CHAPTER 4

REIMAGINING THE CURRICULUM

When we think about curriculum our thoughts often focus on *choosing* a curriculum, which means purchasing a resource—an age-graded or life-stage series of "textbooks" (in print or digital versions). Equating curriculum with a printed text series is a product of the schooling approach to curriculum. We also tend to associate curriculum with children and teens—because of the predominance of Sunday school. Rarely do we talk about a lifelong formation curriculum or an adult curriculum or a family curriculum.

We need to rethink what a faith formation curriculum means today and move beyond a reliance on a linear, sequential, grade-level curriculum approach, dominated by printed texts that serve as the "curriculum" and are developed primarily for use in a classroom or age-group centered setting at church. This approach to curriculum is simply not up to the challenges of the twenty-first century!

The word *curriculum* is derived from the Latin verb *currere*, which means to run. In literal terms, a curriculum is a course to be run; it is a *journey*. A faith formation curriculum is a lifelong journey of discipleship—a process of experiencing, learning, and practicing the Christian faith as we seek to follow Jesus and his way in today's world.

If we imagine a faith formation curriculum as a lifelong journey of growing in faith and discipleship, then we can think of curriculum as the subject matter and processes that engage people in learning, experiencing, and practicing the Christian faith along this journey. We can think of curriculum as the life, the substance that is experienced. And this life—this substance—is greatly expanded both in content and in learning environments in the twenty-first century.

PART I. ESSENTIAL FEATURES

How should we envision a lifelong faith formation curriculum in the twenty-first century—a curriculum that reflects our continuing mission, the new faith formation ecosystem, and a contemporary approach to learning?

I am proposing eight essential features of a twenty-first century curriculum that move us from theory and vision to curriculum and practice. Reflected in these eight characteristics are the foundational insights we explored in Chapters 2 and 3. A faith formation curriculum for the twenty-first century is:

1. **Holistic.** Envisioning Christian faith as a way of the head, the heart, and the hands—informing, forming, and transforming people in Christian faith and identity.

2. **Comprehensive and balanced.** Developed around the eight primary faith-forming processes that facilitate faith growth and incorporate essential knowledge and practices of the Christian faith: caring relationships, celebrating liturgical seasons, celebrating rituals and milestones, learning the Christian tradition and applying it to life, praying and spiritual formation, reading the Bible, serving people in need and working for justice and caring for creation, and worshipping God with the faith community.

3. **Systemic.** Providing a curriculum for the new faith-forming ecosystem—an intergenerational faith formation curriculum centered in church life and events, an age-group and generational faith formation curriculum, a family faith formation curriculum for the home, and a missional faith formation curriculum for the spiritual but not religious and the unaffiliated.

4. **Lifelong.** Spanning ten decades of life and addressing the uniqueness of each stage of life.

5. **Contextual.** Addressing the needs, hungers, interests, and concerns of people today, and their unique spiritual and faith journeys by embracing an approach that moves from life to faith to life.

6. **Digitally-enabled.** Complementing the gathered community settings with online learning environments and utilizing the abundance of digital media and tools for learning and faith formation.

7. **Connected.** Linking church life, age groups/generations, daily/home life, and online life through continuous faith formation—connecting participation in church life and events with daily/home life by using online content and connections *or* reaching people at home and in daily life with online faith formation content and experiences that connect to church life and events.

8. **Multi-platform.** Delivered and conducted in multiple settings—self-directed,

mentored, at home, in small groups, in large groups, church–wide, in the community and world, and in physical and online learning environments.

The Curriculum of Lifelong Faith Formation

How can we design a lifelong faith formation curriculum for the twenty-first century that embodies the eight features described above?

A lifelong faith formation curriculum is really an integration of four curricula: intergenerational, age group, family, and missional—all supported by digitally–enabled, online faith formation.

Intergenerational Faith Formation

Central to twenty-first century faith formation is guided participation in a community of practice. Joyce Mercer makes the key point that this is not just "doing." It includes fully and actively practicing our faith in everyday life and making theological meaning out of the stuff of everyday life. Theological themes and faith practices are embedded in the experience of church life throughout the year and are an integral element of the curriculum. For example:

- *The feasts and seasons of the church year* provide a natural rhythm and calendar to the curriculum: Advent and Christmas seasons, Epiphany, Baptism of the Lord, Call of the Disciples, Ash Wednesday, Lenten season, Holy Week, Easter, Easter season, Pentecost, All Saints and All Souls, and remembrances of saints and holy people throughout the year.
- The *Revised Common and Catholic Lectionaries* provide a rich curriculum for the whole community with its three-year cycle of weekly readings from the Old Testament, psalms, epistles, and gospels built around the seasons of the church year. The *Narrative Lectionary* is a four-year cycle of readings from September through May each year following the sweep of the biblical story, from creation through the early Christian church.
- *Ritual, milestone, and sacramental celebrations* provide events rich in theological meaning and faith practice that celebrate the faith journey throughout life: baptism, confirmation, first Bible, first communion, graduation, marriage, funerals, and much more.
- *Acts of service and justice*—locally and globally—provide a focus on mission to the world and put in action biblical and church teachings on service, justice, and care for the earth.

When the experiences of church life are the focus of intergenerational and age-group learning, we have the opportunity to *prepare* people—with the appropriate knowledge and practices—for participation in the central events of church life and the Christian faith, and to *guide* their participation and reflection upon those events.

Use the following template to develop a profile of the events and activities of the congregation. Produce the profile on newsprint, in a written report, and/or on an Excel spreadsheet.

Faith-forming Processes	Church Life and Events
Caring relationships	
Celebrating the liturgical seasons	
Celebrating rituals and milestones	
Learning the Christian tradition	
Praying and spiritual formation	
Reading the Bible	
Serving people in need, working for justice, caring for creation	
Worshipping God	

Age-group and Generational Faith Formation

Age-group and generational faith formation addresses the unique life tasks, needs, interests, and spiritual journeys of age groups and generations across the whole life span. The eight faith-forming processes are the framework for an age-specific or generationally-specific curriculum, which also includes life issues appropriate to that stage of life and missional initiatives to engage the spiritual but not religious and the unaffiliated and uninterested.

Age-group and generation faith formation needs to be connected to the events of church life and to family life. For example:

- People learn about worship and how to worship; experience Sunday worship with the faith community and practice worshipping; and live the Sunday worship experience at home and in their daily lives.
- People learn about the Bible and how to read it, interpret it, and apply it to their lives; experience the Bible at Sunday worship and at home; and develop their own practice of Bible study and reading.
- People learn about Jesus and the Christian tradition—teachings, history, practices, what it means for life today, and how to live the Christian faith today; and experience the life of Jesus and the Christian tradition through participation in the events of church life, especially church year feasts and seasons.

- People learn about prayer and spirituality, and how to develop their spiritual lives through prayer and spiritual discipleship; experience the prayer life of the faith community; and develop their own practice of prayer and the spiritual disciplines.
- People learn about the justice issues of our day and the biblical and church teachings on justice, service, and care for creation; experience acts of justice and service with the faith community—locally and globally; and engage in the practices of serving those in need, caring for creation, and working for justice—as individuals, with their families, and with their church and other groups and organizations.

