Family Faith Formation
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www.VibrantFaith.org
www.LifelongFaith.com
SeasonsOfAdultFaith.com
FamiliesAtTheCenter.com
WholeCommunityFaithFormation.weebly.com
Innovation Lab Design

1. A one-day Design Workshop – envision and begin the design of new initiatives in faith formation
2. A 90 minute online Design Webinar for all leadership teams to support their design work (6-8 weeks after the Design Workshop)

   **Week of**

3. A 90-minute online Implementation Webinar for all leadership teams to plan for implementing their new initiatives (6-8 weeks after the Design Webinar)

   **Week of May**

4. A variety of Tools and Resources at www.LifelongFaith.com to support design work, and Networking among congregations to share projects and ideas
Part 1. Families Today

Families Today

- Diversity of family structures and a variety of living arrangements from 0-18 years old
- Pressures of work and finances; 70% of mothers work outside home
- Increasing complexity of family life, managing/balancing time and commitments
- New generation of parents: Millennial parents & young Gen X
- Decline in religious practice at home, and decline in participation and affiliation in churches
- Decline in faith transmission and practice at home
Changing Spiritual-Religious Identities

**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.
Changing Spiritual-Religious Identities

Many ‘nones’ lost faith before they finished high school

Percentage of religiously unaffiliated Americans raised in a faith group who said they abandoned religious practice at the following time

- 62% Before age 18
- 28% Between 18 and 29
- 5% Between 30 and 49
- 2% After age 50

SOURCE: Public Religion Research Institute

DESERET NEWS GRAPHIC

Changing Spiritual-Religious Identities

At what age did you stop self-identifying as Catholic?

- Under age 5: 5%
- 5 to 9: 10%
- 10 to 12: 24%
- 13 to 17: 39%
- 18 to 20: 11%
- 21 to 25: 3%
- Median age: 13
NSYR – Christian Smith, et al.

Leaving the Catholic Church rarely means becoming an atheist. Many former Catholics still believe in God or some other divine force, and about one-third of them still pray. This is not fundamentally different from emerging adults who are raised in other faiths. It demonstrates a widespread trend in this generation of moving away from organized religion but retaining a belief in and connection with the divine. These youth (and emerging adults) may be open to discussions about the nature of God that are more sophisticated and inviting than some may imagine.

NSYR – Christian Smith, et al.

Most Catholic youth today are growing up in environments of major religious pluralism, which can make them hesitate to make strong religious commitments themselves. Catholic youth need to be shown how they can simultaneously seriously believe, practice, and profess their own faith while appropriately respecting and honoring the faith of others who are different.
First Two Decades of Life (NSYR)

- Young people committing to live their lives for God is one religious experience that is among the most important factors in leading teenagers into the highest levels of emerging adult religion.
- They found that almost 60 percent (58.8%) made their first commitment to live their lives for God before the age of 14. Most of these probably committed to God during the childhood years.
- Approximately 6% make a first commitment between 14-17, and another 5% between 18-23.
- 31% of young adults reported never committing to God as a teenager or emerging adult. Smith says that one can expect that few of them probably ever will.
- So, 85 percent of young adults who have committed their lives to God appear to have made their first commitment before age 14.

First Two Decades of Life (NSYR)

- The religious commitments and orientations of most people appear to be set early in life and very likely follow a consistent trajectory from the early formation through the adolescent and into the emerging adult years.
- What matters for most even more is what happens religiously before the teenage years, which powerfully conditions most of everything that happens thereafter.

