Adult Faith Formation
John Roberto, Vibrant Faith

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www.LifelongFaith.com
SeasonsAdultFaith.com
FamiliesattheCenter.com
www.VibrantFaith
Lifelong Faith
Books

New

LifelongFaith.com – Presentations, Journal
ReimagineFaithFormation.com – Adults
Seasons of Adulthood

- **Young Adults**
  - 20s-30s
  - *Millennials*
- **Midlife Adults**
  - 40s-mid 50s
  - *Gen Xers*
- **Mature Adults**
  - mid 50s-mid 70s
  - *Baby Boomers*
- **Older Adults**
  - 75+
  - *Builders*

A Profile of Adult Faith Formation

- **Courses:** large group, small group, online
- **Bible study programs**
- **Small group interested-centered programs**
- **Book groups**
- **Worship or lectionary-based programs**
- **Retreat programs**
- **Online activities and resources, Apps**
- **Sacrament preparation/milestone experiences**
- **Service projects & mission trips**
- **Parent & grandparent programs**
Emerging Shift

FROM
Program-Centered
- Curriculum
- Resources
- @ Church

“One Size Fits All”

TO
Person-Centered
- Faith Maturing
- Personalized Offerings
- Multiple Learning Environments

“One Sizes Fits One”

Maturing in Faith
Toward What Ends Are We Working

Characteristics of Mature Faith
Characteristics

1. Developing and sustaining a personal relationship and commitment to Jesus Christ
2. Living as a disciple of Jesus Christ and making the Christian faith a way of life
3. Reading and studying the Bible—its message, meaning, and application to life today
4. Learning the Christian story and foundational teachings of the Christian faith (Trinity, Jesus, creed, morality and ethics) and integrating its meaning into one’s life
5. Praying—together and by ourselves, and seeking spiritual growth through spiritual disciplines

Characteristics

6. Living with moral integrity guided by Christian ethics and values
7. Living the Christian mission in the world—serving those in need, caring for God’s creation, and acting and advocating for justice and peace.
8. Worshipping God with the community at Sunday worship, ritual celebrations, and the seasons of the church year
9. Being actively engaged in the life, ministries, and activities of the faith community
10. Practicing faith in Jesus Christ by using one’s gifts and talents within the Christian community and in the world
ADULT LEARNING TODAY

Lifelong Learners

Majorities of Americans seek out learning activities in their personal and work lives

PERSONAL LEARNERS: 74% of adults

Percent of adults who say that in the past 12 months they have ...

- Done at least one of the activities below: 74%
- Read how-to magazines, consumer magazines, or other publications related to some area of personal interest: 58%
- Attended a meeting to learn new information (e.g., book club, sports club, health-related support group): 35%
- Attended a convention/conference to learn something of personal interest (e.g., garden show, sci-fi convention): 30%
- Taken a course related to your personal interest or hobbies: 25%
- Taken an online course: 16%
Lifelong Learners

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- Done at least one of the activities below: 74%
- Read how-to magazines, consumer magazines, or other publications related to some area of personal interest: 58%
- Attended a meeting to learn new information (e.g., book club, sports club, health-related support group): 36%
- Attended a convention/conference to learn something of personal interest (e.g., garden show, sci-fi convention): 30%
- Taken a course related to your personal interest or hobbies: 25%
- Taken an online course: 18%

Recent educational experiences have paid off in key ways for some learners

PERSONAL LEARNERS

Among adults who pursued personal learning activities, percent who say their learning ...

- Helped them feel more capable and well-rounded: 87%
- Opened up new perspectives about their lives: 69%
- Helped them make new friends: 64%
- Made them feel more connected to their local community: 58%
- Prompted them to get more involved in career opportunities: 43%
Motivation 3.0

Motivation 3.0 presumes that humans have a third drive—to learn, to create, and to better the world. Motivation 3.0 has three essential elements.

