



# FORMING FAITH THROUGH MILESTONES

FUTURE OF FAITH SYMPOSIUM

OCT 20 - OCT 22 2016



# What is your definition of a milestone?



A milestone is one of a series of numbered markers placed along a road or boundary at intervals of one mile or occasionally, parts of a mile. Mileage is the distance along the road from a fixed commencement point.



# What is your definition of a faith connected milestone?

A milestone is a meaningful, memorable moment in the lives of individuals and communities.



Milestones in our lives can be life changing. Some are happy. Some can be sad and fearful times.



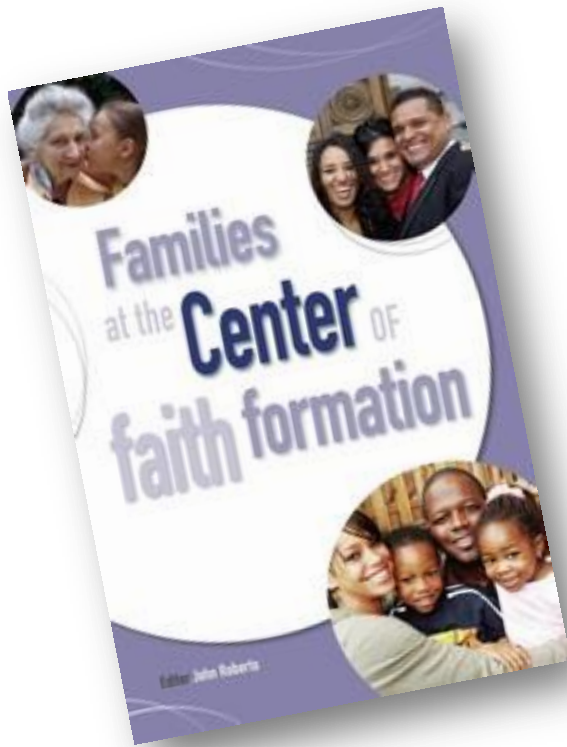
# What does it mean to form faith through milestones?

Connecting the meaningful, memorable moments in our lives to God's presence in those moments.



Adding scripture, prayer, and a blessing makes this a faith formation moment and becomes part of our faith journey.





*“A milestone is an action or event marking a significant change or stage in development. These life and faith markers can provide important times for engaging families when they are most open to change and growth.”*  
– John Roberto

# Milestones celebrated in the congregation

- **Baptism**
- **Communion**
- **First Bible**
- **Confirmation**
- **Beginning Religious Instruction**
- **Graduation**



# What milestones do we recognize in our homes and in everyday living?

- Getting a Driver's License
- New Home
- Family Reunion
- Loss of a Pet
- First Cell Phone
- Birthdays



# Why aren't we all in the same place in our faith journeys?



- Faith Formation is like learning a language
- Not everyone is fluent because they haven't been immersed in it
- One hour a week does not do it

# Why is it important for faith formation to happen in the home?



- The home is an essential part of our faith formation.
- Like learning a language, it is where we are immersed in it
- How do we encourage faith formation in the home?
- Milestones is a good place to start!

Where do we start?

Name it!

# 1. Name it

Identify a moment as significant to one's life and faith directly related to the name of the Milestone Ministry event.

# 2. Equip it

Provide support, modeling, and resources to help people experience **Opportunity!** opportunity to again embrace the grace of God in Christ

### 3. Bless it

Offer a prayer in a worship service, cross+generational event, and/or the small group or home event to embrace people's lives with the grace, mercy, and peace of God in Christ.

### 4. Gift it

Provide a gift to help the participants recall a particular milestone in their lives with faith, hope, and love

## 5. Reinforce it

Offer a follow up event to help deepen the faith formation impact of the Milestone Ministry experience. Encourage and support faith practices recommended at the initial Milestone event and, when helpful, explore new ones.

1. Name it
2. Equip it
3. Bless it
4. Gift it
5. Reinforce it

An important  
ingredient...establish  
faith practices!