(Smith and Snell, 247)
PART 2. FAMILIES & FAITH

Key Factors

Research studies over the past twenty years continue to affirm this truth. We know the factors that make a significant difference in promoting faith in children and adolescents:

• parents’ personal faith and practice
• a close and warm parent-child relationship
• parent modeling and teaching a religious faith
• parent involvement in church life and Sunday worship
• grandparent religious influence and relationship
• family conversations about faith
• family faith religious practices including praying, reading the Bible, serving others, and celebrating holidays and rituals
Family Practices

1. Reading the Bible as a family and encouraging young people to read the Bible regularly
2. Praying together as a family and encouraging young people to pray personally
3. Serving people in need as a family and supporting service activities by young people
4. Participating regularly in Sunday worship as a family
5. Being involved in a faith community and serving in church as a family and as young people
6. Eating together as a family
7. Celebrating rituals and holidays at home
8. Having family conversations
9. Talking about faith, religious issues, and questions and doubts
10. Ritualizing important family moments and milestone experiences
11. Celebrating holidays and church year seasons at home
12. Providing moral instruction

Parent Practices

• Parents participated in mission trips as a family as their kids were growing up.
• Parents participated in service projects with their kids as they were growing up.
• Parents frequently shared Christ with unbelievers as their kids were growing up.
• Parents personally read the Bible several times a week or more as their kids were growing up.
• Parents encouraged their teen to serve in the church.
• Parents typically asked for forgiveness when they messed up as their children were growing up.
• Parents encouraged their children’s own unique talents and interests as they grew up.
• Parents attended churches that emphasized what the Bible says as their kids were growing up.
• Parents taught their children to tithe as their kids were growing up.
Pope Francis, *Joy of the Gospel*

The family is the primary setting for socialization, since it is where we first learn to relate to others, to listen and share, to be patient and show respect, to help one another and live as one. The task of education is to make us sense that the world and society are also our home; it trains us how to live together in this greater home. In the family, we learn closeness, care and respect for others. . . . Every day the family has to come acknowledging its members (276)

Families & Faith

- **Primary Influence:** Parents and the Family
- **Secondary Influence:** The Congregation and Significant Adults
Families & Faith

The primary mechanisms by which Catholic identity becomes rooted in children’s lives are not Catholic schooling or sacramental preparation, but rather the day-to-day religious practices of the family and the ways parents model their faith and share it in conversation, collaboration, and exposure to outside religious opportunities. (Burktus and Smith)

Families & Faith

This is all to say that the definitive causal agents in the religious and spiritual outcomes of American youth are neither clergy nor youth ministers, neither educators nor the voices of popular culture and media, but parents. (Burktus and Smith)
One of the most basic suggestions of our findings is that young adults arrive at a sense of their fundamental identity and worldview not by weighing all possible intellectual arguments for and against a proposed way of life, but rather by roughly adopting the worldview of those mentors who left the deepest impression upon them—and who loved them and cared for them the most. It should come as no surprise, then, that the emergence of the new generation of dedicated young Catholics will rise and fall with the choices of their parents.

(American Catholic Religious Parenting, Burtkus and Smith)
What do we believe?

- God is actively present in family life.
- Parents and the family are the most important religious influence on religious transmission.
- Faith is formed through the day-to-day religious practices of the family and the ways parents model their faith and share it.
- Faith is formed when there is a substantial investment of thought, time, and intimacy by parents in faith transmission.
- Faith is formed in relationships – at home and in the intergenerational faith community.
- Faith is formed in developmentally-appropriate ways over time.

Fundamental Shift
What if we fashioned faith formation around the family?
PART 3. STRATEGIES FOR FAMILY FAITH FORMATION

The Power of Habit

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER
THE POWER OF HABIT

Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business

Charles Duhigg
How to Create a Habit

1. The Cue

2. The Reward

3. The Routine

When _(cue)_ I will _(routine)_ because it provides me with ___(reward)__.
HOW TO CHANGE A HABIT

Do you want to change a habit?

- Yes
- No

If you said no, quit reading this flowchart.

If you said yes, go on.

What time is it?

What craving do you think your habit is satisfying?

Where are you?

What did you just do?

TEST THAT THEORY:

Who else is around?

What emotion are you feeling?

THE RENEWED ROUTINE

Keep experimenting until you find something new that satisfies the urge.

ONE OF THE SEVEN THINGS IS THE CUE.

Look for which one stays the same every time you feel the urge.

THEY’RE ALL THE SAME.

Substitute another reward (i.e., instead of eating a cookie, have a cup of coffee).

Is the craving gone?

