Vibrant Faith Institute
Developing Pathways and Playlists for Discipleship and Faith Growth

Personalized learning is tailoring learning (faith formation) around each person's strengths, needs and interests— including enabling choice in what, how, when and where people learn (grow in faith and discipleship).

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.. People should be able to clearly understand where they are in their faith journey and their next steps in faith growth. They don't have to do everything, they just need to do the one next thing..

A Pathway is life-centered, reaching into every area of a person's life: relationships, family life, life transitions, marriage, parenting, financial stewardship, spiritual formation, professional and work life, service to others, and more.

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

- *A way of the head* (inform) demands a discipleship of faith seeking understanding and belief with personal conviction, sustained by study, reflecting, discerning and deciding, all toward spiritual wisdom for life. This requires that we educate people to know, understand, and embrace with personal conviction Christianity's core belief and values.
- *A way of the heart* (form) demands a discipleship of right relationships and right desires, community building, hospitality and inclusion, trust in God's love, and prayer and worship. This requires that we foster growth in people's identity through formation and the intentional socialization of Christian family and community.
- *A way of the hands* (transform) demands a discipleship of love, justice, peace-making, simplicity, integrity, healing, and repentance. This requires that we foster in people an openness to a lifelong journey of conversion toward holiness and fullness of life for themselves and for the life of the world. (See *Will There Be Faith: A New Vision for Educating and Growing Disciples.* Thomas Groome, HarperOne, 2011, pages 111-119).

A Pathway focuses on faith maturing. The goal of a Pathway is to develop disciples and promote faith growth. A Pathway is created around the church's vision of discipleship and mature faith—identifying characteristics of faith maturing that can be used for people to discern their faith journey and chart a path for growth.

Faith Maturing & Personalizing Faith Formation

We are proposing to form disciples and promote faith growth through ten essential characteristics of Christian faith and discipleship that incorporate knowing and believing, relating and belonging, practicing and living. These ten characteristics—drawn from the Christian faith tradition and from research on what makes a difference in people's lives—can form the basis of helping people discern their faith journey and needs, and help the congregation accompany people through relationships, programs, activities, and resources.

Ten Characteristics of Faith Maturing
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 and integrating its meaning into one's life
5. Praying—together and by ourselves, and seeking spiritual growth through spiritual disciplines
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

We are proposing personalizing faith formation as a way to address the increasingly diverse spiritual-religious identifies of people today. Personalizing learning, one of the latest educational innovations, seeks to address the diverse learning needs of people in educational settings. We can bring this innovation into faith formation. We personalize faith formation in order to address the greater diversity in religious practice and engagement among our people. Personalizing faith formation provides a way to address the diverse faith growth needs of adults by tailoring the faith forming environment—the what, when, how and where people learn and grow—to address the spiritual and religious interests and needs of people. It means providing variety and choice in faith formation programming, activities, and resources around the lives of people.

We know from research and experience that children, youth, adults, and families represent at least four religious-spiritual identities:

1. ***People with a vibrant faith and relationship with God who are engaged in the faith community****.* For these people religious faith is central to their lives. These are people of all ages who are spiritually committed and growing in their faith within a church community. These are people who have found their spiritual home within an established Christian tradition and a local faith community that provides ways for them to grow in faith, worship God, and live their faith in the world. They are living their faith in daily life, at home, and in the world. Congregations are challenged to provide lifelong faith formation for all ages and generations, at home and at church, that develops vibrant faith, is continuous throughout life, and engages all people in the life and mission of the church community

2. ***People who participate occasionally in the faith community and whose faith is less central to their daily lives.*** These are people who participate occasionally in church life—Sunday worship, seasonal celebrations, community events, and age-group programs. They may participate in significant seasonal celebrations, such as Christmas and Easter, and celebrate sacraments and milestone events, such as marriage and baptism. Some may even attend worship regularly and send their children to church programs. For parents transmitting a religious faith often means bringing their children to educational programs at church, and participating because of their children. For "Occasionals" their spiritual commitment is not central to the way they live their lives and their connection to the church is more social and utilitarian than spiritual. While receptive to an established church, they do not have a faith commitment that would make their relationship with God and participation in a faith community a priority in their lives. Their occasional engagement in church life does not lead them toward spiritual commitment. Congregations are challenges to develop faith formation that begins with the spiritual life and level of engagement of "Occasionals."

