We Are Family: Where Faith Meets Life (WCCRE 2018)

Strategies for Family Faith Formation

John Roberto
Vibrant Faith Leadership Team
jroberto@lifelongfaith.com

www.VibrantFaith.org
www.LifelongFaith.com
SeasonsofAdultFaith.com
FamiliesattheCenter.com
Lifelong Faith Books
www.LifelongFaith.com

FAMILIES & FAITH
Changing Spiritual Religious Identities

- 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

Canadian Spiritual Religious Identities

- Reject Religion (26%)
  - No-Religious seldom or never participate, yet 50% identify with a religious tradition
- Middle (45%)
  - Low-Religious infrequent participation, but identify with a religion, open to involvement
- Embrace Religion (30%)
  - Pro-religious involved, pray, read the Bible, feel God cares about them, feel God’s presence
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:

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

SOURCE: Public Religion Research Institute

DESERET NEWS GRAPHIC

Changing Spiritual-Religious Identities

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

- 10 to 12: 24%
- 13 to 17: 39%
- 18 to 20: 11%
- 21 to 25: 11%
- 5 to 9: 10%
- Under age 5: 5%
- Median age = 13
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)
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.

(Burtkus 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.

(Burtkus and Smith)
Parental Influence

Sponsor of the Faith
point of access between church home

Gatekeeper of the Faith
control over how much and what sorts of religious content their children encounter

Interpreter of the Faith
meaningful embodiment of the Christian faith in the lives of children

Parent Role

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
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.

DESIGNING FOR TODAY’S FAMILIES
Family Design: Life Stages
children/teens – parents - grandparents

Life in Today’s Families
How do they spend their time?
The Power of Habit

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?**

**WHAT REWARD DO YOU WANT TO CREATE?**

**THE CUE**

- What time is it?
- What craving do you think your habit is satisfying?
- Where are you?
- What did you just do?

**THE REWARD**

- What emotion are you feeling?

**THE ROUTINE**

- Substitute another reward (i.e., instead of eating a cookie, have a cup of coffee.)
- Is the craving gone?

**THE HABIT YOU WANT TO CHANGE**

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

**THE CUE**

- From Step 1

**THE ROUTINE**

- From Step 2

**THE REWARD**

- Substitute the opposite reward (i.e., instead of eating a cookie, take a walk.)
- Is the craving gone?

**STEPS**

1. **THE CUE**
2. **THE REWARD**
3. **THE ROUTINE**

**ONE OF THESE 5 THINGS IS THE CUE.**

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

**STEPS**

1. **THE CUE**
2. **THE REWARD**
3. **THE ROUTINE**

**THE REWARD**

- When I do __________, it provides me with ________.

**THE ROUTINE**

- When __________, I will ____________ because ________.
DESIGNING FOR TODAY’S FAMILIES

Family Faith Formation

@ Home

@ Church & School

@ Online Website, Social Media
Family Faith Formation
@ Home & Church or School

1. Faith Practices
   • Learning the tradition
   • Praying and spiritual formation
   • Reading the Bible
   • Serving, working for justice, caring for creation
   • Worshipping

2. Seasons of the Year

3. Rituals and Milestones

Parent Faith Formation
@ Home & Church or School

Key Content

Faith Forming Skills & Practices

Knowledge & Skills for Parenting

Parental Faith Formation
Family & Parent Formation Online

Families at the Center of Faith Formation
A Network of Experiences, Activities & Resources for Families with Children

Family Design: Life Stages
children/teens – parents - grandparents
## Developing a Design for Families

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**DIGITAL STRATEGIES**
What Does Digital Make Possible

1. **Mobile**: Learning and faith formation are now mobile—anytime, anyplace, 24x7.
2. **Abundance**: Audio, video, print, websites, apps, online learning platforms, and more.
3. **Multiple Ways to Grow**
4. **Micro-learning Content**
5. **Faith Formation Website**: learning center, a portal to activities and resources, and a connecting point for people.
6. **Online Learning Spaces**: Edmodo, Schoology, and Google Classroom