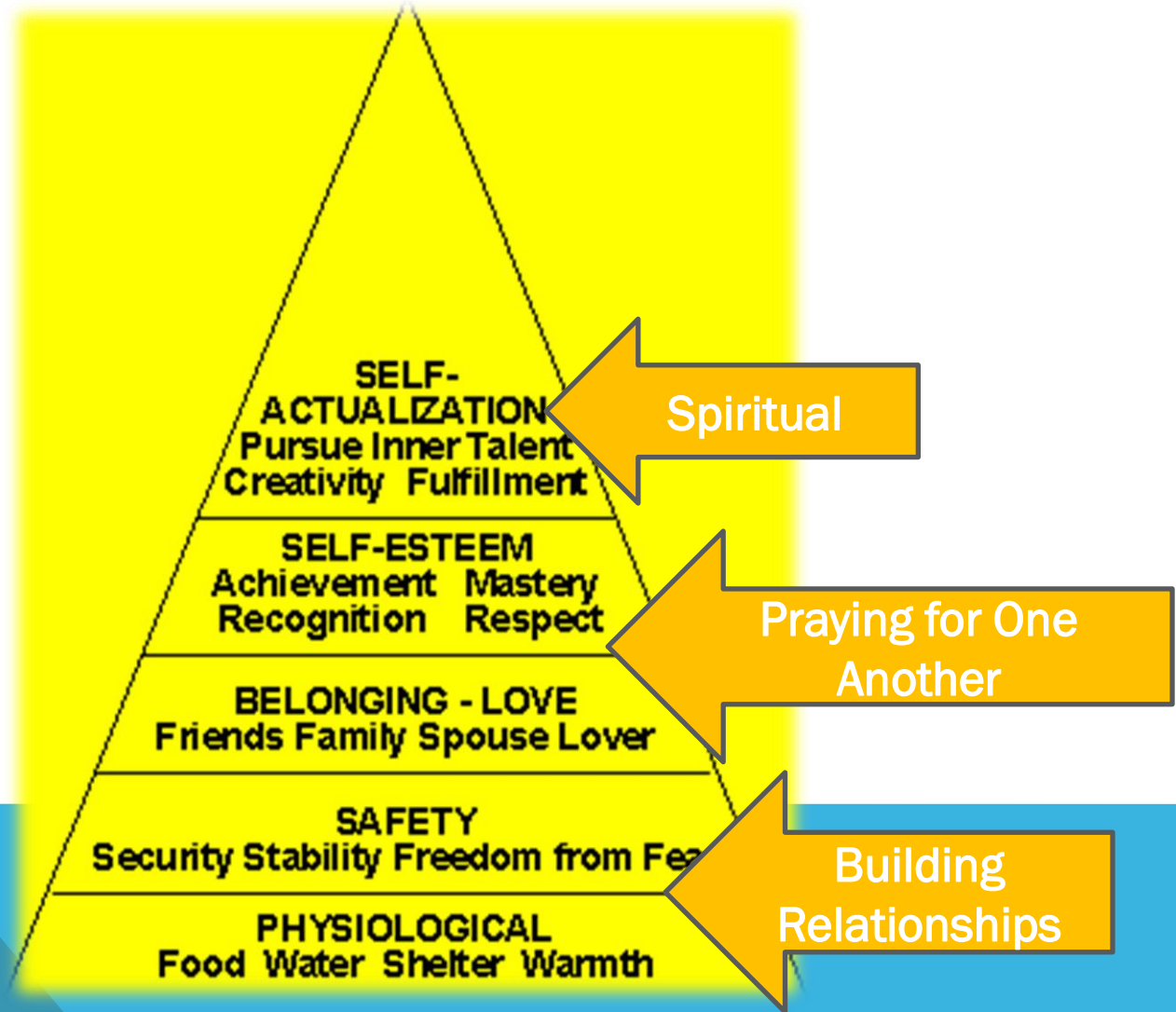
## Four Key Faith Practices

1. Caring Conversations
2. Devotions
3. Service
4. Rituals and Traditions

## FAITH5

1. Share
2. Read
3. Talk
4. Pray
5. Bless

# Maslow Hierarchy of Needs



## THE GOAL:

- Lifelong Faith Formation
- Relationships over Programs
- Be Strategic for the World,  
not the Congregation