3. ***People who are uninvolved in a church but are spiritual.*** These are people who are often called "spiritual but not religious." Many of these people are "Dones" who have left church after decades of

participation and often leadership roles within the church. Many believe in God and have a relationship God, and are growing spiritually. Many practice their Christian faith unattached to a faith community or tradition. Many are spiritually hungry and searching for God and a life of meaning and purpose. Some may join a nondenominational Christian church focused on their spiritual needs, while others may find an outlet for their spiritual hunger in small communities of like-minded spiritual seekers, in local or global acts of service, or in online spiritual resources and communities. Parents, though not involved in a church, may send their children to church programs; and the parents may participate at times with their children. Congregations are challenged to become more missional—reaching people where they live (in-person and online), building relationships, engaging in spiritual conversations, offering programs and activities that nurture their spiritual growth in home or community settings, and inviting them to consider participation in a church community.

4. ***People who unaffiliated and have left involvement in organized religion.*** These are the "Nones." They no longer believe religion is important in their lives. They experience little need for God and the spiritual life and are not affiliated with organized religion and established Christian churches. The unaffiliated reflect a steadily increasing percentage of the American population, especially young adults in their 20s and 30s. Many parents today are "first generation Nones" and are raising their children in religiously uninvolved and unaffiliated homes creating a "second generation of Nones." Many leave organized religion because they stopped believing in the religion's teachings (usually a top reason), or because their family was never that religious when they were growing up, or because of their experience of negative religious teaching about or treatment of LGBTQ people (*Exodus*, 2016). Congregations are challenged to find ways to move out into the world and cultures of the unaffiliated, build relationships, and be witnesses to the Christian faith in the world today. Congregations are challenged to develop strategies and approaches for moving faith formation from the church into the community and online.

We need to tailor faith formation to address these four identities at each stage of life. The days of a one-size-fits-all program are gone. No one program, class, or resource can address the diverse faith growth needs of people today. We can create personalized approaches that use the faith maturing characteristics to guide people in discerning their faith growth needs, and providing content, experiences, and activities that help them to grow from where they are

We can take each characteristic and develop a *Pathways Guide* to help people discover where they are in their faith journey using a continuum from "getting started" to "growing" to "going deeper" with short illustrations for each one. Then we can develop a personalized faith growth plan—or what educators are now calling *Playlists*—of content (print, audio, video, online) and direct experiences to address their needs.

There are two ways to design a personalized plan for faith formation. The first utilizes a *Pathways Guide* to help people discern their faith growth needs and then provides *Playlists* of content, experiences, and activities to address those needs. The second approach personalizes a congregation's faith formation offerings by tailoring them to distinct faith growth needs through a variety of *Playlists* and inviting people to select the activities that best address their spiritual and religious journey.

Develop a Pathways Guide

A *Pathways Guide* 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.. People should be able to clearly understand where they are in their faith journey and their next steps in faith growth. They don't have to do everything, they just need to do the one next thing.

A *Pathway* focuses on faith maturing. The goal of a Pathway is to develop disciples and promote faith growth. A Pathway is created around the church's vision of discipleship and maturing faith—identifying characteristics of faith maturing that can be used for people to discern their faith journey and chart a path for growth.

Approach One uses the ten faith maturing characteristics (or similar characteristics from your Christian tradition) to create a *Pathways Guide* to help people discern their faith growth needs, and then design *Playlists* of content and experiences that address each characteristic. The *Pathways Guide* incorporates a rating scale for discerning faith growth needs, for example: Getting Started, Growing, Going Deeper.