Use the following template to develop a profile of age-group/generational programming and the (potential) connection to the life and events of the church. Produce the profile on newsprint, in a written report, and/or on a Excel spreadsheet.

Faith-forming Processes	Age-group/ Generational Programming	Connection to Church Life and Events
Caring relationships: intergenerational and peer relationships, supportive communities		
Celebrating the liturgical seasons: feasts and seasons of the church year		
Celebrating rituals and milestones: celebrating rituals, sacraments, and milestones at significant moments in one's life journey and faith journey		
Reading the Bible: studying and interpreting the Bible—its message, its meaning, and its application to life today		
Learning the Christian tradition: learning the content of the tradition (Trinity, Jesus, church, beliefs, morality, and ethics), reflecting upon that content, integrating it into one's faith life, applying it to life today, and living its meaning in the world		
Praying, devotions, and spiritual formation: personal and communal prayer; being formed by the spiritual disciplines		
Serving and justice: living the Christian mission in the world—engaging in service to those in need, care for God's creation, and action and advocacy for justice		
Worshipping God with the faith community: experiencing God's living presence through Scripture, preaching, and Eucharist; and being sent forth on mission		

Family Faith Formation

Congregations equip families to become centers of learning and faith growth at home by nurturing family faith and developing the faith life of parents and grandparents, strengthening family life by focusing on family asset-building, and developing the knowledge, skills, and confidence of parents (and grandparents) for parenting. There are five elements in a family faith formation curriculum for the home:

- *Nurturing family faith at home* by utilizing the eight faith-forming processes as the primary content—knowledge, experiences, practices, and resources—developed from events of church life, as well as specially designed family resources.
- *Building strong families* by developing family assets: 1) nurturing relationships (positive communication, affection, emotional openness, encouragement for pursuing talents and interests); 2) establishing routines (family meals, shared activities, meaningful traditions—holidays, rituals, celebrations, dependability); 3) maintaining expectations (openness about tough topics, fair rules, defined boundaries, clear expectations, contributions to family); 4) adapting to challenges (management of daily commitments, adaptability problem-solving, democratic decision-making); and 5) connecting to the community (neighborhood cohesion, relationship with others in the community, participating in enriching activities, supportive resources in the community (*The American Family Asset Study*, Search Institute).
- *Parent faith formation* through participation in intergenerational faith formation at church and church life, and through targeted programs of theological and biblical formation for parents and grandparents.
- *Parenting for faith-growth training* to equip parents with knowledge, skills, and resources to develop the faith life of their children and practice faith at home as a family.
- *Parenting education* that develops the knowledge, skills, and confidence of parents (and grandparents) for parenting children and teens, with a special focus on parent practices, such as love and affection, stress management, relationship skills, respect, promoting and modeling learning, life skills, behavior management, healthy lifestyle, supporting spiritual and religious development and practice, and protection and safety.

Use the following template to develop a profile of current and potential family programming and the (potential) connection to the life and events of the church. Produce the profile on newsprint, in a written report, and/or on a Excel spreadsheet.

Content Areas	Programs, Activities, and Resources for the Home	Connection to Church Life and Events
Faith practices • Celebrating the liturgical seasons • Celebrating rituals and milestones • Learning the Christian tradition • Praying • Reading the Bible • Serving, working for justice, caring for creation		
Family Assets • Nurturing relationships • Establishing routines • Maintaining expectations • Adapting to challenges • Connecting to the community		
Parent faith formation		
Parenting for faith-growth training		
Parenting education		

Missional Faith Formation

The mission curriculum includes two types of "content." The first involves expanding and extending the church's presence through outreach, connection, relationship building, and engagement with people where they live—engaging with people around their life situation (needs, interests, concerns), their quest for meaning and purpose in life, their drive to make a difference in world and in lives of others, and more. This first type of missional curriculum provides a safe environment for people to explore life-centered and spiritual-centered activities. (See the missional section on page 50 in Chapter 2 for more ideas.)

The second type of curriculum content provides pathways for people to consider or reconsider the Christian faith, to encounter Jesus and the good news, and to live as disciples in a supportive faith community. Missional faith formation guides

people as they move from discovery to exploration to commitment. The catechu-menal process with its ritual stages and formational content—participation in the life of the faith community, education in Scripture and the Christian tradition, apprenticeship in the Christian life, intimate connection with the liturgy and ritu-als of the church, moral formation, development of a life of prayer, and engagement in actions of justice and service. Programs like *The Alpha Course* cover the basics of Christianity in a multisession course in a supportive small group environment.

Use the following template to develop a profile of current and potential mis-sional activities in two categories: outreach and pathways. Produce the profile on newsprint, in a written report, and/or on a Excel spreadsheet.

Target Audience	Expanding and Extending the Church's Presence through Outreach and Community	Pathways to Jesus, Discipleship, and the Christian Faith

Online Faith Formation

Digital media and the online environment provide the means to connect church life, age groups/generations, and daily/home life through continuous faith forma-tion—connecting participation in church life and events with daily/home life by using online content and connections *or* reaching people at home and in daily life with online faith formation content and experiences that connect to church life and events. For example:

- Extend and deepen people's experience and participation in church events and programs with online content for daily and home life. Consider the possibilities for extending Sunday worship, church year feasts and seasons, intergenerational and family programs, classes, youth meetings, mission trips, retreat experiences, vacation Bible school, and more.

- Provide a complete faith formation experience online connected to the life of the church, for example, a forty-day Lent "curriculum" that connects the Lent events at church with online content for experiencing and practicing Lent in daily and home life. For example:

CHURCH LIFE EVENTS	DAILY AND HOME LIFE ACTIVITIES
Ash Wednesday	Fasting activities
Lent Sunday liturgies	Praying activities
Stations of the Cross	Service/almsgiving activities
Lent prayer	Lectionary reflections
Lent retreat	Lent study resources and videos
Lent service	Lent devotions
Lent soup suppers	Daily Bible readings

- "Flip the classroom or program" by creating a digital platform to provide the content that people would learn in the gathered setting into an online learning space using print, audio, video, and more. And then transform the gathered program using interactive activities, discussion, project-based learning, and practice and demonstration. One example is redesigning children's faith formation so that children and their parents are learning online at home and doing activities together, and then refocusing "class time" to engage children in creating projects and activities that demonstrate their learning. Another example is designing a high school confirmation program that provides the content that used to be taught in the weekly sessions in an online platform for individual learning—watching videos, reading short materials, and writing a reflection journals; engages the young people in small groups during the month to discuss their online learning; and then meets monthly in a large group gathered session for discussion, interactive activities, and application of the content to living as a Christian today. During the year retreats, worship, and service projects offer additional gathered sessions.
- Offer opportunities for individuals, families, and small groups to utilize the digital platform as their primary learning setting and provide opportunities for regular interaction in face-to-face, gathered settings or in a web conference format, such as a Google+ Hangout. One example is offering six, one-hour parent webinar programs delivered to parents at home in four-month semesters: three webinars followed by a parent gathering at church; three more webinars and concluding with a parent gathering at church. Another example is developing an online Bible study where groups can meet regularly in a physical setting or virtually through Skype or a Google+ Hangout for sharing their learning.

