



FAMILIES AT THE CENTER OF FAITH FORMATION

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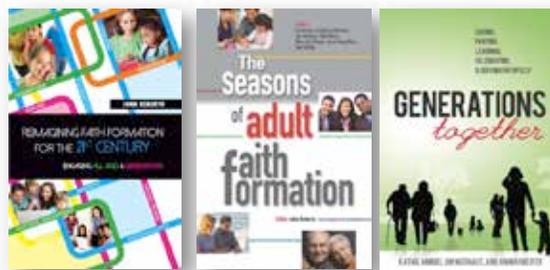
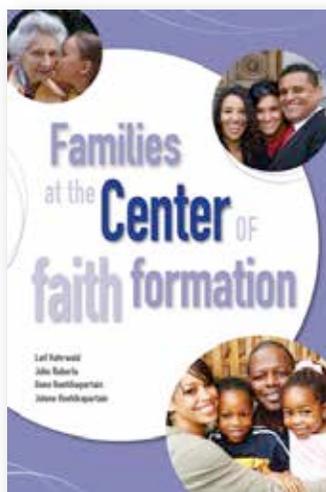
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Wondering. . . .

- *What does a vibrant and vital family faith look like in a 21st century world?*
- *How do we meaningfully engage/connect with today's families?*
- *How do we empower/equip/resource families to transmit faith at home - to practice a vital and vibrant faith?*
- *How do we reach families who are not involved in a faith community or feel religion is not important?*

What's Changing?

- 1. Diversity of Family Forms:** No single family arrangement encompasses the majority of children today.
 - ✓ Two-parent, married couple households are on the decline.
 - ✓ Children and adolescents live in a variety of family arrangements that change and evolve over the course of a child's life.

What's Changing?

2. **Generational Diversity:** Gen X Parents (mid 30s-mid 50s) and Millennial Parents (20s-mid 30s)

- Generational approaches to parenting and family life
- Gen X parents approach child-rearing as a set of tangible practices that will keep their children safe, reasonably happy, well-behaved, and ready to take on life's challenges. They practice *protective parenting*.
- Millennial parents, reflecting their values of individuality and self-expression, focus more on a democratic approach to family management, encouraging their children to be open-minded, empathetic, and questioning—and teaching them to be themselves and try new things. They are moving away from the overscheduled days of their youth, preferring a more responsive, less directorial approach to activities. (*Responsive Parenting*)

What's Changing?

3. **Ethnic Diversity:** A growing diversity of ethnicities and nationalities in society and churches

- Millennial generation is America's most ethnically diverse
- Distinct ethnic identities, histories, religious traditions, and practices
- Distinct needs as a family

What's Changing?

- 4. Spiritual-Religious Diversity:** Parents and families reflect an increasing diversity in religious beliefs, practices, and affiliation.
- 23% of Generation Xers and over 34% of Millennials are not religiously affiliated and the number of unaffiliated Millennials is growing.
 - Families of Generation X and Millennial parents are participating less in church life and Sunday worship. Religion and spirituality may be important to families today, but for many it is not usually expressed by participation in churches

What's Changing



What's Changing?



What's Changing?

- Significant indicators, such as religious identification as a Christian, worship attendance, marriages and baptisms in the church, and changing generational patterns, point to a decline in family religious socialization across all denominations.
- There is also a decline in religious traditions and practices at home. Gen X and Millennial parents often lack the religious literacy and religious experiences necessary for faith transmission.

FAMILIES AT THE CENTER APPROACH

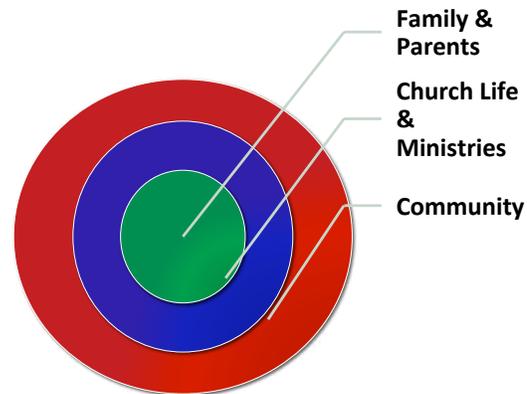


What Makes a Difference in Faith Growth?

1. Parents' personal faith and practice
2. Parent-child relationship: close, warm
3. Parents' modeling and teaching a religious faith
4. Parents' involvement in church life and Sunday worship
5. Grandparents' religious influence & relationship
6. Religious tradition a child is born into
7. Parents of the same faith
8. Family conversations about faith
9. Family religious practices: prayer, reading the Bible, service to others, celebrating holidays/rituals

Transforming Our Narrative: Families at the Center

1. See the home as the essential & foundational environment for faith nurture, faith practice, and the healthy development of young people.