Playlists of content and experiences are developed for each characteristic with activities targeted to each rating on the discernment continuum (getting started, growing, going deeper). There are *Playlists* for each "level" on the continuum. *Playlists* incorporate a variety of programming including gathered programs at church, small groups, online learning and resources, mentoring, and more. The *Playlists* are published on a digital platform to make it easy for people to access them.

Design Process
1. Identify a target audience(s).
2. Identify how and where you will use the *Pathways Guide*.
3. Develop the characteristics of faith growth you want to use in your *Pathways Guide*. Use the ten characteristics of maturing faith or use characteristics of faith growth specific to the content of the event or program (such as preparing for confirmation).
4. Develop a 'discernment continuum" that gives people a way to reflect on their current growth. Use a faith growth continuum: Getting Started, Growing or Making Progress, Going Deeper; or a rating scale: How true is each statement for you: 1= not true from me , 3=somewhat true for me, 5=very true for me.

Developing Faith Formation Playlists

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 Getting Started, Growing, Going Deeper. Each playlist provides a variety of ways for people to learn and grow in faith. Here's a checklist for designing *Playlists*.

Design Process

1. Develop *Playlists* for a target audience.
2. Select content and experiences to address each faith maturing characteristic with activities for each "level" of discernment. Some of the resources and programming will apply to multiple "levels" of faith growth needs. Review the "Curating Resources" section to develop a process for finding, reviewing, and using resources, especially digital resources, in designing your *Playlists*.
3. Using a variety of settings or environments for faith growth: independent, mentored, at home, small group, large group, intergenerational /whole church, and world.
4. Address the ways people learn through a variety of activities: verbal-linguistic (word/book smart), logical-mathematical (number/logic smart), visual-spatial (art/picture smart), bodily-kinesthetic (body/movement smart), musical-rhythmic (music/sound smart), naturalist (nature/environment smart), interpersonal (people/group smart), intrapersonal (self/introspection smart).
5. Use a variety of methods: reading; writing/keeping a journal; storytelling and creating stories; watching feature films, TV shows, videos; creating a media project or video; viewing or creating art; viewing or taking photographs; watching drama or acting; listening to or creating a podcast; listening to or creating music; conducting a demonstration or exhibit; experiencing games, simulations, video games; analyzing

or creating a case study; developing an apprenticeship or internship; experiencing prayer and rituals; creating prayer experiences; taking a field trip; participating in a mission trip; engaging in or creating a service/action project; developing a mentor relationship; and more.

6. Publish the *Playlists* on a digital platform and use social media for connection, interaction, and sharing learning reflections. You can add the playlists to your existing church website or create a website just for faith formation and link it to your church website. Building a website is made much easier today by the availability of online website builders that provide predesigned website templates, drag-and-drop features to create webpages, and hosting for the website. Three popular website builders to explore are *Weebly*, *Wix*, and *Squarespace*. All three have easy to use features and very reasonable subscription fees. For advanced users *WordPress* provides thousands of predesigned templates, lots of customization features, and ready-to-use apps. *WordPress* does require an understanding of web design and some programming ability.

Methods and Activities

Utilize the Faith Forming Experiences in the Life of the Church
- Sunday worship
- Sacramental celebrations
- Faith formation programming
- Intergenerational and family programming
- Service and justice ministries
- Pastoral care
- Church events and community life

Provide a Variety of Settings or Environments for Faith Growth
- Independent/Individualized
- Mentored
- Family / At Home
- Small Group
- Large Group
- Intergenerational /Whole Church Community
- Community and World

Address the Ways People Learn (Multiple Intelligences) through a Variety of Activities
- Verbal-linguistic (word / book smart)
- Logical-mathematical (number / logic smart)
- Visual-spatial (art / picture smart),
- Bodily-kinesthetic (body / movement smart)
- Musical-rhythmic (music / sound smart)
- Naturalist (nature / environment smart)
- Interpersonal (people / group smart),
- Intrapersonal (self / introspection smart)