+ **Autonomy**: the desire to direct our own lives with autonomy over task (what they do), time (when they do it), team (who they do it with), and technique (how they do it).
+ **Mastery**: the urge to get better and better at something that matters—to be engaged deliberate practice to produce mastery.
+ **Purpose**: the yearning to do what we do in the service of something larger than ourselves, to seek purpose—a cause greater and more enduring than ourselves.

“The secret to high performance and satisfaction—at work, at school, and at home—is the deeply human need to direct our own lives, to learn and create new things, and to do better by ourselves and our world.” (Daniel Pink)

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Adult Motivation

We can identify at least four different orientations for learning:

+ a *goal-orientation* in which learning is seen as leading to a change in work or personal status
+ an *activity-orientation* in which participants’ social interactions are especially valued,
+ a *learning-orientation* in which a love of learning underlies the learner’s engagement and participation,
+ a *spiritual-orientation* in which learners seek new meaning and perceive education as the starting point for thinking in new ways.

(Schuster and Grant)
# Adult Motivation

1. Facing life transitions: learning and support to cope with changes in their lives, e.g., raising children, aging parents, financial matters, job changes, divorce
2. Addressing life-stage needs
3. Experiencing a gap between their present level of understanding, skill, performance and/or growth and their desired level or goal
4. Appealing to personal and spiritual growth
5. Providing personal benefits; making a difference in other’s lives
6. Enriching and enjoyable experiences
7. Learning something new or that could not be done before
8. Being together with other people – community and belonging
9. Fitting into busy lives – short duration, multiple times and ways to participate

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**NEW WAYS OF LEARNING AND FAITH FORMATION IN A DIGITAL WORLD**
The Print Era (1500s - )

The Multimedia Era (1960s - )
The Digital Era (2000s -)

What is the Digital Transformation Making Possible?

1. Learning and faith formation are now mobile—anytime, anywhere, 24x7. People have the digital devices to stay connected and to access learning and faith formation on the go.

2. There is abundance of high quality digital content for faith formation—audio, video, print, websites, apps, online learning platforms, and more.

3. New digital media and learning methods mean that we can provide multiple ways to learn and grow—activities and experiences that reflect different learning styles and multiple intelligences.
What is the Digital Transformation Making Possible?

4. Digital media and online activities, especially videos, mean that we can develop content in smaller units (micro-learning) that better suit today’s learners who have shorter attention spans.

5. A faith formation website can serve as an online learning center, a portal to activities and resources, and a connecting point for people.

6. Online classrooms, like Edmodo, Schoology, and Google Classroom, provide safe spaces for young people, parents, and adult leaders to engage in faith forming experiences and interaction.

Characteristics of 21st Century Learning

1. Blended Learning
2. Micro-Learning
3. Immersive Learning Environments
4. Multiple Ways of Learning
5. Multisensory Learning
6. Project-Based Learning
7. Collaborative Learning
8. Visual Learning
9. Practice-Oriented Learning
10. Storytelling
FAITH FORMATION FOR THE SEASONS OF ADULTHOOD

Seasons of Adulthood

- **Young Adults**
  - 20s-30s
  - *Millennials*

- **Midlife Adults**
  - 40s-mid 50s
  - *Gen Xers*

- **Mature Adults**
  - mid 50s-mid 70s
  - *Baby Boomers*

- **Older Adults**
  - 75+
  - *Builders*
The Seasons of Adulthood

Seasons of Adulthood

• Young Adults (20s-30s)
• Millennial Generation
• Midlife Adults (40s-mid 50s)
• Generation X
• Mature Adults (mid 50s–75)
• Baby Boom Generation
• Older Adults (75+)
• Building Generation

Life Issues

1. Physical & Cognitive Changes
2. Developmental Tasks
3. Family Life Cycle
4. Faith Development
5. Spiritual-Religious Identities
6. Generational Characteristics

Generations

- iGeneration (2000-)
- Millennials (1980-99)
- Generation X (1961-1979)
- Baby Boomers (1946-60)
- Builders (before 1946)