Transforming Our Narrative Families at the Center

2. Reinforce the family's central role in promoting healthy develop and faith growth; enhancing the faith-forming capacity of parents and grandparents.
3. Express care with the families in our congregations and communities, including listening to them, showing interest in their lives, and investing in them.
4. Provide support and advocacy when families really need it.
5. Share power with families, treating them as true partners by giving them voice in things that matter to them and collaborating with them to solve problems and reach goals.

Transforming Our Narrative Families at the Center

6. Build faith formation around the lives of the today's families and parents, rather than having the parish prescribe the programs and activities that families will participate in.
7. Address the diversity of families by moving away from "one size fits all" programs and strategies toward a variety of programs and activities tailored to the unique life tasks and situations, concerns and interests, and religious-spiritual journeys of parents and families.
8. Offer regular gatherings of all our families for learning, worship, service, relationship-building, and more throughout the year.

Transforming Our Narrative Families at the Center

9. Engage families together with the whole community for learning, worship, service, relationship-building, and more throughout the year.
10. Find ways to reach families at home with support, resources, and activities to develop family life and grow in faith.
11. Strengthen families by helping them develop the practices and skills for healthy family life.
12. Equip parents with the knowledge and skills for effective parenting and forming faith in young people.

Transforming Our Narrative: The Family as School of Discipleship

It is in the domestic household that we eat, sleep, bathe, get dressed, relax and converse with others. In the context of the household we learn basic social conventions, from table manners to the demands of hospitality toward guests. In the household we learn how to be accountable for our lives; we learn when we are expected for dinner (or to prepare dinner); we learn what chores and other miscellaneous responsibilities are assigned to us and how the smooth functioning of the household depends on the fulfillment of those chores and responsibilities. More importantly, in many households we learn about the possibilities for committed, appropriately vulnerable relationship with others and the privileges and responsibilities that those relationships bring. It is in this nexus of patterned relationships which constitutes the household that we can better understand the image of the Christian household as a “school of discipleship.”
(Richard Gaillardetz)