# EXAMPLES OF FORMING FAITH THROUGH MILESTONES

CONGREGATION, COMMUNITY, HOME, AND DIGITAL WORLD



# Congregation Example



+

## High School Graduation

### Equipping Graduates for the Future

Desired Outcomes

- Connect a graduate's choices for an intentional faith journey to his or her future.
- Reaffirm the graduate's and his or her family's commitment to faith traditions at home and in the congregation.
- Experience blessings that keep the graduate in the love of God.
- Receive a fun-filled laundry bag of handy items or other gifts from a faith-filled community that wishes to surround the graduate.

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MISSION

## Milestones: Equipping Graduates at Home and Away

... by many although traveled by only a few.  
... er from the home community.  
... es: in a unique faith journey.  
... an practice while gaining insights into how others live and  
... f the Christian faith.

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# Community Example

**MILESTONES MINISTRY**

Each generation will reap what the former generation has sown.  
— Proverb

## Family Reunion Milestone Moment

Milestones Ministry brings an awareness of the presence of God to individuals of all generations by recognizing the home as church, too. Milestones Ministry provides a clear and usable model for congregations, homes, and community to connect faith formation resources with daily life experiences. The rich variety of life experiences represented in Milestones Ministry does the essential ministry of the church: promoting Christian faith formation with family, friends, and others with whom we can reach.

When a family gathers for a reunion, it is a wonderful blessing that provides an opportunity to embrace the past, time for remembering relationships and meeting new members of the family. This milestone is a good time to reflect on past generations and the lives of those who have gone before. There has been a history specific to each participating household that includes disappointments, joys, and hopes. It is important to be sensitive to a wide variety of experiences. This Milestone Moment offers an opportunity for family members to be excited about traveling side-by-side into the future with the encouragement that the Christian faith has brought and continues to bring to families.

Milestones incorporate a simple structure that includes naming, equipping, blessing, gifting, and reinforcing so that the Milestones Ministry Moment has a greater chance to take deeper root in lifelong faith formation.

**Four Keys for Practicing Faith**

- Caring Conversations
- Devotions

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**MILESTONES MINISTRY**

Scripture alone  
Faith alone  
Grace alone  
— Reformation Themes

## Reformation Anniversary Milestone Moment

On October 31, 1517 Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses on the door of a church in Wittenberg, Germany. That event is recognized as the beginning of the Reformation. Luther would continue to clarify his message to emphasize salvation by grace through faith in Christ. What began in 1517 as an objection to the selling of indulgences to pay for St. Peter's Basilica in Rome launched a renewal of the church that continues to this day.

The Reformation directly impacted church and society. Luther helped bring the Christian faith into the daily lives of people by translating the Bible and liturgy into the German language and bringing faith to the common people by emphasizing love God's work as simple, joyful, and raising the voice of the poor and Christian life.

**Naming** – Observing the Reformation encourages us to pause and give thanks for how Martin Luther and other reformers proclaimed the heart of the gospel. It provides opportunities to reflect on how the Reformation continues to impact our lives of faith. This Milestone Moment incorporates a five part structure: the importance of trusting God's action and not our efforts as essential to salvation. This Reformation message frees us to love God and neighbor and to share the Christian faith with the world.

**Equipping** – Experience the importance of the Reformation in people's lives by engaging in caring conversations, devotional reflections, service, and Christian rituals and traditions that reflect key Reformation themes.

**Blessing** – The Reformation promotes a life of prayer for all people. Offering a blessing to others is a sacred and relational moment for Christians that extends God's love and grace to others.

**Gifting** – Giving a tangible gift like a bookmark, Bible, cross, Small Catechism, or other reminder of this occasion for years to come.

**Reinforcing** – Following the Reformation Anniversary Milestone Moment, it is important to continue to reflect on how salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ transforms our lives every day.