- Relationship to Institutions
- Relationship to Authority
- Family Relationships
- Work-Life Balance
- Communication Style
- Technology Usage
- Learning Style
- Spiritual Expression
- Worship Style
Styles of Learning: Builders

- lecture and expert presentations
- activities that take into account their age-related abilities to hear, see, and move
- connect their experience to the topic
- structure and predictability (no surprises); low-risk learning environment
- independent skill practice time
- still like printed resources and books for study

Styles of Learning: Boomers

- group interactions and discussions
- storytelling
- chances to try new skills independently
- stable, risk-free environment but want to interact with others
- experiential, practical, and fun activities that allow for team exercises
- use technology as means for learning
- blend of people who prefer printed books and those who learn online
Styles of Learning: Gen Xers

- learn by doing
- experiential with lots of direct experience activities
- shorter, episodic learning experiences
- visual learning (images, videos)
- practical and relevant (What will I do with this learning?)
- discretion to complete tasks their own way
- prefer independent self-directed learning, including individual projects
- use technology where possible, including online learning, video, etc.
- will turn to digital resources over the printed resources

Styles of Learning: Millennials

- microlearning and episodic learning experiences
- lots of activity-based group work
- fast-moving, interactive activities
- visual learning (images, videos)
- technology enabled learning using their own devices for learning
- collaborative learning environments with peer interaction
- entertainment and learning at the same time
**Spiritual Religious Identities**

- **Not Spiritual, Not Religious Unaffiliated**
- **Spiritual but Not Religious Uninvolved**
- **Moderate Faith Practice & Occasional Engagement Occasionals**
- **Vibrant Faith & Engagement at the Center of Life Actives**

**Spiritual-Religious Diversity**

**Unaffiliated Make Up Growing Share Across Generations**

% of each generation that identifies current religion as atheist, agnostic or nothing in particular

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silent generation (b. 1928-1945)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby Boomers (b.1946-1964)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation X (b. 1965-1980)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older Millennials (b. 1981-1989)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>+9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger Millennials (b. 1990-1996)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2014 Religious Landscape Study, conducted June 4-Sept. 30, 2014. All changes are statistically significant.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
Designing 21st Century Adult Faith Formation

1. Target a Season(s) and the Life Stage Characteristics: young adults, midlife adults, mature adults, older adults
2. Target the religious-spiritual identities: vibrants, occasionals, spirituals, unaffiliateds
3. Build on adult motivation: what’s motivating people
4. Identify current offerings: whole church, adult specific, etc.
5. Be person-centered—personalize the process and offerings
6. Provide a variety of content, methods, formats, etc
7. Use digital enabled and connected strategies
8. Foster communities of learning and practice
21st Century Learning

1. Blended Learning
2. Micro-Learning
3. Immersive Learning Environments
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Adult Faith Formation

- Young Adults
  - 20s-30s
  - Millennials
  - Presentations
  - Courses: large group, small group, & online
  - Bible study
  - Small group interested-centered
  - Book groups
  - Worship or lectionary-based programs

- Midlife Adults
  - 40s-
  - Gen Xers
  - Mid 50s
  - Bible study
  - Small group interested-centered
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  - Online activities and resources
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  - Service projects. mission trips
  - Parent/grandparent programs

- Older Adults
  - 75+
  - Builders
  - Retreat programs
  - Service projects. mission trips
  - Parent/grandparent programs
In a Variety of Environments

• @ Church
• @ Home
• Online
• In the Community (coffee shop, museum)
• In the World (mission trip, tour)
• On Your Own (in the car, while you commute, while you wait for children, in quiet time)
• AND MORE
With a Variety of Choices

Online

The Seasons of Adult Faith Formation

A Network of Adult Faith Formation
Experiences, Programs, Activities, & Resources
In the Community: God on Tap

God on Tap Blog

We post news and updates about God on Tap and discussion topics for upcoming gatherings. Feel free to leave a comment and sign up to receive new posts by email!