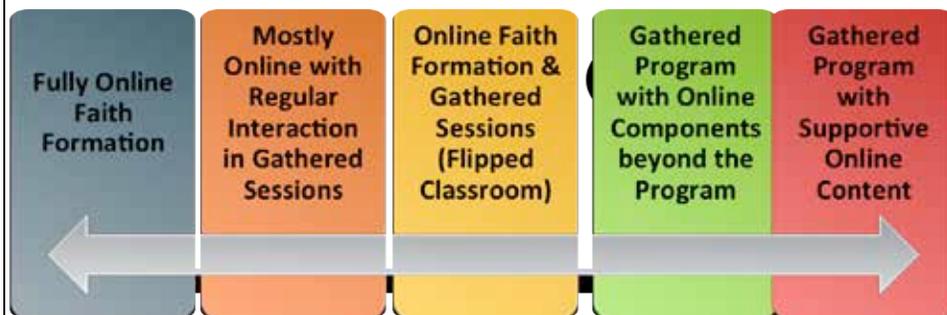
Transforming Our Practice

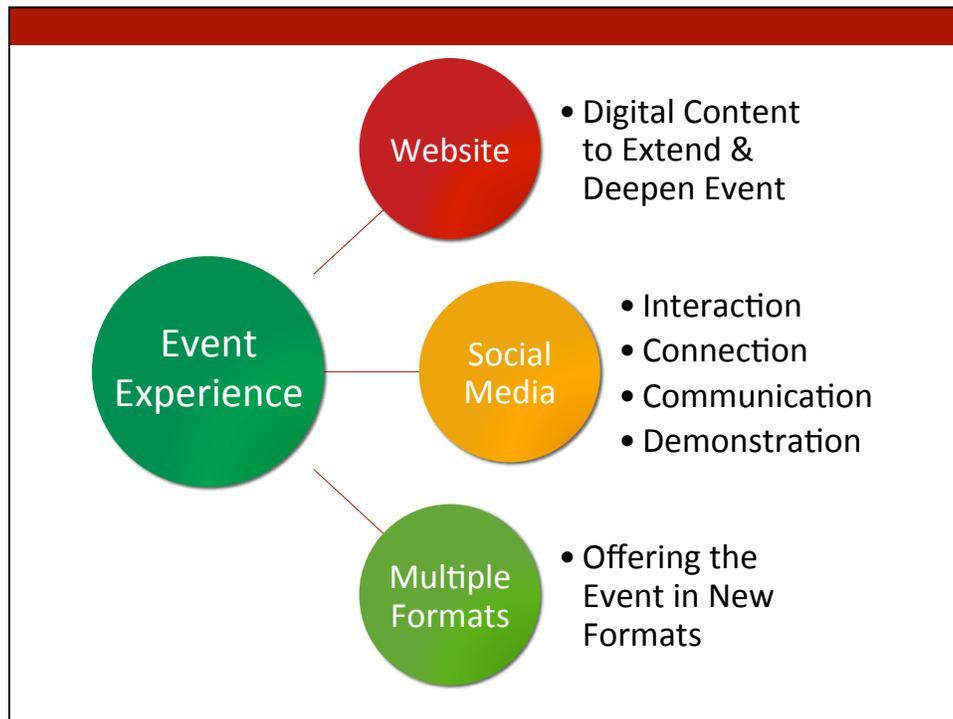
1. A **variety** of relationships, content, experiences, and resources
2. New **methods**: immersive, multimedia, multi-sensory, highly visual, participatory, experiential
3. New **formats**: episodic, micro-learning, on demand, mobile, 24x7,
4. New **digital** media and digital platforms
5. Multiple **environments**: self-directed, mentored, at home, in small groups, in large groups, church-wide, in the community, and in the world.

Transforming Our Practice

1. Diversity of Family Forms
2. Variety of Spiritual-Religious Identities
Engaged----Occasionals----Spirituals----Unaffiliated
3. Generational Parenting Approaches
 - Gen X parents—*Protective Parenting*
 - Millennial parents—*Responsive Parenting*
4. Diversity of Ethnicities

Transforming Our Practice Digitally Enable & Connected





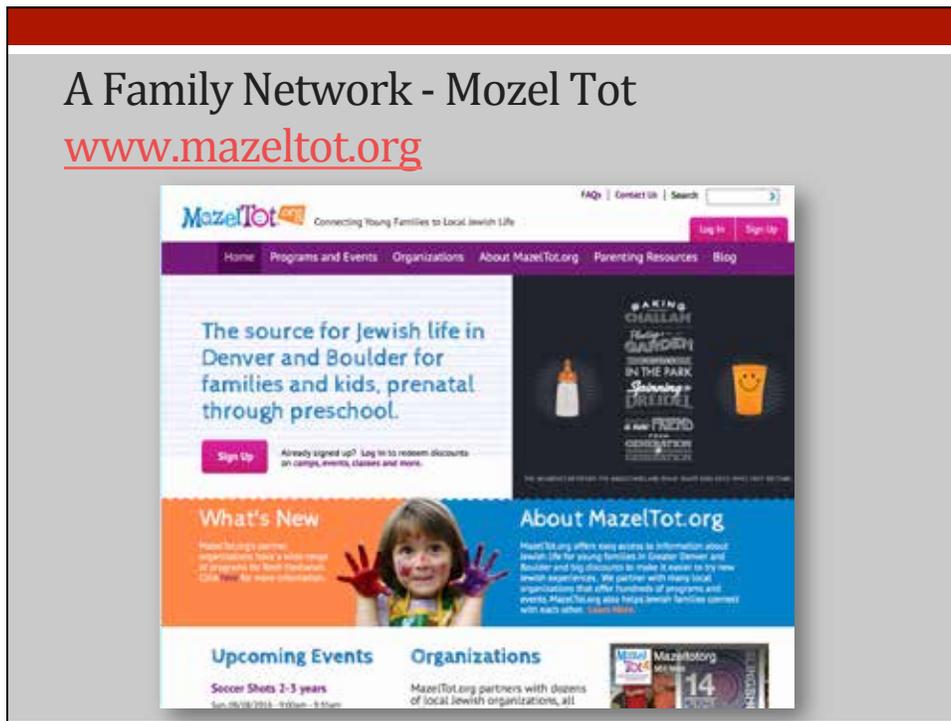
Families at the Center Strategies



1. God in Everyday Life
2. Faith Practices @Home
3. Milestones
4. Seasonal Events
5. Intergenerational Connection
6. Strong Family Life
7. Parents & Grandparents as Faith Formers

A Family Network - Moxel Tot

www.mazeltot.org



Family Faith Formation Network



Families at the Center of Faith Formation

A Network of Experiences, Activities & Resources for Families with Children



Family Life

Each month we will explore, experience, and practice an important family ritual that can enrich your family relationships and build a stronger family.