- Provide high-quality and easily accessible online religious content—courses, activities, print and e-books, audio and video programs, and content-rich websites—on the faith formation website or with links to select websites. One example is offering adults a variety of online Bible and theology courses for individual study using online courses from colleges and seminaries, video programs on YouTube, and online programs and webinars from religious publishers and organizations. Another example is providing an online prayer and spirituality center where people can access daily prayer reflections and devotions, offer prayer intentions, pray for others, learn about spiritual practices, download prayer activities for the home, and more.

The chart on the next page reflects the understanding of curriculum just presented. Consider using this tool as a way to assess your current approach to curriculum and as a guide to expanding your faith formation curriculum.

A Lifelong Curriculum Plan

The subject matter and processes that engage people in learning, experiencing, and practicing the Christian faith

Content Areas	Church Life & Events	Family at Home	Children & Parents	Youth & Parents	Young Adults	Mid-life Adults	Mature Adults	Older Adults	Digital & Online
Caring relationships									
Celebrating the liturgical seasons									
Celebrating rituals and milestones									
Learning the Christian tradition and applying it to life									
Praying and spiritual formation									
Reading the Bible									
Serving people in need, working for justice, caring for creation									
Worshipping God within the faith community									
Life stage • Individual • Family assets • Parents									
Missional activities • Outreach • Pathways									

PART 2. REIMAGING CURRICULUM DESIGN

In the twenty-first century, the curriculum is the network. On the network people can experience the life and substance of the Christian faith in a way that expands both the content and environments and can be personalized and customized. The fundamental operating system and delivery system for faith formation is now the *network*.

- The network provides a variety of experiences, programs, activities, resources, and social connections that are available anytime and anywhere, in physical places and online spaces, and conducted in variety of settings—self-directed, mentored, at home, in small groups, in large groups, church-wide, in the community, and in the world.
- The network incorporates digital platforms (websites) that integrate all of the content (programs, activities, resources), connect people to the content and to each other, provide continuity for people across different learning experiences, and is available anytime, anywhere.
- The network integrates online and face-to-face learning, blending learning in a variety of ways from online programs with minimal interaction in physical settings to programs in physical settings that utilize online content or extend the program using online content.

How can we design a curriculum that is holistic, comprehensive, systemic, life-long, contextual, digitally enabled, connected, and multi-platform? The following design process will help bring these characteristics to life in a curriculum plan and a network design that reflects a twenty-first century approach to faith formation.

Step 1. Research your target audience and identify needs
Step 2. Build the faith formation network design
Step 3. Generate programming for the faith formation network
Step 4. Design a season of faith formation programming
Step 5. Build the digital platform—a faith formation website
Step 6. Design a process for assessing and personalizing learning
Step 7. Test the seasonal plan and web design
Step 8. Launch the faith formation network
Step 9. Evaluate the season of programming
Step 10. Design the new season of programming

Ideas for designing programming (intergenerational, age group, family, and missional) can be found at http://www.21stCenturyFaithFormation.com and http://www.IntergenerationalFaith.com. The 21st Century Faith Formation website has a variety of strategies for (digitally) blended faith formation.

Preparation

First, develop a *network team* (or task force) to design your network for a target audience: age group, generation, or families. The task force should include church staff and ministry leadership, faith formation leaders, and members from your target audience who can bring new perspectives and experiences to the design work. It is very helpful to have several people who bring experience and expertise in the digital technologies and media, and social media. The task force will need a facilitator. Prepare the team by having them read Chapters 1–3 in this book.

Second, identify the *target audience* for your faith formation network, for example: children and families, adolescents and families; young adults (20s–30s), mid-life adults (40s–50s), mature adults (mid 60s–70s), and older adults (75+), multi-generational family, and more. You can adapt these categories by grouping several categories, such as all adults 30 and over or children and adolescents; or by focusing more narrowly, such as young children and parents, 0–5 years old. Note: The design process in this chapter is written for designing a network and digital platform for an age group or family. This process can be applied to the whole faith community—something more suitable for smaller size churches or for congregations that want to develop an all-ages network around their intergenerational events and ministries.

Third, complete the four profile forms in Part 1 of this chapter for intergenerational, age-group, family, and missional faith formation. This information will provide a starting point for designing the faith formation network in Step 3.

Step 1. Research Your Target Audience and Identify Needs

Conduct research on the target audience using the following categories:

- life-stage issues (developmental needs, concerns, interests)
- generational issues
- milestones and life transitions
- ethnic and cultural needs
- spiritual and religious needs

By consulting research findings and listening carefully to people in the community, the team can determine the most important needs a faith formation network should address through programs, activities, and resources. Follow these guidelines for effective research.

Review relevant research and effective faith formation practices for the target audience. Begin with existing research studies on the spiritual and religious needs, interests, and life tasks of your target audience to identify important themes to address. Review research and case studies of effective practices to

determine what's most effective in faith formation with the target audience. Con-sult the research reports and effective practice articles online in the "Library" of the Faith Formation Learning Exchange: www.faithformationlearningexchange. net, and at www.21stCenturyFaithFormation.com.

Consider the following questions to guide the research:

1. *Life Stage.* What's happening in the lives and world of your target audience today: family, work, leisure, relationships, sexuality, suffering and grief, social and political issues, community issues? What are the developmental life tasks of people in your target audience?

2. *Generational.* What is the generational identity and the unique generational characteristics of your target audience (builders, boomers, Gen X, millen-nials, iGeneration)?

3. *Milestones and Transitions.* What are the significant milestones and transi-tions in the lives of your target audience? (For example: marriages, births, graduations, geographic relocations, family formation and re-formation, career changes, empty nests, retirement, unanticipated illness, divorce, and the loss of loved ones.)

4. *Ethnic/Cultural Needs.* Which ethnic/cultural communities and traditions are present in your target audience? What are the unique lived experiences, needs, and aspirations of people from each ethnic/cultural community?

5. *Spiritual and Religious Needs:* What are the significant spiritual and religious needs, interests, and concerns of people in your target audience?

Conduct focus group research with the target audience. An excellent way to gather information about people in the community is through focus groups. Organize focus groups of eight to twelve people in the target audience. Select a diversity of people in each focus group, reflecting ethnic/cultural diversity, socio-economic diversity, and spiritual and religious diversity (from the actively engaged to the "churchless"). Meet for about one hour in a variety of locations and times. Remember that people who are not involved in church may be hesitant to come to a meeting at church. Have two people lead each focus group—one to record (on a computer or tablet is preferable) and one to ask the questions. The recorder can also ask follow-up questions as appropriate. Use the following questions as a guide for developing focus group interviews. Every focus group needs to use the same questions so that comparisons can be made across the groups. In a 60-minute focus group there is usually time for at least seven questions that you can select from the following list.

1. How would you describe your age group in key words or phrases?

2. What are some of the key life tasks that your age group is experiencing?

3. What are some of the important life issues that your age group is experiencing today?

4. What are the most meaningful experiences you have in life? What makes these experiences meaningful to you?

5. How important is your relationship with God? Why?

6. Where do you experience God most?

7. What are the significant spiritual issues that your age group is experiencing today?

8. What is most important to you about being a Christian (or a member of a particular denomination or faith tradition) today?