Yes

No

Routine

Reward

THE HABIT YOU WANT TO CHANGE

When you feel the urge for your habit, ask yourself . . .

THE CUE

THE REWARD

THE ROUTINE

Studies show that the easiest way to implement a new habit is to write a plan:

Post this plan where you will see it.

Try it for a week.

Eventually, studies say, the new behavior will become automatic.

Substitute the opposite reward (i.e., instead of eating a cookie, take a walk).

Is the craving gone?

Yes

No

Family Faith Formation Strategies

1. Faith Practices @ Home
2. Milestones
3. Seasonal Events
4. Bible through the Year
5. Family & Intergenerational Programming
6. Parents & Grandparents as Faith Formers
#1. Faith Practices @ Home

1. Seasons of the year
2. Rituals and milestones
3. Learning the tradition
4. Prayer and spiritual formation
5. Reading the Bible
6. Service, justice, care for creation

### Young Children
- 

### Older Children
- 

### Young Adolescents
- 

### Older Adolescents
- 

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Discovering God in Everyday Life

**Examen for Children**

1. Quiet the children before bedtime.
2. Ask them what made them happy over the past day.
3. Ask them what made them sad over the past day.
4. Ask them what they look forward to tomorrow.
5. Remind them to thank God for what made them happy, ask for God’s help when they are sad, and pray for God’s presence in the coming day.
“It’s the Best Time of Your Life”

I visit a lot of older people in my line of work and one of the things they tell me over and over is, "This is the best time of your life. Enjoy it." All of them absolutely cherish the time when their children were growing up. They know that I’m busy and sometimes frayed tending to work and family. And so, they remind me to slow down and savor this time because it won’t come again. It’s really hard to remember this in the chaos of getting everyone fed, homework done, shuttling kids to practice and doctor’s appointments. So, I am grateful for these older, wiser parents that remind me to slow down, breathe deep, and savor the moments same for you. -Keith

Collect Rocks, Spread the Love

Collecting rocks must be one of the most low-tech summer activities there is. But The Kindness Rocks Project turns it into something beautiful. Just collect rocks and use them to spread the love.

Children’s Ministries Faith Formation @ First Church of Simsbury

Faith at Home: God is Love (Feb)

Stories to Print and Read

Jesus loves me story from Lighthouse to print and read
Jesus loves me song from Lighthouse to print and read
I love my Bible story from Lighthouse to print and read
I love my Bible story from Lighthouse to print and read

Activity

Jesus loves me coloring pages
Jesus loves me coloring pages
Jesus loves me coloring pages
Jesus loves me coloring pages

God loves me coloring pages
God loves me coloring pages
God loves me coloring pages
God loves me coloring pages

Go to the Children’s Ministry website for more information.
#2. Milestones throughout Life

1. Ritual and blessing
2. Home celebration/blessing
3. Learning program –
4. Symbol
5. Supporting continued growth

Milestones

- Birth / Baptism
- Baptism anniversaries
- First prayers
- First Bible stories
- Starting school year
- Receiving a first Bible
- First Communion
- Confirmation
- Graduation

1. Church ritual/blessing
2. Home celebration/blessing
3. Learning program – at church or home
4. Symbol
5. Supporting continued growth
Forming Faith through Milestones

1. 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

Preparation
• What types of experiences, programming, activities, and resources will you develop to prepare people for the event?

Experiencing
• How will you design the event?
• How will you engage age groups, families, and the faith community?

Living
• How will you sustain/extend the event?
• What types of experiences, programs, activities, and resources will you offer people?
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 his love in worship)
Pre-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 – Apostles’ Creed (What do Lutheran’s 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 your own, importance of faith)

Rituals & Milestones

celebrate meaningful, memorable moments in your family

Baptism Anniversary

Starting School

Getting Ready to Worship

Birthday Celebrations

Scripture Reading

Prayer

Forming Faith through Milestones

Rooted in FAITH

First Year – Baptismal Remembrance (A Gathering for newly baptized)
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Forming Faith through Milestones

- High School Graduation Milestone: Supporting Graduates on the Journey
  - Emphasize the importance of preparing graduates for the next step in life.
  - Highlight the role of faith in navigating the challenges of the transition.