Use a Variety of Methods
- Read
- Write
- Engage in storytelling and create stories
- Feature films, TV shows, videos
- Converse with others

- Create a media project or video
- View or create art
- View or take photographs
- Watch or engage in drama
- Listen to or create a podcast
- Listen to or create music
- Conduct a demonstration
- Experience games, simulations, video games
- Analyze or create a case study
- Develop an apprenticeship or internship
- Create an exhibit
- Experience prayer and rituals
- Take a field trip (e.g., churches, museums)
- Participate in a mission trip
- Engage in or create a service / action project
- Keep a journal
- Develop a mentor relationship
- Experience events in the congregation

Here is an example of a Playlist for parents on reading and studying the Bible with children at home.

Getting Started
- Participate in the Bible workshop for parents that is offered twice a year.
- Watch the "Reading the Bible with Children" video and/or listen to the podcast on the family website.
- Begin the practice of a weekly Bible story reading and/or video viewing using the resources on the family website.
- Select and purchase a recommended children's Bible and an adult study Bible for parents.
- Engage the children in the summer vacation Bible school program.

Growing
- Continue the weekly Bible story or video practice.
- Practice the FAITH5 (from Faith Inkubators) each day: Share the highs and lows of the day every night; read a key Bible verse or story every night; talk about how the Bible reading might relate to your highs and lows; pray for one another's highs and lows aloud every night; bless one another before turning out the lights of the day.
- Participate in the family Scripture reflection after Sunday worship each week.
- Learn how to pray with the Bible by watching the video online and using the prayer activities online.
- Participate in the church wide "30-Day Bible Experience" of reading one gospel at home.
- Engage the children in the summer vacation Bible school program.

Going Deeper
- Continue the FAITH5 daily practice.
- Join an adult Bible study group offered by the church.
- Engage the whole family in a 365-day "read the whole Bible" experience using the resources on the family website.
- Develop a personal Bible study plan using the resources on the family website.
- Participate in the family Scripture reflection after Sunday worship each week.
- Engage the children in the summer vacation Bible school program.

Curating Resources for Faith Formation

One of the essential skills for developing Playlists of rich content and experiences is learning how to *curate* high quality faith formation content in all forms and media that can engage people in learning and growing in developmentally appropriate ways targeted to their faith growth needs.

Curation may be a new word for many, but it has a long history. The term *curator* comes from the Latin word *curare* meaning "to care for." Every time we visit a museum we experience the work of museum curators who acquire, care for, develop, display, and interpret a collection of artifacts or works of art in order to inform, educate, and entertain us. Museum curators are subject-matter experts who guide a museum's overall art collection. Librarians have a similar curation task—they curate books and media in a variety of forms, including digital—to inform, educate, and entertain us. Like museum curators, librarians have done this for centuries. The Library of Alexandria (Egypt) in the ancient world have had curators over two thousand years ago!

A content curator is someone who continually finds, groups, organizes, and shares the best and most relevant content on a specific subject to match the needs of a specific audience. Content curators provide a personalized, high-quality selection of the best and most relevant content and resources available. They do not create more content, but make sense of all the content that others are creating.

How does curation apply to faith formation? When faith formation was a matter of selecting the right print resource or program from the right religious publisher, there was little need for curation. Leaders simply selected the right resource. But even in the era of "the resource is the curriculum," many faith formation leaders were curators. To design home-grown programming they would search through print resource, films, and music to design a retreat or a youth meeting or an adult topical series or a parent workshop. They never thought of themselves as curators, but that is what they were doing—searching through a variety of resources, selecting the most appropriate resources to match with the needs of the people and the program, and then using the resource in the program design.

We now live in an era where there is an abundance of religious content in digital form—audio, video, apps, e-books, websites—and in print form. We are benefiting from the rise of online resource centers with freely accessible, high quality religious content and experiences that congregations, families, and individuals can access. In the new digital world of abundant resources, the role of the faith-formation leader is shifting from *providing* religious content and programming to *curating* religious content and experiences for all ages.