Digital Methods for Faith Formation

1. Extend a church event or program
2. Design one event or program, offer it in multiple platforms
3. Prepare for and follow-up an an event or experience
4. Flip a gathered program
5. Integrate online and gathered
6. Create online only experiences
7. Use webinars, Facebook live, podcasts, etc. to deliver programming directly to people
"Its 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!" As on their lives, they absolutely treasure the time when their kids growing up. They know that I'm busy and sometimes frustrated and family. And so, they remind me to slow down and enjoy the kids because it won't come again. It is really hard to remember of getting everyone fed, homework done, shuffling kids to prac and doctor's appointments. So, I am grateful for these older, wiser parents that remind me to slow down, breathe deep, and enjoy the moment same for you. -Keith

Collect Rocks, Spread the Love

Collecting rocks must be one of the most low-tech summer activity. The Kindness Rocks project turns it into something beautiful. Collecting rocks and use it to spread the love. Extend the Event
Sunday Worship

- Learning
- Praying
- Reading the Bible: Daily Readings
- Living

Tri-Saints Lutheran Hardy, NE
One Event/ Program, Multiple Formats

- Gathered
- Small Group
- Independent
- Online

- Digital Content to Extend & Provide New Ways to Experience

- Interaction
- Connection
- Communication
- Demonstration

- Website
- Social Media
- Multiple Formats
- Event/ Program

Weekly Themes

- Conversations
- Devotions
- Service
- Rituals and Traditions

Daily Bible Readings

Scripures Verse

Prayer and Blessing
Build on an Event/Experience

Preparing
- 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?

Flip the Model

@ Home / Daily Life
Exploring the Content - print, audio, video, activities

@ The Program
Applying the Content: Create – Practice - Perform - Participate
Webinar Live Presentation

Upper Dublin Lutheran Church

**Teens and Digital Media: Our First Facebook Live Event!**

Join us for our first Facebook Live event from the comfort of home or while you’re out and about on your smartphone as Pastor Keith is joined by Bethany Stolle, who will present on what parents need to know about teens and digital media. Tune into the UDLT Facebook page at 8pm Eastern Time on November 6th to watch and share your ideas and questions. This is open to everyone. Please forward this email or share our Facebook event with a friend! - Keith

**Program Description**

The mall, public parks, friend’s houses, the lunch room, the physical spaces that were central to socialization, extracurricular learning, and identity formation for many of us have increasingly shifted to digital spaces. And there are implications for parents, teachers, ministry leaders and anyone else who works with young people. This workshop will explore digital media trends among kids and teens, the diversity of experiences when it comes to youth and social media, how adolescents are working out their identities through “networked publics,” and considerations for faith formation with a tech-connected generation.

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**STRATEGIES FOR FAMILY FAITH FORMATION**
Family Faith Formation
@ Home & Church or School

1. Faith Practices
   - Learning the tradition
   - Praying and spiritual formation
   - Reading the Bible
   - Serving, working for justice, caring for creation
   - Worshipping

2. Seasons of the Year

3. Rituals and Milestones

Faith Practices Template

Reading the Bible
   - What do you see families doing?
Praying
   - What do you see families doing?
Learning the Tradition
   - What do you see families doing?
Serving
   - What do you see families doing?
Celebrating rituals
   - What do you see families doing?
Family faith conversation
   - What do you see families doing?
Moral/value formation
   - What do you see families doing?
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.
Milestones

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

Forming Faith through Milestones

- **First Year** – Baptism Remembrance (A Gathering for newly baptized)
- Toddlers – Creation (Care for the world God made)
- Pre-School One – Bible (Receive a Story Bible)
- Pre-School Two – Worship (Proclaim Christ and help in worship)
- PreK – 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 one’s own, importance of faith)
Forming Faith through Milestones

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

Forming Faith through Milestones

Preparing
- 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?
Rituals & Milestones
celebrate meaningful, memorable moments in your family

Baptism Anniversary
Have each of your children share the story of their baptism day to celebrate this milestone. It is a total family experience that enriches everyone’s heart.

Starting School
Going off to preschool or kindergarten or this grade for the first time is an exciting milestone for children and parents alike. It demonstrates a level of responsibility and independence that the family will cherish for years.