Discussing Creativity at God on Tap Tomorrow Night!

Join us for God on Tap tomorrow night, July 26th at 7:30pm at Newt & Max’s Brewing Company in Ambler. Our topic: creativity.

When the universe seems to be sending you signals, it’s best to pay attention.

Lately, I’ve been hearing a lot about creativity—how it works, what fuels it, what impedes it, and what promotes it.

From a podcast reminding us listeners of the importance of sunscreen for creativity, to

reading authors like Stephen King and Anne Lamott describe their writing process, to Elizabeth Gilbert’s TED Talk about embracing creativity, to a conversation just this past week with my friend like Jim Kast-Fay about how he creates great projects like his Thirty Second or Less videos. (He describes his creative process as something akin to throwing spaghetti against a wall and seeing what happens.)

Creativity is a common thing. We create all kinds of art, theatre, music, school lessons plans, woodworking, gardens, beer, designing, writing, brainstorm plans, you name it. We may not have created ourselves, and yet we do create and mold and shape our lives as we tend to our relationships, work, andavings.

God on Tap Blog Posts

Exploring Creativity at God on Tap Tomorrow Night!

God on Tap Tomorrow Night: Mapping our Natural Landscapes

God on Tap Tonight: What do you fear? By, Jennifer Flanders, Ph.D.
PERSONALIZE FAITH FORMATION

Pathways of Faith Growth
Playlists of Content & Experiences
Project-Centered Faith Formation

PATHWAY
Vibrant
Occasional
Uninvolved Unaffiliated

PLAYLIST
Variety of Experiences & Activities
Variety of Experiences & Activities
Variety of Experiences & Activities

Personalized Pathways of Faith Growth
Two Ways to Approach Personalizing

**Approach One: Personalize the Pathway for People**
- Develop pathways of faith maturing
- Develop playlists of content and experiences tailored to the pathways
- Upload playlists to a digital platform

**Approach Two: Personalize the Offerings**
- Offer a variety of content, experiences, and activities tailored to different spiritual-religious identities and the life stage needs of people
  - *Getting Started ---- Growing ---- Going Deeper*
- Format the content tailored to different spiritual-religious identities
- Develop a digital platform with content to address the needs
### Spiritual Assessment

#### Knowing God

1. I understand the basic beliefs of the Christian faith, and intentionally reflect on my relationship with God.
2. I strive to develop a daily time of prayer and meditation on spiritual matters.
3. I am engaged in a small group of believers, and I believe in sharing spiritual experiences with others.
4. I regularly attend worship services, and I participate in the observance of religious practices.
5. I value the teachings of Jesus Christ, and I strive to live in accordance with His commandments.
6. I seek to understand the mysteries of faith, and I am eager to explore deeper spiritual truths.
7. I am committed to growing in my faith, and I actively engage in spiritual growth activities.

#### Loving God

1. I demonstrate love and compassion towards others, and I seek to serve those in need.
2. I am willing to forgive others, and I strive to maintain healthy relationships.
3. I am consistent in my prayers and devotions, and I find solace in the presence of God.
4. I actively participate in community service, and I seek to make a positive impact on the world.
5. I am mindful of the needs of others, and I strive to alleviate the burdens of those in distress.

#### Serving God

1. I volunteer at local church or community organizations.
2. I support the mission and vision of my church, and I contribute to its financial well-being.
3. I involve myself in the activities of my church, and I am committed to its educational and outreach programs.
4. I engage in personal spiritual growth, and I seek to deepen my relationship with God.
5. I am a member of a small group, and I actively participate in its discussions and activities.