So what is a faith formation curator? A faith formation curator is a trusted guide who continually finds, groups, organizes, and connects the best and most relevant content and resources on a specific subject to match the needs of a specific audience. The resources can come in many forms: people resources, programs at church and in the community, and media resources (print, audio, video, online, digital). Curation is the way that faith formation leaders connect programming with high quality resources.

We can identify three steps in the process of curating faith formation: 1) research and organize resources, 2) evaluate resources, and 3) connect the resources to programming. The research and organize phase of the process is continuous. Good curators are always searching for new resources and organizing them for future use.

Step 1. Research and Organize the Resources

The first step in the curation process is researching and reviewing resources. This is the collection phase. There's no need to select or evaluate resources at this stage—the key is to collect as many high-quality resources for faith formation.

It is helpful to develop a list of trusted expert curators to assist you in researching and evaluating resources. We all know people in faith formation who make it part of their work to stay current with the best resources. Make a list of these people and invite them to be part of the curation support system.

It is also helpful to develop a list of high-quality online resource centers with high-quality content. Be selective—this does not have to be a long list of websites. Select resource centers with well-produced content. Review websites from national and regional denominational agencies, religious publishers, churches, and religious organizations online faith formation content. For a list of online resources for faith formation go to the "Curation" section of the LifelongFaith.com website.

Be sure to subscribe to faith formation blogs and newsletters that review faith formation resources to make it easier for you to keep up-to-date on what's new. Blogs and newsletters are produced by individuals, denominational offices, seminaries, religious organizations, and religious publishers. A good example of a faith formation blog (and online resource center) is *Building Faith* (www.buildfaith.org) from Virginia Theological Seminary.

Here is a checklist of the types of resources to research:
- People: teachers, mentors/guides, program leaders, small group leaders, guest presenters
- Community programs: churches, agencies, organizations,
- Educational institutions: colleges, seminaries, educational organizations
- Retreat and spiritual life centers, monasteries
- Regional and national denominational programs, events, and websites
- Museums
- Books (with study guides)
- E-books
- Apps
- Audio podcasts
- Audio learning programs
- Videos, feature films, and TV shows
- Video learning programs
- Online courses
- Online activities

One of the easiest ways to develop a library of faith formation resources is to create homegrown resources by saving and archiving church programming. Develop a plan for recording presentations and programs at church in audio/and or video format. Think of all of the opportunities throughout the year for recording program that can be used in other learning formats such as self-study or small group study. Consider weekly sermons, presentations, special events, concerts, and more. Develop a YouTube channel for the congregation to store and categorize all of the video recordings.

Step 2. Evaluate Resources

Every faith formation curator needs standards for evaluating faith formation resources that reflect their Christian tradition and the needs of their congregation. A set of evaluation standards needs to be developed locally. Consult denominational resources for evaluating curriculum resources. Most denominations have

evaluation standards for assessing educational resources or textbooks. This can serve as a basis for developing the congregation's evaluation standards.

Here are ten categories for developing a resource evaluation checklist. Add one or more focusing questions to each category. Try to keep the checklist short so that it is easy to use. Use the evaluation criteria to review potential resources.

1. Biblical content and interpretation
2. Theological content and emphasis
3. Developmental appropriateness
4. Ethnic-cultural appropriateness
5. Inclusive of diversity
6. Respect for diverse ways of learning
7. Appearance and visual appeal
8. Ease-of-use
9. Quality of experience
10. Ability to be incorporated into daily and home life

Step 3. Select Resources for Playlists

Select the best resources for your target audience to match with each faith maturing characteristic on your *Pathways Guide* and with the different "levels" of faith growth. Select content and experiences for your *Playlists* that include intergenerational, family age-specific, and online and digital.

Worksheet: Designing a Pathways Guide

1. Identify a target audience(s): children and parents, adolescents, young adults, midlife adults, mature adults, older adults.