9. How do you live your Christian faith? Name some of the ways you put your faith into practice.

10. How can the church help you to continue growing as a Christian? Be specific. Name some of the things you would like to see your church offer for your age group.
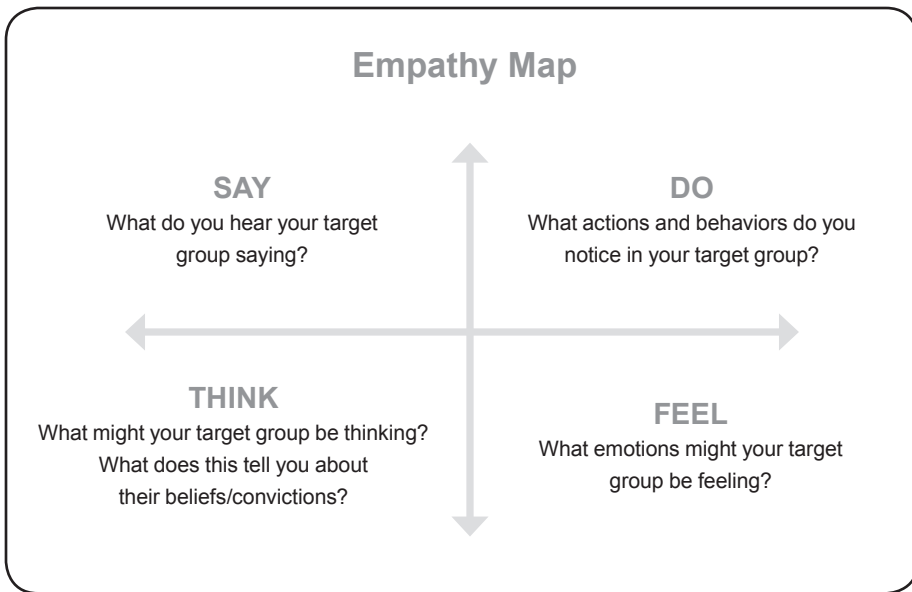
Compile the results from focus groups by identifying patterns or recurring themes about the life tasks and spiritual and religious needs. Also pay attention to information that may be unique to one focus group. Sometimes this uncovers important insights about the target audience.

Conduct observation of the target audience in the community. Engage the team in becoming anthropologists by observing people in the community. Develop an observation checklist and ask team members to spend a week simply observing people at work, at school, at play, at stores, in coffee shops and restaurants, and so on. Watch for things like:

1. What are some of the most popular activities in the community?

2. Where do people gather outside of work and school—coffee shop, gym, mall, park, community center, YMCA/YWCA, and so on? What are they doing there?

3. Where do people work? Do most people work in the community or do they commute to another area? What types of jobs do people have?

4. What are the most popular or well-attended churches in the community?

5. Where are people on Sunday morning, if they are not at worship?

Find patterns in the research findings. An "Empathy Map," developed by the Stanford School of Design, is one tool to synthesize observations and draw out insights from the research. Organize research findings into the following four quadrants: What are people saying, doing, thinking, and feeling? Do this activity as a research team and use one or more sheets of newsprint to compile the findings.

Empathy Map

SAY
What do you hear your target group saying?

DO
What actions and behaviors do you notice in your target group?

THINK
What might your target group be thinking? What does this tell you about their beliefs/convictions?

FEEL
What emotions might your target group be feeling?

Review the results of the Empathy Map and identify the most important *needs, interests, issues,* and *concerns* of the target audience using the categories below. Record them on newsprint or create a report for everyone.

- life stage issues (developmental needs, concerns, interests)
- generational issues
- milestones and life transitions
- ethnic and cultural needs
- spiritual and religious needs

Step 2. Build the Faith Formation Network Design

Begin building the faith formation network by determining the content areas appropriate for the target audience. Use the eight faith-forming processes as the basic framework for the network. The eight processes can be combined, as in the Families with Children Network example on page 101. New content areas can be added to the network (perhaps some surfaced in the research).
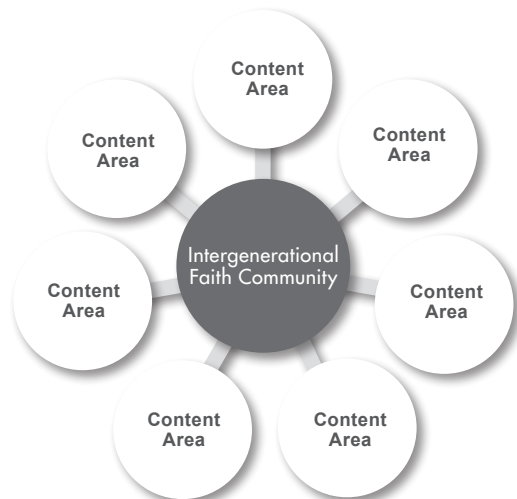
- life issues
- reaching the "churchless"
- life-stage role such as parents in a families with children network or grand-parents in an adult network
- major programs such as children's programming in families with children network or confirmation program for an adolescent network

Diagram your network on a sheet of newsprint. Be comprehensive even if it looks overwhelming. You can always combine content areas or modify them later in the process. Examples on pages 102–104 illustrate three faith formation network designs.

Building a Faith Formation Network

FOUNDATIONAL CONTENT AREAS

1. Caring relationships
2. Celebrating the liturgical seasons
3. Celebrating rituals and milestones
4. Learning the Christian tradition and applying it to life
5. Praying and spiritual formation
6. Reading the Bible
7. Serving people in need, working for justice, caring for creation
8. Worshipping God within the faith community
9. Life issues
10. Missional
11. Life stage
12. Major programs

Content Area

Content Area

Content Area

Content Area

Content Area

Content Area

Content Area

Content Area

Intergenerational Faith Community

Example: Whole Community Faith Network

The Whole Community Network illustrates how a smaller-sized church can develop one faith formation network for all ages. At the center of the network is the life and events of the intergenerational faith community. Smaller-sized churches can focus their energy intergenerationally by engaging all ages in the life and events of church life—Sunday worship, church year feasts and seasons, mission and service, caring relationships, prayer—and developing intergenerational learning programs around these events.

Each life stage would have content (programs, activities, and resources) that applies the intergenerational experiences and learning to their lives in age-appropriate ways, as well as content that addresses age-appropriate religious and spiritual needs, and life-stage needs, concerns, and interests. The twelve foundational content areas (page 99) provide the basic framework for these life-stage networks. To reduce the complexity of the network these content areas can be combined, for example, a faith practices category that includes several foundational content areas.

Example: Families with Children Network

The Families with Children Faith Formation Network combines several of the eight faith-forming processes together and adds a content area for family assets, a life-stage role for parents, and a program area for children's programming.

Example: Adult Faith Formation Network
(Adults in their 50s–mid 70s)

The Adult Faith Formation Network incorporates the eight faith-forming processes, combines celebrating rituals and milestones with adult life issues because of similar content, adds missional, life issues, and a life-stage role for grandparents.

Caring relationships

Liturgical seasons

Grandparents

Learning the tradition

Adult milestones and life issues

INTERGENERATIONAL FAITH COMMUNITY

Praying and spiritual formation

Missional

Bible

Sunday worship

Service, justice, creation

Step 3. Generate Programming for the Faith Formation Network

With the network design set, programming can be added to each content area. Use the following process to generate programming ideas for each content area of the network. Generate a list of all the possible programs, activities, and resources that *could* be included in the network. This list becomes the database of ideas that can be used to develop each season of program for the network. The following template provides a format for adding programming to each network content area.