1. January: The Family Meal
2. February: Progression
3. March: Blessing (Emotional Life)
4. April: Celebrating Trials and Milestones

Join us for our MONTHLY FAMILY GATHERINGS on the first Sunday of each month after Sunday worship. This will be a time to explore and experience the monthly theme and learn how to practice it at home.

Use the resources that accompany each month's theme for PRACTICE at HOME. Each resource includes stories, biblical reflections, and family activities.

[FAMILY LIFE](#)



Parents

"Just for Parents" offers a variety of ways for you to enhance and enrich your knowledge and skills for parenting children and teens. All of these programs, activities, and resources are designed around research-based ways to help your children and teens grow in healthy and positive ways. Try to experiment with: 1) Challenging them to grow up, 2) providing them with support, 4) involving them in decision-making, and 3) expanding their possibilities for the future.

1. Participate in the "First Wednesday" Webinar Series - without leaving your home!
2. Use a variety of articles to build positive relationships at home.
3. Learn more about your children and teenager.
4. Participate in a Small Group Study with the best selling book "The Secret of Happy Families" by Bruce Feiler
5. Watch the video "Parenting for the Long Haul" and download the "9 Promising Strategies" guide.
6. Strengthen family relationships with teens.
7. Discover parenting resources.

[PARENTS](#)



God in Daily Life

How can we discover God and the sacred in the rhythms and practices of everyday life? God is truly present to us each day, and His presence is discovered in the fabric of our lives - our experiences, our relationships, and more. We are all spiritual beings. We can discover the spiritual in our everyday lives, and recognize, understand, and respond to God's presence in each day. Here are four daily practices to help you discover God.

1. Finding God in your day through the daily Examen.
2. Helping children feel God through bedtime reflection.
3. Encouraging the sacred each day through the FAITHO.
4. Finding God through photos.

[GOD IN DAILY LIFE](#)



Faith @ Home

Faith @ Home provides a variety of activities to help your family grow in faith at home - all of which can be easily integrated into family life. You pick the time.

Reading the Bible

- A 12-week Summer Bible Reading Plan for Children
- An Old Testament Bible Review 5-minute devotional
- Learning the Devotion Tradition
- Ten Commitments to Read
- Church Swaggen Hunt
- I LOVE G-O-D
- Thank You for Others

Praying

- Short Prayers for 30 Occasions

Serving Others

- Assembly Promise like for Neighbors
- Participate in a "Serve the Community" Day
- Collect food for the Hungry

[FAITH @ HOME](#)



Milestones

Celebrate meaningful, memorial moments in your family's life with these ritual celebrations of milestones.

1. Baptism Anniversary
2. Starting School
3. Getting Ready to Worship
4. Birthday Celebrations

[RITUALS & MILESTONES](#)



Seasons

The seasons of the year offers a variety of opportunities for families to celebrate, learn, and have fun together. We have selected one family activity for each month of the year, reflecting the calendar seasons and the church year seasons.

1. January: Martin Luther King Jr.
2. February: Ash Wednesday
3. March: The Road to Paris
4. April: Easter and New Life
5. May: Mother's Day
6. June: Vacation Travel
7. July: Independence Day
8. August: Back to School
9. September: Fall Harvest
10. October: Helping Halloween
11. November: Thanksgiving
12. December: Christmas is Coming!

[SEASONS](#)



Bible & Worship

Bring the message and experience of Sunday worship into your home. Try one or more of the following activities to learn more about the Sunday Scripture readings and to find ways to apply God's message to your lives.

1. Review this Sunday's worship service.
2. Watch a video reflection on the Sunday reading in story and music.
3. Use "Taking Faith Home" for your daily devotion, Bible reading, and family conversation.
4. Use "Sunday Connection" to connect Sunday worship with daily life and engage children in creative activities.
5. Read the daily Scripture readings & watch a video reflection.

[BIBLE & WORSHIP](#)



Faith @ Church

Participate with all generations in the events and experiences of the faith community and connect your experiences at church with your faith at home.