- Mission Trip Milestone: Community Blessings at Home and Away
  - Discuss the value of service and cultural exchange.
  - Encourage students to reflect on the impact of their experiences.

- Family Reunion Milestone: Moments that Matter
  - Celebrate the importance of family relationships.
  - Offer tips for maintaining strong family bonds.

- Retirement Milestone: A Major Life Transition
  - Acknowledge the significance of retirement.
  - Provide guidance for adjusting to a new phase of life.

- Encourage students to share their thoughts and reflections on these milestones.
#3. 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)
Integrate Online & Gathered 40-Day Lent Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Daily &amp; Home</th>
<th>Online</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Ash Wednesday</td>
<td>• Fasting</td>
<td>• Lenten learning resources</td>
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<td>• Lenten Sunday liturgies</td>
<td>• Praying</td>
<td>• Lenten calendar</td>
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<td>• Stations of the Cross</td>
<td>• Service/Almsgiving</td>
<td>• Daily Lenten prayer</td>
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<td>• Lenten prayer</td>
<td>• Lectionary reflection</td>
<td>• Weekly table prayer</td>
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<td>• Lenten retreat</td>
<td>• Family Lenten activities</td>
<td>• Video resources</td>
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<td>• Lenten service</td>
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<td>• Online retreat experience</td>
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<td>• Lenten soup suppers</td>
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Example: Earth Day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Home</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Community cleanup</td>
<td>• Ecumenical prayer service</td>
<td>• Recycling activities</td>
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<td>• Planting a community garden</td>
<td>• Intergenerational program on theology of caring for creation</td>
<td>• Planting a family garden</td>
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<td>• All ages workshop on caring for creation</td>
<td>• Church audit</td>
<td>• Meal time creation prayer</td>
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<td>• Story time at the library on environmental awareness</td>
<td>• Global project for whole community</td>
<td>• Daily Bible verses for April</td>
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#4. 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

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
Extend the Event

Church Event or Program  At Home & Daily Life

Practical Strategies

1. Develop a family faith formation website.
2. Seasonal family festivals and gatherings.
3. Connect to Sunday worship.
4. Schedule a yearlong plan for milestones.
5. Make faith practices a seasonal focus.
6. Create family immersion experiences.
7. Develop a monthly seasonal event.
#5. Equipping Parents

Equipping parents and grandparents with the knowledge and skills necessary for faith-forming: how to transmit faith and values to their young people, how to become a Christian role model, and how to build a community of faith at home that nurtures faith growth in the young.

Developing a Strong Family Life
Developmental Relationships – Search Institute

- Express Care
- Challenge Growth
- Provide Support
- Share Power
- Expand Possibilities
**What Makes a Difference**

1. Parents participated in mission trips.
2. Parents participated in service projects.
3. Parents frequently shared Christ with unbelievers.
4. Parents personally read the Bible several times a week or more.
5. Parents encouraged their teen to serve in the church.
6. Parents typically asked for forgiveness when they messed up.
7. Parents encouraged their children’s unique talents and interests.
8. Parents attended churches that emphasized what the Bible says.
9. Parents taught their children to tithe.

**Developing Strong Family Life**

**Family Life 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
Empowering Parents

**Competencies**

- Expressing care, love, affection, and support for children
- Balancing time and commitments, managing stress
- Practicing healthy relationships
- Disciplining children and learning discipline practices
- Creating a warm, caring supportive family.
- Set boundaries and high expectations for children
- Managing technology and media use
- Challenging children to grow and continuously improve
- Providing support to help children complete tasks and achieve goals
- Sharing power with children so that there voice is heard and they share in making decisions.
- Expanding possibilities and connecting children to opportunities for growth
- Developing emotional communication skills
- Developing positive parent-child interaction skills
- Learning to respond consistently to their child

Empowering Parents

- Parental Faith Formation
- Faith Forming Skills & Practices
- Knowledge & Skills for Parenting