1. Correlate the most important needs from the research into the appropriate content areas of the network. Some of the important needs will be included in multiple content areas.

2. Add the faith formation programs that will continue to be offered for the target audience into the appropriate content areas of the network. Some programs may be listed more than once. (See the completed profile forms from Part 1.)

3. Add events, ministries, and programs from the intergenerational faith community into the appropriate content areas of the network. Some events/programs may be listed more than once. (See the completed profile form from Part 1.)

Use a large newsprint sheet to record information and to see the whole picture of network programming.

Target Audience:				
Network content areas	Important needs for research from this content area	Current programming in this content area	Intergenerational events/programs that connect to this content area	New program ideas for this area

It would also be easy to create an Excel spreadsheet with all of this information. Once you have generated program ideas for various content areas you can follow these steps.

Review the profile of programming. Begin by analyzing the current age-specific and intergenerational programming using the following questions:
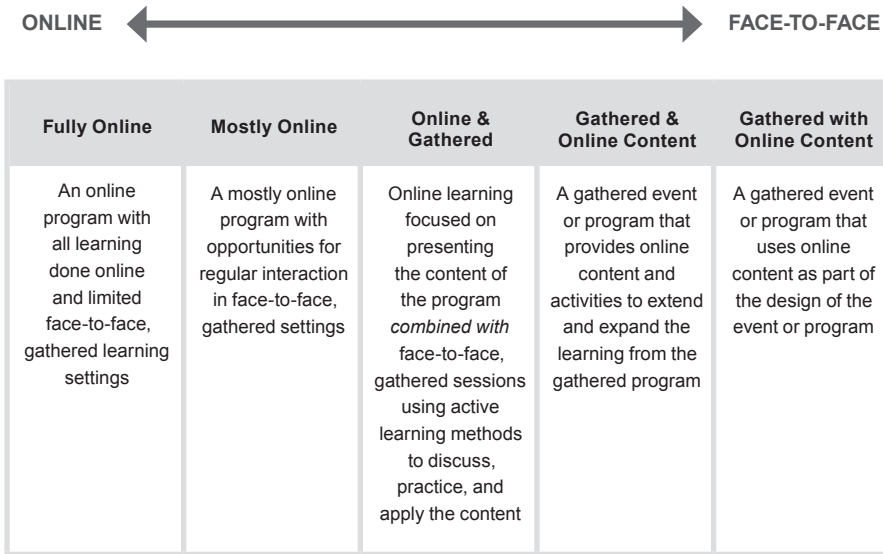
1. What needs are we *not* currently addressing in this target audience?

2. Who are we currently serving? Who are we *not* serving? Do we have out-reach and programming directed toward the "churchless"—the spiritual but not religious and the unaffiliated and uninterested?

3. Do we have strong intergenerational connections and programming for this target audience?

4. Are we utilizing online/digital programming and resources with this target audience?

5. Do we have a variety of learning environments for this target audience: self-directed, mentored, at home, in small groups, in large groups, church-wide, in the community, and in the world?

Identify opportunities for blended faith formation. Use the Blended Faith Formation Continuum that follows to review current programming and intergen-erational connections to discover ways to use the blended faith formation strategies in redesigning existing programming or develop new programming with online and digital strategies.

Digital media and the online environment provide the means to connect church life, age groups/generations, and daily/home life through continuous faith formation—connecting participation in church life and events with daily/home life by using online content and connections *or* reaching people at home and in daily life with online faith formation content and experiences that connect to church life and events.

Digital media and the online environment provide the means to redesign a gathered program by "flipping the program"—providing online content for indi-vidual or small group study and then gathering to discuss, apply, practice, and demonstrate learning.

Blended Faith Formation Continuum

ONLINE ←————————————————→ FACE-TO-FACE

Fully Online	Mostly Online	Online & Gathered	Gathered & Online Content	Gathered with Online Content
An online program with all learning done online and limited face-to-face, gathered learning settings	A mostly online program with opportunities for regular interaction in face-to-face, gathered settings	Online learning focused on presenting the content of the program *combined with* face-to-face, gathered sessions using active learning methods to discuss, practice, and apply the content	A gathered event or program that provides online content and activities to extend and expand the learning from the gathered program	A gathered event or program that uses online content as part of the design of the event or program

For more information on blended faith formation see the examples in Chapter 3 on page 72. For resources and ideas for blended faith formation go to www.21stCenturyFaithFormation.com.

Generate ideas. Generate ideas for new programming for each content area on the network. Remember that programs can be conducted in online spaces and physical places; in a variety of settings: on your own (self-directed), mentored, at home, in small groups, in large groups, church-wide, in the community, and in the world; and with a variety of programs, activities, and resources—print, audio, video, and digital/online.

New programming ideas can be intergenerational as well as age specific. First, determine if any current age-specific programs can be redesigned to become intergenerational experiences. Second, identify new programs that are built around intergenerational events and programs, such as learning programs that prepare people—with the appropriate knowledge and practices—for participating in the central events of church life and guide their participation and reflection upon those events.

Together as a team generate new ideas for programming across the content areas of the network. Begin by consulting the ideas for intergenerational, family, missional, digital/online programming at www.21stCenturyFaithFormation.com and www.IntergenerationalFaith.com.

Use the following questions to help you generate ideas. Record the ideas on newsprint for all to see.

1. What new programming do we need to offer to address the needs that surfaced in our research?

2. What would our target audience like to see the church offer them through faith formation?

3. How can we address the audience's needs through age-specific programming?

4. How can we address the audience's needs through intergenerational or family programming?

5. How can we develop missional outreach programming and strategies to reach the "churchless" in our target audience?

Here are two activities that provide a creative alternative to simple brainstorming.

"What If" You Used Your Imagination?

Use imagination to generate ideas. The easiest way to begin is by saying: "I need fresh and novel ideas to solve my challenge. I will suspend all judgment and see what free and easy ideas we can think up. It doesn't matter how weird or offbeat they are." Allow your team the freedom to conceptualize without judging ideas in terms of the real world. Ask team members to list as many "what if" statements as they can on Post-it® notes (for example, "What if we developed a community café to reach people who are spiritual, but not involved in the church community?"). Ask them to complete the "What if…" statement personally, writing one statement per Post-it. After several minutes, ask people to place their Post-it notes on a sheet of easel paper. Then cluster similar ideas together. When ideas are grouped based on common characteristics or themes, an organization and structure begins to arise from the information. More ideas are generated as people begin to see the structure and fill in the gaps. A sense of priority is often revealed as one or more of the clusters claim the energy and interest of the group.

"How Might We?"

Brainstorm responses to the question: "How Might We?" Distribute Post-it® notes and pens/markers to everyone on the team. Ask them to start their opportunity statements with "How Might We . . . " and abbreviate on post-its with "HMW." Go for quantity, not quality at this point. Post all of the ideas on sheets of easel paper. Cluster similar HMW statements.

Compile a complete report. Use the template that follows to compile a report of the results. This report presents all of the ideas from which seasonal plans can be designed: January–April, May–August, and September–December.