1. Worshiping Together on Sunday
2. Celebrating the Church Year Feasts & Seasons
3. Engaging in Service to the Community & World
4. Gathering for Social Events
5. Celebrating Births & Sacraments
6. Gathering with All Ages for Learning

[FAITH @ CHURCH](#)

Curating & Creating Family Resources

Current Roles

- **Developing** religious content
- **Designing** programming
- **Managing** programming
- **Teaching/Facilitating** programming

Emerging Roles

- **Designing** faith forming environments —*architecture*
- **Designing Digital Platforms** for faith forming content
- **Curating** faith forming content & experiences

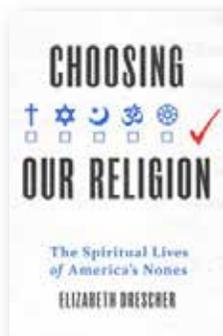
STARTING POINTS

EIGHT STRATEGIES FOR FAMILIES AT THE CENTER FAITH FORMATION

Eight Strategies

1. Discovering God in Everyday Life
2. Forming Faith at Home through the Life Cycle
3. Forming Faith through Milestones
4. Celebrating Seasonal Events through the Year
5. Encountering God in the Bible through the Year
6. Connecting Families Intergenerationally
7. Developing a Strong Family Life
8. Empowering Parents and Grandparents

#1. Discovering God in Everyday Life



- Everyday experiences are the core resources of spiritual narratives, even for those affiliated with traditional religious institutions
- “The 4Fs” of contemporary spirituality: Family, Friends, Food, and Fido.
- “People feel most connected to whatever they understand as God, the divine, a Higher Power when they’re deeply engaged in the fabric of everyday life, spending time with family, with friends, preparing and sharing food, enjoying their pets.”

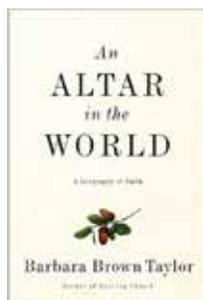
#1. Discovering God in Everyday Life

Spiritually meaningful practices:

1. enjoying time with family
2. enjoying time with friends
3. enjoying time with pets or other animals
4. preparing and/or sharing food/meals
5. praying
6. enjoying nature
7. listening to/playing music
8. enjoying/creating art
9. physical activity/sports
10. yoga and meditation

On the list of 25 items, the last three items were reading/studying scripture, attending worship, and attending a non-worship activity, event or meeting at church.

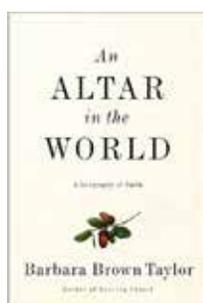
1. Discovering God in Everyday Life



Spirituality “may be the name for a longing for more meaning, more feeling, more connection, more life. When I hear people talk about spirituality, that seems to be what they are describing. They know there is more to life than what meets the eye. They have drawn close to this ‘More’ in nature, in love, in art, in grief. They would be happy for someone to teach them how to spend more time in the presence of this deeper reality. . . .”

“ . . . the last place most people look is right under their feet, in the everyday activities accidents, and encounters in their lives. . . .the reason so many of us cannot see the red X that marks the spot is because we are standing on it”.

1. Discovering God in Everyday Life



. . . . To make bread or love, to dig in the earth, to feed an animal or cook for a stranger—these activities require no extensive commentary, no lucid theology. All they require is someone willing to bend, reach, chop, stir. Most of these tasks are so full of pleasure that there is no need to complicate things by calling them holy. And yet these are the same activities that change lives, sometimes all at once and sometimes more slowly, the way dripping water changes stone. In a world where faith is often construed as a way of thinking, bodily practices remind the willing that faith is a way of life.”

Discovering God in Everyday Life

- 1. Embed and Equip**
Worship, learning, sacraments, retreats, and more
- 2. Create and Sponsor**
Family/intergenerational programs
Small group experiences
- 3. Equip and Resource**
Print, audio, and video resources for discovering God and for living practices in everyday life
- 4. Connect and Engage**
New settings for spiritual conversations

#2. Forming Faith at Home

A Household Curriculum

Content: Eight Faith Forming Processes

Settings: Home, Intergenerational, Church Life, Parents

1. Home: What are families doing to grow in faith and discipleship in each of the eight faith forming processes?
2. Intergenerational: How are families connected to the other generations at church?
3. Church: How are congregations empowering, resourcing, and supporting families to grow as disciples & practice their faith?
4. Parents: How are congregations empowering, resourcing, and supporting parents as faith formers?

2. Faith Forming at Home

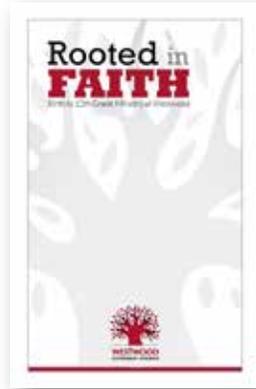
Developmentally-Appropriate: Content accommodated to the needs and interests of each stage *and* to the way young people think and assimilate information and values at each life stage.