**Key Content**
Parent Programming

1. Parent website
2. Parent programs
   • Progression of parent workshops, webinars, or courses through the life cycle
   • Incorporate parent formation and education into congregational events that already engage parents
   • Provide targeted programs of theological and biblical formation
   • Add a parent-only component to family-intergenerational learning programs
   • Add a parallel parent experience to the existing children/teen program
   • Add a parent component to vacation Bible school in the evenings or online.
   • Provide online faith formation for parents
3. Laboratory experiences
4. Parent mentors
5. Life cycle or affinity groups for parents
Suggestions for Programming

1. Address diverse spiritual-religious identities of parents.
2. Have parents practice new skills with their own children during program sessions.
3. Design programs that engage parents in the learning experience.
4. Use a variety of environments and methods to engage all parents, anytime and anywhere.
5. Use online platforms and digitally enabled strategies.
6. Give parents a plan.

#5. Family & Intergenerational Programming
Intergenerational Faith Formation

Engaging all ages and generations together in informing and forming disciples of all ages in Christian identity.

- Intergenerational Learning
- Weekly, Bi-Weekly, and Monthly Models
- Small Group & Large Group Models

Intergenerational Learning

Part 1. Meal, Community Building, Prayer
Part 2. GATHER: All Ages Learning
Part 3. GROW: In-Depth Learning Experience
  - Formats: Whole Group, Age Group, or Activity Center
Part 4. GO FORTH:
  - Sharing Learning Experiences
  - Home Application
  - Closing Prayer
HI-life Gatherings...

Our 40th year of whole communitycatechesis is focused on Living a Moral Life. Our theme is Navigating Life with PIP — Public-Private Interaction. Christian moral life can be summed up as the recognition of the awesome gift of God’s living presence in our lives and our continuing effort to respond to that love.

During this year we will explore the guidelines that God has given us to live lives of love and faithfulness, including the sin commitments and the antidotes.

We encourage participants of all ages to participate in our HI-life Gatherings—our intergenerational learning assemblies that are the foundation of our lifelong faith formation process. Our monthly Gatherings are a time of fellowship, faith formation, and fun.

Sharing a Simple Meal Together
No cooking—just come and enjoy.

At a typical Gathering you are welcomed by greeters in the Hospitality Room and seated at a table in the Fellowship Hall to enjoy a meal with fellow participants of all ages. At your table there might be a single adult, a family of four, a retired persons, or an empty nest couple. There will be a couple of questions on the table to focus our table talk.

Whole Group Opening Experience
Introduction of the topic to be experienced by all ages.

After the meal, everyone moves to the church for an openingramer and an activity to set the tone for the evening, such as a story or video segment. Each household receives an HI-life theme book and learns to use it throughout the evening.

Exploring the Topic through Age-Specific Learning Activities
Learning about the same topic according to one’s age or stage in life.

Then the group divides into smaller groups for age-specific learning activities. A typical evening might have adults staying in the church for a reader and group discussion, young adults in Meeting Room 6, PIP youth in Meeting Room 7, PIP youth in the Hospitality Room, and parents with young children (approximately ages 1–18) together in the Fellowship Hall. There are handouts for each group to touch and guide the learning activities of the evening and trained facilitators to assist the parents and children at each table.

Whole Group Sharing Experience
Closing of the Gathering for all ages

To conclude our evening, everyone reunites in the church 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 season which is the focus of the month.

Elements of LOGOS

In local churches, LOGOS teams build intergenerational relationships between young people and caring, Christian adults of all ages through a four-part weekly format:

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

GenOn Ministries
www.genonministries.org
Intergenerational 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

Family Camp

Imagine a powerful Bible camp experience for all ages — from infants to seniors, and everyone in between, not just a camp for kids. We’ve been doing this for almost 50 years! This year we have seven camps to choose from, each one will fill you and your family with an authentic joy and peace that comes only from experiencing the gospel at camp.

We gather together as a community, families and staff from around the nation and even world. Come play, study, and grow in this beautiful, spirit-filled place. Click on camp week if you want to find out more information and to register.