2. Describe the life stage & religious-spiritual characteristics of your target audience.
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

3. Identify how you will use the Pathways Guide. For example:
- ✓ Sacraments/milestones: Marriage, Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation, beginning church faith formation, etc.
- ✓ RCIA, evangelization, and new member processes
- ✓ Gathered faith formation events and programming
- ✓ Parenting meetings
- ✓ Small groups: affinity groups, interest groups, Bible study groups,
- ✓ On-ramps where people in your church might start the discipleship journey

4. Develop the characteristics of faith growth you want to use in your Pathways Guide. For example:
- ✓ Option 1. Use characteristics of faith growth specific to the life stage - such as family faith practices (see example) or the content of the event (such as preparing for confirmation)
- ✓ Option 2. Use characteristics of maturing faith (see "Faith Maturing Characteristics")
  - Developing and sustaining a personal relationship and commitment to Jesus Christ
  - Living as a disciple of Jesus Christ and making the Christian faith a way of life
  - Reading and studying the Bible—its message, meaning, and application to life today
  - Learning the Christian story and foundational teachings of the Christian faith and integrating its meaning into one's life
  - Praying—together and by ourselves, and seeking spiritual growth through spiritual disciplines
  - Living with moral integrity guided by Christian ethics and values
  - Living the Christian mission in the world—serving those in need, caring for God's creation, and acting and advocating for justice and peace.
  - Worshipping God with the community at Sunday worship, ritual celebrations, and the seasons of the church year
  - Being actively engaged in the life, ministries, and activities of the faith community
  - Practicing faith in Jesus Christ by using one's gifts and talents within the Christian community and in the world

5. Develop a 'discernment continuum" that gives people a way to reflect on their current growth. For example:
- ✓ Inquiring---Getting Started---Making Progress---Going Deeper
- ✓ How true is each statement for you: 1= not true from me , 3=somewhat true for me, 5=very true for me

Example: Adolescent Faith Growth Pathway

Here is an example of an adolescent Pathways Guide to help adolescents identify their strengths and areas of growth in their faith life. All of the items are based on the ten characteristics of faith maturing. Young people respond by answering the question: "How true is each statement 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. God cares for me in a special way.   1 2 3 4 5
2. I am keenly aware of the presence of God in my life.   1 2 3 4 5
3. I try to live my life as a follower of Jesus.   1 2 3 4 5
4. I have a real sense that God is guiding me.   1 2 3 4 5
5. My religious faith is important in my life today.   1 2 3 4 5
6. My life is committed to Jesus Christ.   1 2 3 4 5
7. I am developing a personal relationship with Jesus Christ   1 2 3 4 5
8. I am discovering what Jesus' teachings mean for my life   1 2 3 4 5
9. My faith shapes how I think and act.   1 2 3 4 5
10. I talk about my faith with others   1 2 3 4 5
11. I read and study the Bible and seek its meaning for my life.   1 2 3 4 5
12. I use the Bible to discover how I should think and act.   1 2 3 4 5
13. I am growing in my understanding of the Christian faith—beliefs, traditions, and   1 2 3 4 5
    practices.
14. I ask sincere and searching questions about the nature of a life of faith in God.   1 2 3 4 5
15. I accept opportunities to learn how to speak naturally and intelligently about my   1 2 3 4 5
    faith.
16. I pray regularly.   1 2 3 4 5
17. I feel God's presence in prayer.   1 2 3 4 5
18. I seek out opportunities to help me grow spiritually.   1 2 3 4 5
19. I live my life and make moral decisions guided by Christian moral values that tell   1 2 3 4 5
    me what is right or wrong behavior.
20. My Christian faith helps me know right from wrong.   1 2 3 4 5
21. I am optimistic, trusting, and convinced that I can do much to make the world a   1 2 3 4 5
    better place.
22. I am involved in actions to serve those in need.   1 2 3 4 5
23. I am involved in actions to care for creation.   1 2 3 4 5
24. I speak out and act against specific social injustices.
25. I feel God's presence when I serve people in need.   1 2 3 4 5
26. I see evidence that God is active in the world.   1 2 3 4 5
27. I worship God regularly at Sunday worship.   1 2 3 4 5
28. I feel God's presence when I worship on Sunday.   1 2 3 4 5
29. I am actively engaged in activities of my church community.   1 2 3 4 5
30. I practice my faith in Jesus by using my gifts and talents at church and in the world. 1 2 3 4 5