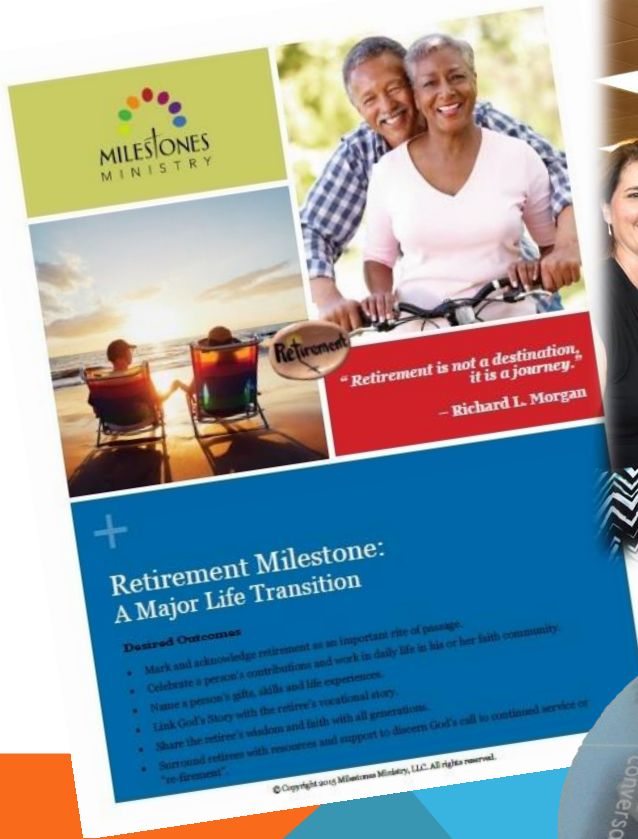


**MILESTONES MINISTRY**

Service Rituals and Traditions

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# Home Example



**MILESTONES MINISTRY**

**Retirement**

*"Retirement is not a destination, it is a journey."*  
— Richard L. Morgan

**Retirement Milestone: A Major Life Transition**

**Desired Outcomes**

- Mark and acknowledge retirement as an important rite of passage.
- Celebrate a person's contributions and work in daily life in his or her faith community.
- Name a person's gifts, skills and life experiences.
- Link God's story with the retiree's vocational story.
- Share the retiree's wisdom and faith with all generations.
- Surround retirees with resources and support to discern God's call to continued service or "re-retirement".

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**MILESTONES MINISTRY**

**Broken Bone Milestone Moment**

Milestones Ministry brings an awareness of the presence of God to individuals of all generations by recognizing the presence of God in our daily lives. Providing opportunities to find God's presence in these moments is important. This Broken Bone Milestone Moment incorporates a simple structure that includes:

**Naming** – It is important to recognize the changes that may take place in the lives of the one who has broken a bone and the lives of those who care for that person.

**Equipping** – This Milestone Moment encourages caring conversations that draw out thoughts and concerns about healing.

**Blessing** – Praying for the one who has broken a bone and for those who will help and care for this person is a great way to witness faith in action in daily life.

**Gifting** – Giving a tangible gift like get well notes, pictures or cards or writing a special message in a Bible are good ways to help participants be reminded of this milestone in daily life. Be creative! Gift something that perhaps will help the person while the cast is still on.

**Reinforcing** – It is a good idea to follow up after the Broken Bone Milestone Moment by gathering one more time after the cast has been removed to share stories about life with and without a cast on and give thanks for healing.

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**Four Keys for Practicing Faith**

- Praying
- Devotions
- Service
- Rituals and Traditions

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**MILESTONES MINISTRY**


# Digital Example



Skype  
Google Hang Out  
Face Time



*Milestones Ministry is a faith formation practice for both home and congregation that helps all generations recognize God's presence in everyday life.*

**Five Steps:** 

**Name it** - identify meaningful, memorable moments

**Equip it** - provide faith practices

**Bless it** - offer a prayer and a blessing

**Gift it** - give a visual reminder

**Reinforce it** - follow up to firmly root faith



Let's  
do it!

1. Name it
2. Equip it
3. Bless it
4. Gift it
5. Reinforce it

How will you form faith  
through milestones?

