, Your Catechists, Your Youth Team Members, Your Teachers of Religion

This scholarship fund is a great gift for your catechists, teachers, youth ministry team, and many of you! You can receive scholarships for Faith Formation Day and other catechist formation opportunities, opportunities outside the diocese, online courses through the University of Dayton's VLCFF (Virtual Learning Community of Faith Formation), and even some college courses on faith formation. Please submit your applications soon! An application is on our Web site:

<http://static1.squarespace.com/static/55844033e4b0b4466f11c152/t/55db2f84e4b05c60e8774f35/1440427908543/MohrScholarship-CatechistFormationFund-ApplicationFo>

Interested in a Bachelors or Masters in Theology, Religious Education, Pastoral Ministry, Parish Administration, or Canon Law?

St. Mary's University of Minnesota:

<http://www.smumn.edu/undergraduate-home/areasofstudy/theology/theology>. (They offer BA in Theology, Religious Education, Pastoral and Youth Ministry;

they also offer a Graduate Certificate in Canon Law)

St. Paul Seminary Graduate Program for Lay People:

<http://www.stthomas.edu/spsod/graduate/degree/mare/> (this includes an optional online distance learning

degree. Their degrees include an MA in Theology, Pastoral Ministry, and Religious Education).

National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL) Membership - This Is for All Catechetical Leaders

Join NCCL and receive CL (Catechetical Leader) Magazine, CL Weekly every Monday, discounts on resources, and information on the national conference and regional workshops! The cost of an individual regional membership to NCCL is only \$75. This is only \$6.25 a month. Use the Mohr Scholarship Fund for this opportunity! For further information about membership, check out the Web site:

www.nccl.org



ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Word on Fire: The Mystery of God Who God Is and Why He Matters

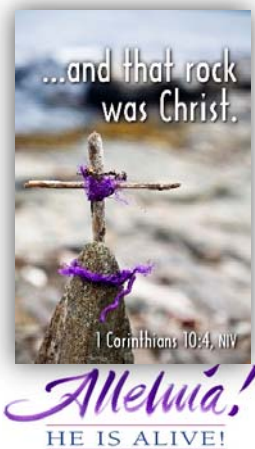
What do we really mean by "God?"

Atheism is on the rise. Skeptical thinkers like Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens, and Sam Harris vigorously attack belief in God as irrational or, even worse, dangerous. The so-called New Atheism has attracted millions of young people thanks to bestselling books such as *The God Delusion* and *God Is Not Great*. How should Christians respond? How can we turn the tide of secularism and draw people back to God? In this new six-part film series and study program, Bishop Robert Barron reaches into our rich intellectual tradition to teach us how. Using the insights of St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, Pope Benedict XVI, he uncovers a clear yet sophisticated understanding of what we mean by "God." Who is God? And why does he matter? Watch this series and you'll not only learn the answers yourself, but also you'll discover how to share them with others – especially those who no longer believe. This film and study program are now ready to be ordered: <http://mysteryofgod.wordonfire.org/>

Parish Catechesis Question

How does your AFC and parish create community opportunities? Do you have family life ministry? Do you encourage adults to belong to small Christian communities? How are parishioners involved with the mission of the Church?





From the Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office

Kevin Losleben

klosleben@dnu.org

507-233-5327

<http://www.dnu.org/youth/>

THE ART OF PROMOTION PART I: DO IT

It's Wednesday night. That one Sophomore who you think would really enjoy some Catholic event is walking out of class. You stop him and say: "Hey Billy-Bob, you should go to the Great Catholic Event Thing."

He asks, "When is it?"

You tell him the date and cost.

He says one of the following (indicating that he's already given this some thought):

"I have a basketball tournament that weekend."

"I'm going fishing with my grandpa that week."

"It costs too much."

"That's two weeks before my second cousin's birthday."

You say, "Okay, well if you change your mind let me know."

We all know what happens then: he doesn't go. It happens all the time. Excuses, excuses. One is left to wonder: does anyone ever go to anything? The reality is that youth are so busy. Between sports, family commitments, and other extracurricular activities, the average high school student is stretched pretty thin. And on top of that, we in the Church are competing for the attention of a target audience that is relentlessly marketed to. In many ways, promoting an event can feel more like a sales pitch. And though it may seem shallow, that's pretty much what it is.

And that's okay. Although it may seem odd to have to convince a Sophomore to go to a Catholic event, the fact of the matter is that the rest of the world is trying to convince him to join its ranks. If we are not trying to convince him that the Gospel is worth his time, then really, we're not doing our Christian duty.

So step one in perfecting the art of promotion: do it. If we're not promoting things that are good for the souls of youth, then guess what? They're not going to go! Personal invitation is essential. It might be awkward and end in failure (the first time anyway...we'll talk about that later), but a personal invitation can go a long way.

Junior High Rally - April 24, 2016 Dassel-Cokato High School

Come hear the hilarious Nic Davidson talk about why he became Catholic. Sing along with the up-and-coming Catholic band: The Alex Street Band. Praise Jesus in adoration after Mass with Bishop LeVoir. Doors open at 1:00.

World Youth Day - Krakow, Poland July 20 - Aug 01, 2016

PRICE REDUCTION: The cost of the trip has now been reduced to \$3,599! Sign up now! Join the Diocese of New Ulm and Bishop LeVoir on their pilgrimage to Krakow, Poland, to visit Pope Francis. Items on the itinerary include a visit to Pope St. John Paul II's hometown, childhood vacation destination, Auschwitz, Jasna Gora monastery in the mountains, and many other exciting spots. This trip is particularly designed for young adults, so if you know of any young adults please recommend to them to come to World Youth Day 2016. More information can be found at www.dnu.org/youth

Discipleship Camps Young Women's: July 24-28, 2016 Young Men's: August 1-5, 2016 Schoenstatt-on-the-Lake, Sleepy Eye

Be sure to check out the promo videos at <http://www.dnu.org/young-womens-discipleship-camp> and <http://www.dnu.org/young-mens-discipleship-camp>. Online payment and registration is now available! Flyers and registration materials/instructions are enclosed in today's mailing.

2016 Dates for Parish Catechetical Leaders (DREs) and Youth Ministers

Mon, March 7	Bishop Lucker Lecture	7 pm	St. Catherine, Redwood Falls
Mon, March 14	PCL/YM Gathering	9:30 gather, mtg 10 am - 2:30 pm	St. Aloysius, Olivia
Thurs, March 17	Chrism Mass	7-8:30 pm	St. Mary, Sleepy Eye
Sun, April 3	Day of Mercy	Start with 10 am Mass - 4 pm	Cathedral, New Ulm
Mon, April 11	PCL/YM Gathering - Curriculum Day	9:30 gather, mtg 10 am - 2:30 pm	Catholic Pastoral Center, New Ulm
Sun, April 24	Junior High Rally	1-6:30 pm	Dassel-Cokato High School
Mon, May 9	PCL/Youth Minister Spring Fling - Bishop LeVoir	Noon - 4 pm	Max's Grill, Olivia
July 24-28	Young Women's Discipleship Camp	Sun 6 pm - Thurs noon	Schoenstatt on the Lake, Sleepy Eye
Aug 1-5	Young Men's Discipleship Camp	Mon 11 am - Fri 6 pm	Schoenstatt on the Lake, Sleepy Eye
Sat, Sept 24	Faith Formation Day	8 am early bird Mass; 9-2:30	Leifeld Hall & Cathedral High School, New Ulm

Check out Riverbend TEC! For more details and an application check out the Web site: <http://riverbendtec.org> July 31 - Aug 2, 2016 - New Ulm