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#### Knowing God: Becoming Theologically Informed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 1: Understanding the Essentials of the Christian Faith</strong>&lt;br&gt;1. I understand the basic beliefs of the Christian faith, and I have a solid grasp of the key doctrines.&lt;br&gt;2. I am able to articulate the central tenets of the Christian faith, and I can discuss them in depth.&lt;br&gt;3. I am familiar with the historical development of the Christian faith, and I can trace its evolution over time.</td>
<td><strong>Module 2: Exploring the Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ</strong>&lt;br&gt;1. I have a solid understanding of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, and I can discuss them in detail.&lt;br&gt;2. I am able to connect the life and teachings of Jesus with the broader context of the Christian faith.&lt;br&gt;3. I am familiar with the impact of Jesus' life and teachings on the development of the Christian church.</td>
<td><strong>Module 3: Understanding the Role of the Holy Spirit</strong>&lt;br&gt;1. I have a solid understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit in the Christian faith, and I can explain its significance.&lt;br&gt;2. I am able to articulate the role of the Holy Spirit in the personal life of the believer.&lt;br&gt;3. I am familiar with the ways in which the Holy Spirit is present in the church and in the world.</td>
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#### Loving God: Becoming Spiritually Transformed

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<td><strong>Module 2: Serving Others in the Community</strong>&lt;br&gt;1. I actively participate in community service, and I seek to make a positive impact on the world.&lt;br&gt;2. I am able to connect my service to the broader goals of the Christian faith.&lt;br&gt;3. I am familiar with the ways in which service can transform both the individual and the community.</td>
<td><strong>Module 3: Engaging in Spiritual Disciplines</strong>&lt;br&gt;1. I engage in spiritual disciplines, such as prayer, meditation, and Bible study, and I seek to grow in my spiritual life.&lt;br&gt;2. I am able to articulate the importance of spiritual disciplines in the Christian faith.&lt;br&gt;3. I am familiar with the ways in which spiritual disciplines can transform the individual and the community.</td>
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#### Serving God: Living Godly Daily

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Playlists for Faith Formation

Personalize the Offerings
Playlist: Bible for Families with Children

Getting Started
• Participate in the Bible workshop for parents that is offered twice a year.
• Watch the “Reading the Bible with Children” video and/or listen to the podcast on website.
• Begin the practice of a weekly Bible story reading and/or video viewing.
• Use the online Guide to select and purchase a recommended children’s Bible, and an adult study Bible for parents.
• Engage the children in the summer vacation Bible school program.

Growing
• Continue the weekly Bible story or video practice.
• Practice the FAITH5 each day: Share the highs and lows of the day every night; read a key Bible verse or story every night; talk about how the Bible reading might relate to your highs and lows; pray for one another’s highs and lows aloud every night; bless one another before turning out the lights of the day.

Going Deeper
• Participate in the family scripture reflection after Sunday worship each week.
• Learn how to pray with the Bible by watching the video online and using the prayer activities online.
• Participate in the church wide “30-Day Bible Experience” of reading one gospel at home.
• Engage the children in the summer vacation Bible school program.

• Join an adult Bible study group offered by the church.
• Engage the whole family in a 365 day “read the whole Bible” experience using the resources on the family website.
• Develop a personal Bible study plan using the resources on the family website.
• Participate in the family scripture reflection after Sunday worship each week.
• Engage the children in the summer vacation Bible school program.
Personalize the Offerings
*Playlists for Reading & Studying the Bible*

### Getting Started
- Participate in the “Welcome to the Bible” program at church
- Watch the video programs on how to read the Bible
- Watch the video program with an overview of the Old Testament and New Testament
- Use the Guide to select a Study Bible and find the Bible online
- Participate in the 30-Day Bible Experience: Reading one Gospel (Matthew, Mark, or Luke)

###Growing
- Develop a daily plan for reading the Bible
- Participate in the lectio divina reflection group after Sunday worship
- Learn how to pray with the Bible
- Join a Bible study group (church, home, coffee shop, online)

###Going Deeper
- Read the Bible in 365 days
- Develop a personal Bible study plan
- Take an online course: Hebrew Scriptures, Gospels, Letters of Paul
- Study and pray the Psalms as a spiritual practice