Tentative Schedule — subject to change. Note: ALL of our 2018 Family Camps will include elements of the “FAMILY BLAST” model we introduced last summer!

**Family Mini-Camp #1**
June 24 – Family Blast Sampler
The Abundant Life
With Ryan Briley, Jonathan & Jina Swenson, Dan Baker.
Special outdoor concert with Peter Elite on Friday Night

**Family Camp #2**
June 30 – July 8 - Family Blast
Cyoheiros: Wake Up Week + Youth Workshop
t with Nikki Hof, Dave Welden
Special Music for Youth/Children

**Family Camp #3**
July 15
The Muse of Soul in the Old Testament
with Beth Chase-Harmon, Dan Stilwell, & Jillian James
PART 4. DESIGNING FAMILY FAITH FORMATION
Two Ways to Approach Personalizing

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

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

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**Family Life Stages**

- Families with Young Children
- Families with Older Children
- Families with Young Adolescents
- Families with Older Adolescents
Characteristics

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

Characteristics

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faith Maturing Characteristic</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Youth</th>
<th>Young Adults</th>
<th>Adults</th>
<th>Family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intergenerational</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Age Group</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Pathways of Faith Growth
A Pathways Model

- **A Pathway is a process** for helping people discern where they are in their faith journey and to chart a path for faith growth—to get from where they are to a closer relationship with Jesus and a deeper practice of the Christian faith.

- **A Pathway is life-centered**, reaching into every area of a person’s life.

- **A Pathway is holistic** incorporating the whole person: head, heart, and hands.

- **A Pathway focuses on faith maturing.**
Diverse Spiritual-Religious Needs

Not Spiritual, Not Religious
Unaffiliateds

The Spiritual but Not Religious
Uninvolved

Faith & Engagement – one among many priorities
Occasionals

Faith & Engagement at the Center of Life
Actives

Personalized Pathways of Faith Growth

Pathways

Vibrant

Occasional

Uninvolved Unaffiliated

PLAYLIST

Variety of Experiences & Activities

Variety of Experiences & Activities

Variety of Experiences & Activities
Designing a Pathways Model

1. Identify a target audience(s)
2. Describe their life stage & religious-spiritual characteristics.
3. Identify how/where you will use the Pathways model
   • Sacraments/milestones
   • RCIA, evangelization, and new member processes
   • Gathered faith formation programming & meetings
   • Small groups: affinity groups, interest groups, Bible study groups
   • On-ramps where people might start the discipleship journey
4. Develop the characteristics of faith growth for the Pathways
5. Develop a “discernment continuum” that gives people a way to reflect on their current growth
Designing Steps 1 & 2
Target Audience & Description

Sample Themes – Mature Adults
1. Dealing with retirement
2. Making life plans, finances, health
3. Becoming a grandparent
4. Making a difference in the community and world
5. Incorporating family changes and transitions
6. New ways of living and relating as a married couple
7. Caring for aging parents
8. Taking time to read the Bible and learn more about my faith
9. Growing spiritually and exploring spirituality for the 2nd half of life
10. Connecting with people my age; talking about things that matter to us
11. Dealing with loss

Designing Step 3 - How & Where

Identify how/where you will use the Pathways model
1. Sacraments/milestones: Marriage, Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation, beginning church faith formation, etc.
2. RCIA, evangelization, and new member processes
3. Gathered faith formation events and programming
4. Parenting meetings
5. Small groups: affinity groups, interest groups, Bible study groups,
6. On-ramps where people in your church might start the discipleship journey
Designing Step 4 – Characteristics

Develop the characteristics of faith growth you want to use in your Pathways model. For example:

1. Option 1. Use characteristics of faith growth specific to the life stage (such as family faith practices) or the content of the event (such as preparing for confirmation)
2. Option 2. Use characteristics of maturing faith

Key Characteristics of Maturing Faith

- Relationships with Jesus Christ
- Living the Christian way of life - discipleship
- Living with moral integrity
- Learning and articulating the teachings of the Christian tradition
- Praying and seeking spiritual growth
- Studying and reading the Bible
- Engaging in service and mission to the world
- Worshipping with the community
Adult Faith Growth Pathway

We believe that growth in our relationship with God and in following Jesus (discipleship) is a lifelong process. We are constantly trying to grow deeper in our relationship with God and in living the Christian way of life each day. Our church is committed to helping you grow wherever you may be in your faith journey. We are committed to helping you live the Christian way of life everyday.