Target Audience:				
Network content areas	Important needs for research from this content area	Current programming in this content area	Intergenerational events/programs that connect to this content area	New program ideas for this area

Step 4. Design a Season of Faith Formation Programming

The most manageable way to program a faith formation network is to develop a three-season approach: January–April, May–August, and September–December. This means launching new programming three times a year and completely updating your website three times a year with the new programming as well as recurring programming. (For an example of a season of programming for adults see Chapter 3. For an illustration of an adult network and website go to: http://holytrinityadults. weebly.com; and for families with children network go to http://holytrinityfamilies. weebly.com.)

All of the network content areas do not need to be introduced in the first season of programming. Over the course of a year (three seasons) network content areas and programming can be added so that the complete plan is finally implemented in the fourth season. Some of the programming will be consistent in every season, while other programming will be specific to a season. Programming from a completed season is archived online (on the website) so that it can be reused in another season or reintroduced a year later.

Here is a guide to developing one season of programming. Develop a first draft of the season and then review all of the programming and make final choices about what to include in the season. Use the template that follows and record the information on newsprint sheets to get a overall view of the season.

Seasonal Plan

Network Content Area	Programming & Dates			
	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4

First, identify the season: January 1–May 1 or May 1–September 1 or September 1–January 1.

Second, add continuing age-group programs to the seasonal plan. Use the seasonal plan template to record the results: list the network content areas and then add the programs to the appropriate month.

Third, add intergenerational events and programs from the faith community to the seasonal plan. Explore the possibility of redesigning current age-specific programs to become intergenerational experiences. Explore the possibility of designing new programs that are built around intergenerational events and programs. (For more ideas go to www.IntergenerationalFaith.com.) Add redesigned or new programming to the seasonal plan.

Fourth, explore the possibility of redesigning existing programming by adding a digital blended strategy, such as adding digital content to extend a program, or "flipping" the program, or offering the program in multiple learning environments, such as video recording a presentation to offer it online as a self-study or small group study or offering the same program as in a large group format or small group format. (See the blended faith formation ideas in Chapter 3 on page 77.) Add redesigned or new programming to the Seasonal Plan.

Fifth, review all of the new age-specific programs and intergenerational events/programs generated in Design Step 3. Select new program ideas to introduce in this season. Use the seasonal plan template to record the results: list the content areas and then add the programs to the appropriate month.

Try to provide programs in *different learning environments* and/or one program in multiple learning environments: on your own (self-directed), with a mentor, at home, in small groups, in large groups, in the congregation, in the community, in the world.

Try to implement a program idea with a *blended (digital) faith formation* strategy: gathered program with online content, gathered program and online content, online and gathered in one program, mostly online, and fully online.

Sixth, develop the final version of the seasonal plan. Select the program ideas for each network content area. Some content areas may have too many programs to launch in one season. Select the ones that will be included in this season and save the other program ideas for another season.

Schedule programming in each network content area. Some of the programming flows through multiple months in a season, such as a weekly Bible study group or children's program. Some programs are monthly, such as a monthly webinar for parents. Other programs are seasonal—Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter—and therefore anchored in one or more months. Still other programming/resources are always available, such as an online course or a video program or Bible study resources.

One way to manage the variety of programming is to focus on one month of major programming in the network content areas. For example the "Learning the Tradition" content area might select one month to schedule its theology enrichment series with four presentations from guest experts and options for small group study and online study using the video recordings. The Bible area might focus its programming in a different month, perhaps around a church year season, such as Lent. This approach reduces the overlap among major programming and helps people participate in multiple experiences. See the example of adult and family learning pages in Step 5. (For an online example of this monthly approach view http://holytrinityadults.weebly.com, and http://holytrinityfamilies.weebly.com.)

Final Plan for the Season

Network Content Area	Programming & Dates			
	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4

Lastly, develop specific plans for each program. Include the following information:

- Date or month
- Learning environment(s)
- Digital strategy(s)
- Resources
- Leaders
- Cost

Step 5. Build the Digital Platform—
A Faith-Formation Website

Building a digital platform (website) is essential to the network approach to faith formation.

This digital platform provides the primary way to connect people to the network's offerings and to connect people with each other. A faith formation website provides the platform for publishing and delivering the experiences, content, programs, activities, and resources of the network. A website provides the platform for *seamless* learning across a variety of experiences, resources, locations, times, or settings. The website, together with social media, provides continuity between faith formation in the congregation, at home, in daily life, and online. And it is available to people anytime, anywhere, and any device (computer, tablet, smart phone).

It is important to build a website dedicated to faith formation. There can be a website for each target audience and their faith formation network, or a website that integrates several target audiences, such as a family, children, and teens website, or a website for all ages with specific sections for each age group. Most church websites are not equipped for this task. They lack the features, ease of use, capacity, or focus on faith formation to become the digital platform for a network. Today it is much easier to develop a new dedicated website for faith formation and then link it to the church website.

Building a website is made much easier today by the availability of online website builders that provide predesigned website templates, drag-and-drop features to create webpages, and hosting for the website. Three popular website builders to explore are: *Weebly* (www.weebly.com), *Wix* (www.wix.com), and *Squarespace* (www.squarespace.com). All three have easy to use features and very reasonable subscription fees. For advanced users *WordPress* (http://wordpress.org) provides thousands of predesigned templates, lots of customization features, and ready-to-use apps. *WordPress* does require an understanding of web design and some programming ability.

Weebly, *Wix*, and *Squarespace* have detailed tutorials for designing a website. Go to their websites to view the tutorials. There are also independent websites with tutorials and how-to instructions for designing a website, some specific to these three website builders. There are dozens of websites created by *WordPress* users that are dedicated to providing assistance to designers. And, or course, there are YouTube videos that teach the basics of web design and provide particular information for *Weebly*, *Wix*, *Squarespace*, and *WordPress*.

Here are several suggestions for web usability from Steve Krug's excellent and easy-to-use book *Don't Make Me Think: A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability*, Third Edition (Berkeley: New Riders, 2014).

1. Don't make the user think—make web pages self-explanatory so the user hardly has any perceived effort to understand them, for example, clear choice of labels, clearly "clickable" items, simple search.

2. People generally don't read web pages closely; they scan, so design for scanning rather than reading.

3. Create a clear visual hierarchy and menu system (main menu, submenus).

4. Make it very clear how to navigate the site, with clear "signposts" on all pages.

5. Omit needless words.

6. The home page needs the greatest design care to convey site identity and mission.

7. Promote user goodwill by making the typical tasks easy to do, make it easy to recover from errors, and avoid anything likely to irritate users.

While it is beyond the scope of this book to provide step-by-step instructions for designing a website, there are specific features that help customize a website design for the requirements of a network approach to faith formation and the seasonal plan that has been created in Design Step 4.

First, choose a domain name (URL) for the faith formation website. The congregation can either purchase a new domain name for the faith formation website from one of the companies that sell and register domain names or use a free domain name provided by the website builder, e.g., *Weebly* provides hosting and a free website URL with the weebly.com extension, such as http://holytrinityadults.weebly.com.

Second, select a website template that is mobile-responsive, which means that the website will automatically size itself correctly on a computer, laptop, tablet, or phone. The template should do this automatically.

Third, create the primary navigation (main menus) for the website directly from the network content areas. Be sure to select a website template that allows enough room for all of the menu items to be seen. Today's website design favors horizontal menus (running across the webpage), rather than vertical menus (running on the left side of the webpage). Select the template that provides enough room for the menus.