Ways I Can Grow

Areas where I need to "get started" (1 and 2 ratings).

Areas where I need to "grow" (2 and 3 ratings).

Areas where I want to "go deeper" (4 and 5 ratings).

Example: 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 every day.

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 = not true from me , 3 = somewhat true for me, and 5 = very true for me.

1. I am growing in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　1 2 3 4 5
2. My faith shapes how I think and act each and every day.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　1 2 3 4 5
3. I make the Christian faith a way of life by integrating my beliefs into the conversation, decisions, and actions of daily life.　　　　　　　　　　1 2 3 4 5
4. I am aware of God present and active in my own life, the lives of others, and the life of the world.　　　　　　　　　　1 2 3 4 5
5. I have a real sense that God is guiding me.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　1 2 3 4 5
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.　　　　　　　　　　1 2 3 4 5
7. I devote time to reading and studying the Bible.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　1 2 3 4 5
8. I use the Bible to discover how I should think and act.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　1 2 3 4 5
9. I pray to God and take quiet time to reflect and listen to God.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　1 2 3 4 5
10. I am growing spiritually through spiritual practices such as contemplation, *lectio divina,* praying Scripture, daily Examen (reflection), and meditation.　　　　　　　　　　1 2 3 4 5
11. I can articulate the fundamental teachings of the Christian faith.　　　　　　　　　　1 2 3 4 5
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.　　　　　　　　　　1 2 3 4 5
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.　　　　　　　　　　1 2 3 4 5
16. I am involved in ways to promote social justice and address injustice in the world.　　　　　　　　　　1 2 3 4 5
17. I am involved in actions to care for creation.　　　　　　　　　　1 2 3 4 5
18. I share the Good News of Jesus through my words and actions.　　　　　　　　　　1 2 3 4 5
19. I participate actively and regularly in the worship life of the church community.　　　　　　　　　　1 2 3 4 5
20. I participate in the life, ministries, and leadership of the church community.　　　　　　　　　　1 2 3 4 5

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 "Going Deeper" (look at the numbers 4 and 5)

Example: Parent Faith Growth Pathway

Here is an example of a *Parent Pathways Guide* to help them identify their strengths and areas of growth in their faith life, and as faith formers of their children and adolescents. All of the items are based on the ten characteristics of faith maturing. Parents respond by answering the question: "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.   1 2 3 4 5
2. My faith shapes how I think and act each and every day.   1 2 3 4 5
3. I make the Christian faith a way of life by integrating my beliefs into the conversation, decisions, and actions of daily life.   1 2 3 4 5
4. I am aware of God present and active in my own life, the lives of others, and the life of the world.   1 2 3 4 5
5. I have a real sense that God is guiding me.   1 2 3 4 5
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.   1 2 3 4 5
7. I devote time to reading and studying the Bible.   1 2 3 4 5
8. I use the Bible to discover how I should think and act.   1 2 3 4 5
9. I pray to God and take quiet time to reflect and listen to God.   1 2 3 4 5
10. I am growing spiritually through spiritual practices such as contemplation, praying Scripture, daily reflection, and meditation.   1 2 3 4 5
11. I can articulate the fundamental teachings of the Christian faith.   1 2 3 4 5
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.   1 2 3 4 5
14. My Christian faith helps me know right from wrong.   1 2 3 4 5
15. I live a life of service by caring for others and reaching out those in need.   1 2 3 4 5
16. I am involved in ways to promote social justice and address injustice in the world.   1 2 3 4 5
17. I am involved in actions to care for creation.   1 2 3 4 5
18. I share the Good News of Jesus through my words and actions.   1 2 3 4 5
19. I participate actively and regularly in the worship life of the church community.   1 2 3 4 5
20. I participate in the life, ministries, and leadership of the church community.   1 2 3 4 5