To help you discover areas for growth and to help us serve you better, please take a few minutes to complete the Adult Faith Growth Pathway. It will help you identify strengths and areas of growth in your own life. Use these statements to assess where you are honestly and prayerfully. Rate “How true each statement is for you?” using the rating scale: 1 = Rarely true of me, 2 = Sometimes true of me, 3 = Occasionally true of me, 4 = Almost always true of me, 5 = Always true of me.

1. I am growing in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
2. My faith shapes how I think and act each and every day.
3. I make the Christian faith a way of life by integrating my beliefs into the conversation, decisions, and actions of daily life.
4. I am aware of God present and active in my own life, the lives of others, and the life of the world.
5. I have a real sense that God is guiding me.
6. I seek spiritual growth by actively pursuing questions of faith, learning what it means to believe in God, and what it’s like to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.
7. I devote time to reading and studying the Bible.
8. I use the Bible to discover how I should think and act.
9. I pray to God and take quiet time to reflect and listen to God.
10. I am growing spiritually through spiritual practices such as contemplation, lectio divina, praying scriptures, daily examen (reflection), and meditation.
11. I can articulate the fundamental teachings of the Christian faith.
12. I am growing in my understanding of the Christian faith—beliefs, traditions, and practices.
13. I exercise moral responsibility by applying Christian ethics, virtues, and values to making moral decisions.
14. My faith helps me know right from wrong.
15. I live a life of service by caring for others and reaching out those in need.
16. I am involved in ways to promote social justice and address injustice in the world.
17. I am involved in actions to care for creation.
18. I share the Good News of Jesus through my words and actions.
19. I participate actively and regularly in the worship life of the church community.
20. I participate in the life, ministries, and leadership of the church community.

Ways I Can Grow
- Areas Where I Need to “Get Started” (look at the numbers 1 and 2)
- Areas Where I Need to “Grow” (look at the numbers 2 and 3)
- Areas Where I Want to “Go Deeper” (look at the numbers 4 and 5)

Designing Step 5 – Discernment

Develop a ‘discernment continuum’ that gives people a way to reflect on their current growth

Inquiring--Getting Started--Making Progress--Going Deeper

“How true each statement is for you?”
1 = Rarely true of me
2 = Sometimes true of me,
3 = Occasionally true of me
4 = Almost always true of me
5 = Always true of me.
Approach #2.
Personalize the Offerings

The Seasons of Adult Faith Formation
A Network of Adult Faith Formation Experiences, Programs, Activities, & Resources

Personalize the Offerings
Playlists Tailored to Different Faith Needs

Playlist:
Reading & Studying the Bible

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

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

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

A faith formation playlist is a curated group of digital (online, video, audio, print) and gathered (church, home, small groups, etc.) faith forming experiences and resources that are tailored to the specific faith growth needs of people around a particular characteristic of faith maturing or theme/topic.

Playlists are developed for each “stage” on the discernment continuum, such as Inquiring, Getting Started, Growing, Going Deeper.

Each playlist provides a variety of ways for people to learn and grow in faith.
Curating Playlists

- Books
- Audio / Podcasts
- Video and movies
- Apps and digital programming
- Website content and activities
- Courses, programs, workshops at church and online
- Church life, ministries, and events
- Small groups at church, home, community settings
- Art, drama, music
- Service and action projects, mission trips
- Retreats
- Field trips
- Mentoring

Faith Formation Playlists

**Variety of Environments:** Self-directed, mentored, at home, in small groups, in large groups, church-wide, in the community, and in the world.