There may be a need to consolidate several content areas of the network to accommodate the website design template. This involves creating submenus (secondary navigation) under the main menu items. Following is an example using the Families with Children Network outlined previously on page 103??. The submenu items are listed under the main menu items. Each main menu title would need to adjusted to fit on the webpage.

1. Sunday Worship

2. Seasons of the Year

3. Family Life (Building Family Assets)

4. Family Faith Practices

    • Reading the Bible
    • Learning the Christian Tradition
    • Praying
    • Celebrating Rituals and Milestones
    • Serving, Working for Justice, Caring for Creation

5. Parent Faith Formation and Parenting Education ("Just for Parents")

6. Children's Programming
    (See the example at http://holytrinityfamilies.weebly.com)

Here is an example using the Adult Network outlined previously on page 102, using short titles that will fit across a webpage.

1. Worship

2. Seasons

3. Scripture

4. Spirituality

5. Study

6. Discovering Faith

7. Service

8. Life Issues

9. Grandparents
    (See the example at http://holytrinityadults.weebly.com)

A well-designed site with clear and easy to understand navigation will increase engagement and the time people spend on the website.

Fourth, build each webpage to incorporate all of the programs, activities, and resources for a particular network content area for the seasonal plan. A well-designed site with quality content will increase engagement and create a positive experience for the user—all of which encourage continuous learning.

Each webpage includes content that is uploaded to the website for people to use—audio podcasts, videos, articles, blog posts, interactive features—as well as descriptions and links to programs, activities, and resources that reside on other

websites, such as online courses. Webpages can include stable content that is going to be available in every season and seasonal or calendar-specific content.

Each webpage is a "learning page" where people can learn online, download resources, and connect to activities and resources across the web. Here are two examples of webpage design—one for adults and one for parents. For more examples online go to http://holytrinityadults.weebly.com and http://holytrinity families.weebly.com.

Adult Learning Page: November Scripture Enrichment

Focus: Gospel of the New Lectionary Cycle beginning in Advent
Programming:

1. Three-session speaker series on major themes in the gospel: Thursday from 7:30–9:00 pm at the church center.

2. Video presentations of the three sessions online for self study.

3. Video presentations of the three sessions online for small group study with accompanying study guide.

4. Scripture study groups using a four-session introduction to the major themes of the gospel conducted at church, in homes, and in the community.

5. Gospel self-study using links to Scripture websites such as www.enterthe-bible.org from Luther Seminary.

6. Online course on the gospel with one or more links to existing online courses at a seminary or university or on iTunes U in the Apple iTunes Store.

Family Learning Page: For Parents Only

Focus: Parenting Education
Programming:

1. "First Wednesdays" parent webinar series: 9:00–10:00 pm online with guest presenter. Each month presents a topic of interest for parents, such as positive parenting, communicating well, raising responsible children and teens, celebrating rituals and milestones, and more.

2. "Learn More About. . . ." resources on parenting topics with links to expert websites and videos, such as www.ParentFurther.com from The Search Institute.

3. "Secrets of Happy Families" five-session book group using Bruce Feiler's book of the same name with study groups organized at church, in homes, in a Google+ Hangout, and by parents in self-organized groups. Study group and supportive resources available on the For Parents Only page.

4. Parent videos on a variety of topics available for viewing on the For Parents Only page or with descriptions and links to YouTube or other websites.

5. List of valuable websites and online resources for parents such as the Boys Town Parenting Center with a national hotline just for parents available 24 hours a day (www.boystown.org/parenting).

Fifth, design the website specifically for your target audiences and write the content for them in their language with titles and examples that connect to their lives; select images (photo or short video) that reflect their life situations. Engage the target audience and tell them what they need to know and do.

Be sure to pay careful attention to the titles and descriptions so that they capture people's interests. Develop descriptions that are positive in tone, indicate clearly the content or focus of an activity. Describe how your offerings respond to something within the lives of people. Highlight the relationship between the content and the particular spiritual or religious needs, interests, passions, concerns, or life issues of people. Describe the two to three benefits of engaging in faith formation.

For examples of congregational faith formation websites go to the twenty-first Century Faith Formation website (www.21stCenturyFaithFormation.com) and select the Case Studies section to read articles describing how churches are creating faith formation websites. There are links to dozens of faith formation websites in churches across the United States.

Step 6. Design a Process for Assessing and Personalizing Learning

An important component of a network approach to learning is giving people an active role in shaping their own learning and moving along their own personal trajectories of faith growth. A faith formation network, rich in a diversity of content and a variety of ways to learn, can guide people in creating their own personal learning pathways. Churches can develop processes for helping individuals and families (online and in-person) to:

1. discern learning and faith growth needs

2. work with a mentor or guide to create a plan for faith growth and learning and find resources on the network

3. engage in faith formation experiences

4. reflect on their learning with a mentor/guide or small group

5. identify new needs for growth and learning

A *faith growth learning plan* helps people identify where they are on their spiritual journey, what they need for continuing their growth, who else might share that need, and the resources that could help them meet that need. For example a family faith growth plan could include participating in Sunday worship, developing faith practices at home (daily devotion, Bible reading), celebrating a church year season at home, doing a service project with other families, and more. Congregations provide mentors or guides to assist people in developing their growth plan, accessing the programs and resources that fit their plan, and evaluating their learning.

First, identify people who can serve as mentors or guides to help people discern their learning needs; find the right programs, activities, and resources to match with their learning needs; and assist with the implementation of the faith growth plan.

Second, design a discernment tool, specific to the target audience, to guide people in assessing their learning and faith growth needs. The discernment tool can be used in a group setting with a facilitator, in a one on one setting with a mentor or guide, or in an online setting with instructions for its use and how to find programs, activities, and resources to match with learning needs.

Third, design a faith growth learning plan. Give people a sense of the flow from discerning needs to finding resources on the network to implementing their plan. (For examples of assessment tools and faith growth plans go to www.21stCenturyFaithFormation.com.)

Step 7. Test the Seasonal Plan and Web Design

It's wise to conduct one or two focus group meetings of the target audience to get feedback on the seasonal plan and the usability of the web design. Testing is an opportunity to learn more about the user through observation and engagement. (For insights on testing the web design see Chapter 9, "Usability Testing on 10 Cents a Day," in *Don't Make Me Think: A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability* [Third Edition] by Steve Krug).

Begin by identifying people within the target audience to test the website and give feedback on the seasonal programming. Invite them to a focus group meeting. Use a deliberate procedure when you test. Create a "testing process" so that you can gain important feedback. Here are four suggestions:

1. Let your user experience the network online. Show; don't tell. Let them review the website and the programming. Provide just the minimum context so they understand what to do. (Have computers or tablets available for people to use or ask them to bring a device to the focus group.)

2. Have them talk through their experience. For example, when appropriate, ask "Tell me what you are thinking as you are doing this."

3. Actively observe. Watch how they use (and misuse!) the website. Don't immediately "correct" what your user is doing.

4. Follow up with questions, such as: "Show me why this would (or would not) work for you." "Can you tell me more about how this made you feel?" "Why?" "Do you find things that interest you and connect with your life?" "Are there things you would have liked to see?"

Based on the feedback from the focus group(s), determine what revisions to make in programming and website design. Consider inviting members of the focus group(s) to become reviewers throughout the season of programming. Stay in regular communication with them, asking for feedback on their experience of the website and the programming.