1. young children (0-5)
2. older children (6-10)
3. young adults (11-14)
4. older adolescents (15-18)
5. emerging adults (19-29)

2. Faith Forming at Home

Stage:	Home	Intergenerational	Church	Parents
Caring Relationships				
Celebrating Seasons				
Celebrating Rituals & Milestones				
Learning the Christian Tradition				
Praying & Spiritual Formation				
Reading the Bible				
Serving/Working for Justice				
Worshipping God Together				

#3. Forming Faith through Milestones



First Year – Baptismal Remembrance (A Gathering for newly baptized)
 Toddlers – Creation (Care for the World God made)
 Pre-School One – Bible (Receive a Story Bible)
 Pre-School Two – Worship (Proclaim Christ and help in worship)
 Pre/K/K – Service (Serve your neighbor as Jesus commanded)
 1st Grade – Lord's Prayer (Learn about prayer)
 2nd Grade – First Communion (Share in the Lord's Supper)
 3rd Grade – Bible (Receive a more age-appropriate Bible)
 4th Grade – Baptism (Learn about Lutheran Baptism)
 5th Grade – Ten Commandments (What do they really mean?)
 6th Grade – Apostle's Creed (What do Lutherans believe?)
 7th Grade – Bible (Receive a Bible with commentary & questions)
 8th Grade – Elder Wisdom (Faith through the generations)
 9th Grade – Sexuality (Loving and serving our neighbor)
 10th Grade – Affirmation of Baptism (Public affirmation of promises)
 11th Grade – Vocation (Live among God's people with care)
 12th Grade – Real World (Tools for living on our own, importance of faith)

#3. Celebrating Milestones

- Birth / Baptism
- Starting School Year
- First Communion
- Receiving a first Bible
- Confirmation
- Graduation (HS, College)
- Engagement
- Wedding
- Retirement
- Death / Funeral

#3. Celebrating Milestones

1. a ritual celebration or a blessing marking the milestone with the whole church community
2. a home ritual celebration or blessing marking the milestone
3. a learning program, often for the whole family or intergenerational, that prepares the individual and the whole family for the milestone and for faith practice at home
4. a tangible, visible reminder or symbol of the occasion being marked
5. resources to support continuing faith growth and practice after the milestone

#3. Celebrating Milestones: Baptism

Church

- Mentors/Coaches
- Parent preparation
- Family gathering
- Ritual
- Intergenerational connection
- Celebration of Baptism
- Reunion
- Baptismal anniversaries

Home

- Caring conversations and storytelling
- Celebrating rituals
- Learning
- Praying
- Reading the Bible
- Serving
- Worshipping together

#4. Celebrating Seasons

Calendar Year

- New Year’s Eve and Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Valentine’s Day
- St. Patrick’s Day
- Earth Day
- Mother’s Day
- Memorial Day
- Father’s Day
- July 4 – Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Start of School
- Halloween
- Thanksgiving

Church Year

- Advent
- Christmas
- Epiphany
- Ash Wednesday
- Lent
- Holy Week
- Easter
- Pentecost
- St. Francis Day–Blessing the Animals (October 4)
- All Saints and Souls (Nov 1-2)

Example: 40-Day Lent Curriculum

Church Life →	Daily & Home Life	← Online Life
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ash Wednesday • Lenten Sunday liturgies • Stations of the Cross • Lenten prayer • Lenten retreat • Lenten service • Lenten soup suppers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fasting • Praying • Service/ Almsgiving • Lectionary reflection • Family activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lenten learning resources • Lenten calendar • Daily Lenten prayer • Weekly table prayer • Video resources • Online retreat experience

Example: Earth Day

Community	Church	Home
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community cleanup • Planting a community garden • All ages workshop on caring for creation • Story time at the library on environmental awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecumenical prayer service • Intergenerational program on theology of caring for creation • Church audit • Global project for whole community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycling activities • Planting a family garden • Meal time creation prayer • Daily Bible verses for April • Children's activities • Storybooks and videos • Home audit

#5. Encountering God in the Bible

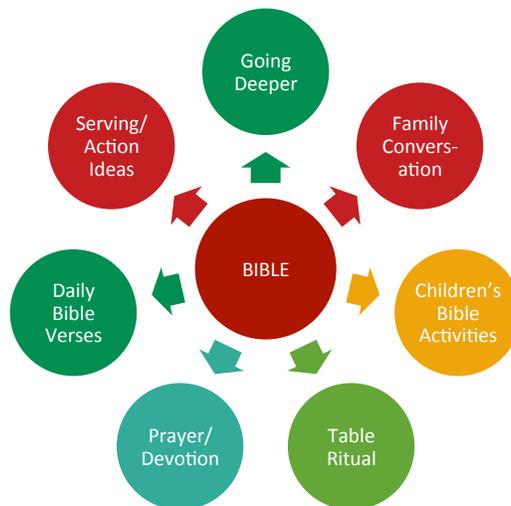
1. Scripture in Sunday Worship
 - Lectionary
 - Sermon Series
2. Exploring the Bible—Family or Intergenerational Programs
 - A Tour of the Old Testament
 - A Tour of the Gospels
 - Walking with Jesus
 - Journeys of Paul