Ways I Can Grow

Areas Where I Need to "Get Started" (look at the 1 and 2 rating)

Areas Where I Need to "Grow" (look at the 2 and 3 ratings)

Areas Where I Want to "Go Deeper" (look at the 4 and 5 ratings)

Example: Family Practices Pathway

Here is an example of a *Family Pathways Guide* for parents to help identify their strengths and areas of growth as a family. All of the items are based on the ten characteristics of faith maturing. Parents respond by answering the question: "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. We eat together as a family.   1 2 3 4 5
2. We engage in positive communication as a family.   1 2 3 4 5
3. We have family conversations about things that are important to us.   1 2 3 4 5
4. We make decisions and solve problems as a family.   1 2 3 4 5
5. We treat each other with respect and dignity.   1 2 3 4 5
6. We support each other: encouraging, expressing care, standing up for each other.   1 2 3 4 5
7. I demonstrate a warm and affirming parenting approach.   1 2 3 4 5
8. I create a warm, caring supportive family environment.   1 2 3 4 5
9. I practice effective communication skills with my children/teens.
10. We talk about faith as a family.   1 2 3 4 5
11. We pray as a family (meal time, bedtime).   1 2 3 4 5
12. We pray as a family during times of struggle or crisis.   1 2 3 4 5
13. I encourage my children/teens to pray.
14. I provide moral instruction and how to decide right and wrong.   1 2 3 4 5
15. We celebrate meaningful traditions and rituals as a family (holidays, birthdays, accomplishments, etc.).   1 2 3 4 5
16. We read the Bible as a family.   1 2 3 4 5
17. We use the Bible as guidance for how we should think and act as a family.   1 2 3 4 5
18. I encourage my children/teens to read the Bible.
19. We serve people in need as a family.   1 2 3 4 5
20. We work to overcome injustice in our world as a family.   1 2 3 4 5
21. We engage in projects to care for the environment as a family.   1 2 3 4 5
22. I encourage my children/teens to talk about their doubts and questions about faith.   1 2 3 4 5
23. I talk about faith and our religious tradition with our children and teens.   1 2 3 4 5
24. I ask about our children/teens perspectives on faith, religion, moral issues, social issues.   1 2 3 4 5
25. We participate in Sunday worship as a family.   1 2 3 4 5
26. We participate in church activities as a family.   1 2 3 4 5
27. We celebrate the church year seasons at church (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter).   1 2 3 4 5
28. We celebrate the seasons of the church year at home (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter).   1 2 3 4 5
29. I encourage and support our children/teens to participate in church activities.   1 2 3 4 5
30. I encourage our children and teens to pursue their talents and interests.   1 2 3 4 5
31. I work with my children/teens to manage "screen time" and social media use.   1 2 3 4 5
32. I express care to my children/teens by listening to them, being dependable, encouraging them, and make them feel known and valued.   1 2 3 4 5
33. I challenge my children by expecting them to do their best and live up to their potential.   1 2 3 4 5
34. I provide support for my children/teens by encouraging their efforts and achievements and guiding them to learn and grow.   1 2 3 4 5
35. I treat my children/teens with respect, hearing their voice, and including them in decisions that affect them.   1 2 3 4 5
36. I inspire my children/teens to see possibilities for their future, expose them to new experiences and places, and connect them to people who can help them grow.   1 2 3 4 5

Ways I Can Grow

Areas We Are Strong as a Family (Review ratings of 4 and 5.) . . . .

Areas We Need to Grow as a Family (Review ratings 1, 2, and 3) . . . .