Step 8. Launch the Faith Formation Network

Generate ideas for promoting and introducing the faith formation network and website to members of the target audience—those active in the congregation church and those not participating in the congregation. Develop church-wide and targeted strategies for promotion.

In your promotional efforts be sure to describe how your offerings respond to something within the lives of people. Highlight the relationship between the season of programming and the particular spiritual or religious needs, interests, passions, concerns, or life issues of people. Describe the two to three benefits of participating or engaging in faith formation. Explain to people how to use the network and how to access the activities and resources.

Use as many promotional methods as you can. Consider the following ideas:

1. Ask those who are participating in church life and faith formation to invite their friends and colleagues. Ask people to use their social networks to promote the faith formation offerings.

2. Promote engagement online by connecting to (or extending from) a gathered event, program, or ministry.

3. Send email or regular e-newsletters to targeted groups (use a service like Constant Contact or Mail Chimp or Flock Note).

4. Establish a Facebook page for faith formation for network announcements, updates, stories, and photos from people engaged in faith formation.

5. Use Twitter to announce updates, events, and invite reflections from people on their experiences in the network.

6. Purchase targeted adds on Facebook and Twitter.

7. Provide ways to share experiences using blogs, Twitter, Facebook: videos, reports, photos, and so forth. Have a contest to encourage submissions and give a prize to the best photo, video, or report.

8. Have the pastor share the benefits and information about the network at Sunday worship.

9. Host information sessions after Sunday worship and other gathered programs to describe the network and how to use it.

10. Include information about the network in new member packets. Send a personalized invitation to new members.

11. Promote the network at all gathered programs and events in the church.

Be sure to find ways to communicate the stories and examples of the benefits and blessings that are coming to individuals, groups, families, and to your whole church community. Consider short videos or audio interviews of people who are engaged and then upload them to the church website and the faith formation website, as well as Facebook.

Step 9. Evaluate Programming

There are two essential times to evaluate programming: at the completion of a program or activity and at the end of a season of programming.

A *program evaluation* can be as simple as embedding an evaluation onto the website with individual programs and activities so that people can complete an evaluation as soon as the program or activity concludes. It is also easy to develop an evaluation form on SurveyMonkey (www.surveymonkey.com) and provide a link on the website to the online evaluation. SurveyMonkey compiles the results of the evaluation and produces a report of the results that can then be printed. (There are sample educational evaluation tools on SurveyMonkey that can be adapted.)

A *seasonal evaluation* reviews both programming and the website design and usability. The seasonal evaluation combines face-to-face evaluation meetings with online evaluation tools such as SurveyMonkey (www.surveymonkey.com).

For the *face-to-face seasonal evaluation*: gather small groups of people (twelve to twenty) who participated in programming and utilized the website. Conduct this activity *twice*: once to get feedback on the content of the network—what people participated in, and second for the design and usability of the faith formation network. Make a copy of the four-quadrant grid (on the next page) on newsprint or a whiteboard to capture people's feedback in four different areas. Draw a plus in the upper left quadrant, a triangle in the upper right quadrant, a question mark in the lower left quadrant, and a light bulb in the lower right quadrant.

- The upper left quadrant is for things people liked or found notable (in the programming and website).
- The upper right quadrant is for constructive criticism.
- The lower left quadrant is for questions that the experience raised in the lives of the people.
- The lower right quadrant is for ideas that the experiences spurred.
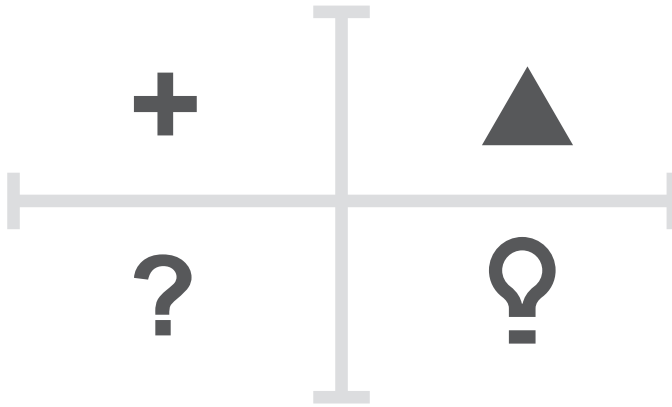
For *online seasonal evaluation*: Develop an evaluation form on SurveyMonkey (www.surveymonkey.com) and provide a link on the faith formation website and church website to the online evaluation. Design the online evaluation in two sections: an evaluation of seasonal programming and an evaluation of the website design and usability. Be sure to have people indicate if they did not participate in a program by adding a response to each question such as "did not participate." Send an email to all those who participated in one or more programs and activities in the season and ask them to go online to compete the evaluation.

Here is a variety of evaluation questions that can be used to construct an evaluation form or a survey instrument. For a survey, try to limit the number of essay questions. People prefer the multiple choice/rating scales. Compile the results and develop a list of areas for improvement as you plan upcoming seasons of programming.

Sample Reaction Questions

How do participants react to the program, or better, what is the measure of their satisfaction?

1. What is your overall feeling after participating in this program/activity? *(Circle all that apply.)* Enthused, Astounded, Satisfied, Indifferent, Ambivalent, Encouraged, Uneasy, Threatened, Discouraged, Affirmed, Challenged, Enriched.

2. I was pleased by/with . . .

3. I was disappointed by/with . . .

4. One thing I found most helpful in this program/activity . . .

5. One of the biggest benefits from participating in this program/activity was . . .

6. This program/activity was . . . very helpful, somewhat helpful, not very helpful, not at all helpful.

7. What recommendations would you make for improving the program?

8. Circle the number that best represents your evaluation of the program/activity. Use a rating scale of 1—strongly disagree, 2—disagree, 3—agree, and 4—strongly agree *or* a rating scale of: 1—not satisfied, 2—somewhat satisfied, 3—satisfied, 4—very satisfied, and 5—extremely satisfied.

    •   I feel that I will be able to use what I learned.
    •   The program/activity was interesting and engaging.
    •   The program/activity encouraged participation, questions, and practical application.
    •   The schedule and length of the program was appropriate.
    •   The program/activity respected my learning style.
    •   The program/activity offered a variety of learning activities and a variety of ways to learn.
    •   The program/activity helped me apply my learning to daily life.
    •   (Add specific features and content of the program/activity for people to evaluate.)

Sample Application Questions

To what extent has learning occurred? This includes understanding the content presented, changing attitudes, developing behaviors, and so forth.

1. One way I can personally use what I learned from my participation in this program/activity is . . .

2. One way this program/activity had an impact on my life . . .

3. What understandings, skills, tools, or ideas do you have now that you did not have at the beginning of the program/activity?

4. List three actions you would like to undertake as a result of your participation in the program/activity.

5. As a result of your participation in this program/activity, what do you want to learn or do next?

Step 10. Design the New Season of Programming

Using the ideas you have already generated the first time through the design process, the results from the evaluation, and the recommendations for improvement, design the new season of programming beginning at Step 4: Design a Season of Faith Formation Programming.

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Works Cited

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Worksheets

All of the worksheets in this chapter can be found online in MS Word files for easy use: www.21stCenturyFaithFormation.com.