#5. Encountering God in the Bible

Scripture in Sunday Worship Intergenerational & Home Faith Formation

September: 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time
 October: 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time
 November: 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
 December: 2nd Sunday of Advent
 January: Baptism of the Lord Sunday
 February: 1st Sunday of Lent
 March: Palm Sunday
 April: 4th Sunday of Easter
 May: Holy Trinity Sunday

#5. Encountering God in the Bible



#6. Connecting Families Intergenerationally

1. **Becoming Intentionally Intergenerational**
 - Identify ways families are current connected and engaged intergenerationally in the faith community
 - Develop ways to strengthen IG connection and engagement
 - Create new ways to connect and engage families
2. **Intergenerational and Family Learning**
3. **Intergenerational Family Service**

#6. Connecting Families Intergenerationally: Learning

HI-life Gatherings...

Sharing a Single Meal Together
 A typical gathering may be welcomed by guests in the Hospitality House and escorted to a table in the Fellowship Hall to enjoy a meal with fellow parishioners of all ages. At your table, there might be a single adult, a family of four, a mixed group, or a group of friends or family. There will be a couple of questions on the table to focus our table talk.

Whole Group Sharing Experiences
 Closing of the Gathering for all ages
 To conclude our evening, everyone remains in the Fellowship Hall to share what has been learned, to pray together, and to be sent forth to continue learning at home in preparation for the church event or service which is the focus of the month.

For the love of God is this:

What we keep in our hearts is what matters.

HI-life Navigating Life with GPS – God’s Proven System

Gatherings for 2009-2010

Rules of the Road – God’s Commandments

Wednesday	September 9	5:45-8:30pm
Thursday	September 10	5:45-8:30pm
Friday	September 11	5:45-8:30pm

Respect and Protect All Life

Wednesday	October 14	5:45-8:30pm
Thursday	October 15	5:45-8:30pm
Friday	October 16	5:45-8:30pm

Give Way with Mercy and Forgiveness

Wednesday	November 18	5:45-8:30pm
Thursday	November 19	5:45-8:30pm
Friday	November 20	5:45-8:30pm

Stay on the Straight and Narrow Path of Fidelity

Wednesday	February 3	5:45-8:30pm
Thursday	February 4	5:45-8:30pm
Friday	February 5	5:45-8:30pm

Navigating with Integrity and Honesty

Wednesday	March 10	5:45-8:30pm
Thursday	March 11	5:45-8:30pm
Friday	March 12	5:45-8:30pm

Be a Good Steward of All God’s Gifts

Wednesday	April 14	5:45-8:30pm
Thursday	April 15	5:45-8:30pm
Friday	April 16	5:45-8:30pm

Wednesday & Friday Gatherings are for all ages. Thursday Gatherings are for adults & teens.

#6. Connecting Families Intergenerationally: Learning

1. Bible Study
2. Family Time
3. Worship Skills
4. Recreation

GenOn Ministries

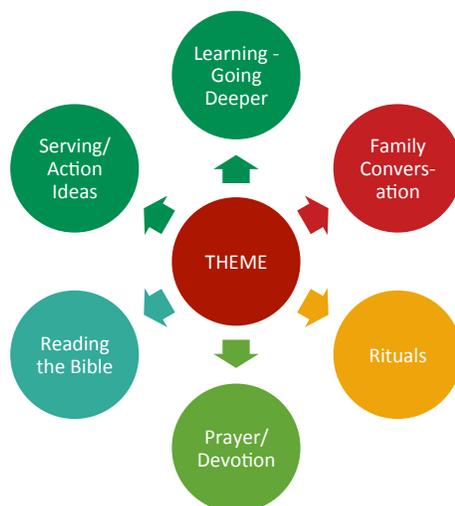


#6. Connecting Families Intergenerationally: Learning



- A flexible, relaxed arrival time with drinks and snacks
- Creative exploration of a Bible story/theme through creative experiences for people of different learning styles and of all ages. Children and adults are not separated and are encouraged to explore the story/theme together
- A short but explicit time of worship with story, music and prayers that builds on the creative exploration.
- A generous welcome and hospitality is expressed through a delicious home-cooked, sit-down meal with others

#6. Connecting Families Intergenerationally: @ Home



#7. Developing a Strong Family Life

Family faith formation strengthens *family life* by developing the assets/strengths and skills for healthy family life and providing a supportive context for forming faith, living the Christian faith, and promoting positive development in children and youth.