**Variety of Ways to Learn**
Playlists of Content & Experiences

If you were to use a Playlist approach to develop the faith of families with young children…

1. *Getting Started Families* (little faith experience)
2. *Growing Families* (somewhat connected to faith community)
3. *Going Deeper Families* (involved and practicing)
   - How would you engage the parents?
   - How would you engage the children and whole family?

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Playlists of Content & Experiences

If you were to use a Playlist approach for first communion…

1. *Getting Started Children* (little to no faith forming experiences)
2. *Growing Children* (some faith forming experiences)
3. *Going Deeper Children* (involved and practicing)
   - What would faith formation look like with these three “types” of children?
   - What would parent and family faith formation look like?
Playlists of Content & Experiences

If you were to use a Playlist approach for confirmation…

1. *Getting Started Adolescents* (little to no faith forming experiences since childhood)
2. *Growing Adolescents* (some faith forming experiences in childhood)
3. *Going Deeper Adolescents* (involved and practicing)

- What would faith formation look like with these three “types” of adolescents?
- What would parent and family faith formation look like?

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What is Edmodo?

*Edmodo is a classroom website that is completely controlled by the teacher…*
Curating & Creating Resources
## Transforming Our Role

### Balancing Both Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Roles</th>
<th>Emerging Roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Developing religious content</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Designing programming</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Managing programming</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Teaching/Facilitating programming</td>
<td>• Designing faith forming environments — architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Curating religious content and experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Designing Digital Platforms for faith forming content</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Three New Roles

- We are becoming **learning architects** who design and/or identify environments which can become settings for faith formation, e.g., homes, workplaces, coffee shops, online communities, and more. We can design content and experiences to “deliver” to that setting.
- We are becoming **curators** of religious content and experiences. When there is an abundance of content, our role shifts from creator to curator. Curators are engaged in finding and identifying high quality content in all formats, matching it with the needs of people, providing the content on a digital platform (and often in gathered settings), and engaging people with the content.
- We are becoming **designers of digital platforms** (websites, social media) where people can connect with each other, access content, engage in learning activities, and more. These platforms provide 24x7 faith formation.
What is Curation

Curation is the process of sorting through the vast amounts of content on the web and presenting it in a meaningful and organized way around a specific topics, learning needs, etc.

- The work involves sifting, sorting, arranging, and publishing information.
- A content curator picks the best content that is important and relevant to share with their community.
- It isn’t unlike what a museum curator does to produce an exhibition: They identify the theme, they provide the context, they decide which paintings to hang on the wall, how they should be annotated, and how they should be displayed for the public.

Curating Religious Content

Research & Organize Resources

Identify Potential Resources for Programming

Select & Connect Resources to programming

Evaluate Resources
Developing Trusted Sources

Research Checklist

1. People: teachers, mentors/guides, guest presenters
2. Community programs: churches, agencies, organizations,
3. Educational institutions: colleges, seminaries
4. Retreat and spiritual life centers, monasteries
5. Denominational programs, events, websites
6. Apps
7. Audio podcasts & audio learning programs
8. Videos & video learning programs
9. Online courses & online activities
10. Television shows
11. Publisher and resource center websites
Evaluation Criteria

- Biblical content and interpretation
- Theological content and emphasis
- Developmental appropriateness
- Ethnic-Cultural appropriateness
- Inclusive of diversity
- Respect for diverse ways of learning
- Appearance and visual appeal
- Ease-of-Use
- Quality of Experience
- Applicable: Able to be incorporated into daily and home life

Marketing in Four Steps – Seth Godin

1. The first step is to invent a thing worth making, a story worth telling, a contribution worth talking about.
2. The second step is to design and build it in a way that people will actually benefit from and care about.
3. The third one is the one everyone gets all excited about. This is the step where you tell the story to the right people in the right way.
4. The last step is so often overlooked: The part where you show up, regularly, consistently and generously, for years and years, to organize and lead and build confidence in the change you seek to make.

(http://sethgodin.typepad.com/sets_blog/2016/08/marketing-in-four-steps.html)