# How will you.....?

Be Intentional

Set Expectations

Plan for  
Accountability

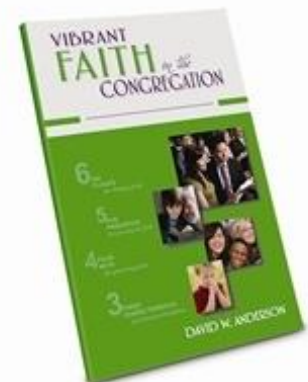
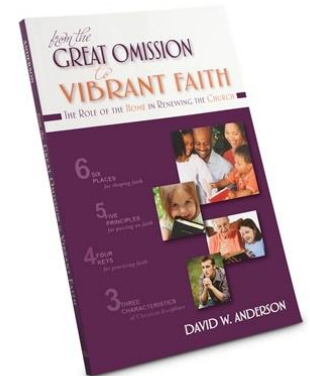
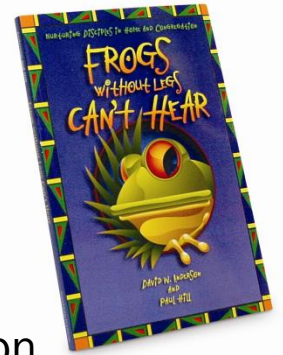
# MILESTONES MINISTRY FRAME

## Five Principles *for living and passing on faith*

- Faith is formed by the power of the Holy Spirit through personal, trusted relationships often in our own homes.
- The church is a living partnership between the ministry of the congregation and ministry of the home.
- Where Christ is present in faith, the home is church too.
- Faith is caught more than it is taught.
- If we want Christian children and youth, we need Christian adults.

## Four Keys *for practicing faith*

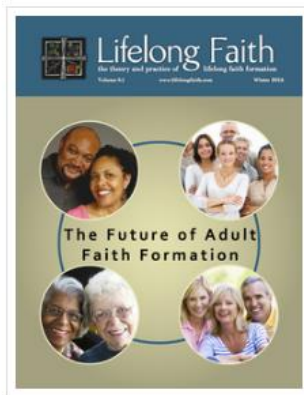
- Caring Conversations
- Devotions
- Service
- Rituals and Traditions



# Lifelong Faith Journals

JOIN THE LIFELONG FAITH MAILING LIST

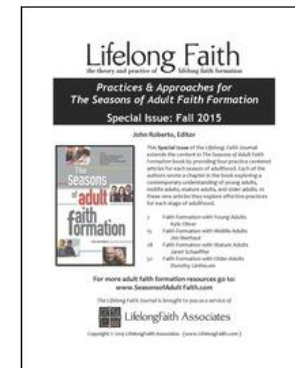
## Fall 2015 & Winter 2016 Special Issues on Adult Faith Formation



Download your copy!

At the 2015 Adult Faith Formation Symposium participants were guided through a scenario planning process to create four scenarios for the future of adult faith formation in congregations and to design strategies for using the scenarios to design new initiatives and projects in adult faith formation. The Winter 2016 Journal issue - **A Guide to Envisioning the Future of Adult Faith Formation** - includes the summary report and adds documentation from the Symposium and additional strategy resources, including tools for facilitating an Adult Faith Formation Scenario Process in your faith community or denomination.

The Fall 2015 issue of the *Lifelong Faith* Journal extends the content in *The Seasons of Adult Faith Formation* book by providing four practice-centered articles for each season of adulthood. Each of the authors wrote a chapter in the book exploring a contemporary understanding of young adults, midlife adults,



Download your copy!

<http://www.lifelongfaith.com/journal.html>

Fall 2014 – Milestones Ministry, An Effective Model for Lifelong Faith

Spring-Summer 2015 – A Milestones Focus on Adults: Replacing Programs with Relationships

Winter 2015– Milestones as a Means to Empower and Equip Lives of Faith



LifelongFaith Associates

# FAMILIES AT THE CENTER

HOME

FAMILY LIFE

PARENTS

GOD IN LIFE

FAITH @ HOME

MILESTONES

SEASONS

SUNDAY WORSHIP

FAITH @ CHURCH



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*Growing the  
church  
by growing  
people in faith*



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