- Developing family assets or strengths
- Promoting character strengths in young people through developmental relationships.

#7. Developing a Strong Family Life

Family Assets – Search Institute



#7. Developing a Strong Family Life

Express Care: Show that you like me and want the best for me.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen—Pay attention when you are with me. • Be Warm—Let me know that you like being with me and express positive feelings toward me. • Invest—Commit time and energy to doing things for and with me. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show Interest—Make it a priority to understand who I am and what I care about. • Be Dependable—Be someone I can count on and trust.
Challenge Growth: Trust that I try to continuously improve...	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspire—Help me see future possibilities for myself. • Expect—Make it clear that you want me to live up to my potential. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stretch—Recognize my thoughts and abilities while also pushing me to strengthen them. • Limit—Hold me accountable for appropriate boundaries and rules.
Provide Support: Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage—Praise my efforts and achievements. • Guide—Provide practical assistance and feedback to help me learn. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model—Be an example I can learn from and admire. • Advocate—Stand up for me when I need it.
Share Power: Hear my voice and let me share in making decisions...	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect—Take me seriously and treat me fairly. • Negotiate—Give me a voice in making decisions that affect me. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond—Understand and adjust to my needs, interests, and abilities. • Collaborate—Work with me to accomplish goals and solve problems.
Expand Possibility: Expand my horizons and connect me to opportunities.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore—Expose me to new ideas, experiences, and places. • Connect—Introduce me to people who can help me grow. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navigate—Help me work through barriers that could stop me from achieving my goals.

#7. Developing a Strong Family Life

Create a Family Life Plan for Each Life Cycle Stage

Using the Family Assets and Developmental Relationships, curate and create developmentally-appropriate programs, activities, and resources for families at each stage.

1. Family website
2. Parent programs
3. Family programs
4. Family mentors
5. Life cycle support groups for parents

#7. Developing a Strong Family Life

ParentFurther. Strengthen Relationships. Prepare for the Future. Understand Ages & Stages.

Great Relationships Don't Just Happen.

Strengthen Yours Here.

Express Care

Share Power

Prevent Alcohol and Tobacco Use

Spark Kids' Motivation

Coming Soon

The Keep Connected Program

Building Relationships to Help Your Child Thrive Through Adolescence

Use ParentFurther to partner with families during the transition to middle school by offering this six-session program in your school, organization, or community. [Learn More.](#)

#7. Developing a Strong Family Life

- Parent Program (*Keep Connected*)
- Family Programming
 1. Communicating effectively
 2. Establishing family routines: family meals, shared activities, daily commitments
 3. Celebrating meaningful traditions and rituals
 4. Discussing tough topics
 5. Making decisions and solving problems as a family
 6. Learning how to build strong relationships and express care for each other
 7. Developing the strengths & potential of children & youth
 8. Supporting each other: encouraging and praising, giving feedback, standing up for each other
 9. Treating each with respect and dignity



#8. Empowering Parents & Grandparents

Twin Tasks

1. Promoting the faith growth of parents
2. Developing the faith forming skills of parents

Content

- Theological and spiritual formation of parents
- Skills for parenting for faith growth
- Knowledge and skills for parenting

#8. Empowering Parents & Grandparents

Guides for Developing Parent Programming

1. Address diverse spiritual-religious identities of parents.
2. Have parents practice new skills with their own children during program sessions.
3. Give parents a plan for parenting.
 - Give them a plan for parenting proactively.
 - Show them how it works.
 - Tell them what to do today.

#8. Empowering Parents & Grandparents

Guides for Developing Parent Programming

4. Address the levels of partnership with parents.
 - Aware
 - Involved
 - Engaged
 - Invested
5. Design programs that engage parents in the learning experience.
6. Use a variety of environments & methods to engage all parents.
7. Use online platforms and digitally enabled strategies.

#8. Empowering Parents & Grandparents

Ideas for Parent Programming

1. Parent website
2. Parent programs—a progression of workshops, webinars, and/or courses for each stage of the lifecycle
3. Laboratory experiences—immersion/hands-on experiences through church events or family/intergenerational programs
4. Parent mentors
5. Lifecycle support groups for parents
6. A parent catechumenate—around key milestone experiences and “moments of return”