Getting Ready to Worship
Getting ready to worship makes it easier on time and easier on parents and children. It is important that the family get ready to worship at your church, whether on Sunday morning or during another family time.

Birthday Celebrations
Birthday is a perfect time to celebrate life and show appreciation to God for the people in your life. It is a way to express your thankfulness for the gifts you have been given.

Scripture Reading
Scripture reading is the foundation of your faith. It is a way to understand your life and the world around you. It is a way to grow in your faith and to deepen your relationship with God.

Forming Faith through Milestones

High School Graduation Milestone: Equipping Graduates for the New Seasons

Mission Trip Milestone: Continuously Blessing at Home and Away

External Educational
- Visit to an educational institution or museum
- Participation in a volunteer program
- Joining a study group
- Reading educational books or articles
- Watching educational documentaries
- Attending workshops or seminars
- Attending lectures or conferences

Internal Spiritual
- Daily prayer
- Bible reading
- Devotional time
- Attending church services
- Participating in prayer groups
- Referring to spiritual texts
- Reflecting on personal experiences
- Daydreaming about spiritual experiences

Forming Faith through Milestones

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)
Seasons of the Year

January: Serving Others

February: Praying through Lent

March: The Real Patrick

April: New Life

Online Advent or Lent “Curriculum”
### Integrate Online & Gathered 40-Day Lent Curriculum

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

### Example: Earth Day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Church</th>
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| • Community cleanup  
  • Planting a community garden  
  • All ages workshop on caring for creation  
  • Story time at the library on environmental awareness | • Ecumenical prayer service  
  • Intergenerational program on theology of caring for creation  
  • Church audit  
  • Global project for whole community | • Recycling activities  
  • Planting a family garden  
  • Meal time creation prayer  
  • Daily Bible verses for April  
  • Children’s activities  
  • Storybooks and videos  
  • Home audit |
Family Faith Formation

@ Home

@ Church & School

@ Online Website, Social Media

Parent Faith Formation

@ Home & Church or School

Young Children — Older Children — Young Adolescents — Older Adolescents

Key Content

Faith Forming Skills & Practices

Knowledge & Skills for Parenting

Parental Faith Formation
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 a Strong Family Life
Developmental Relationships – Search Institute

- Express Care
- Challenge Growth
- Provide Support
- Share Power
- Expand Possibilities
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
Parent Programming Ideas

1. Develop a progression of parent workshops, webinars, or courses at each stage of the life cycle.
2. Provide “how-to” assistance to parents (videos).
3. Have parents practice new skills with their own children during program sessions.
4. Develop family life skills through whole family workshops.
5. Communicate regularly with parents.
6. Give parents a plan (recipes) for family life and faith formation.
7. Incorporate parent formation and education into existing church events and programs (e.g., children’s programming, VBS)
8. Provide online faith formation for parents—targeted theological and biblical content
9. Develop parent mentors
10. Develop life cycle or affinity groups for parents

Parent Formation Plan
Age Appropriate Programming

- **0-5 Young Children**
  - Workshops & webinars
  - Support group
  - Online content

- **6-10 Older Children**
  - Workshops & webinars
  - Support group
  - Online content

- **10-14 Young Adolescents**
  - Workshops & webinars
  - Support group
  - Online content

- **14-19 Older Adolescents**
  - Workshops & webinars
  - Support group
  - Online content
FAMILY PROGRAMMING

Family Worship
Family Camp

Join us for an intergenerational "Adventure Anchored in Christ." This special camp provides grandparents and grandkids with adventure-filled days to pray and play together. Life-long memory-making adventures can be expected!

Grandparents and grandkids entering 1st – 4th grades will stay in the comfortable, adult-friendly accommodations of the Christian Center, but spend their days at Pelican Lake. Feel free to bring your motorhome if you prefer.

2018 FAMILY CAMPS

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 of camp.

We gather together as a community, families and staff from around the nation and even world. Come play, study and grow in this special, spiritual, fun-filled place. Click on camp week 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!

**Grandparents Camp**
June 21-24 – Family Blast Sampler
With Ryer, Jonathon & Sara Swezey, Dan Baker.
Special outdoor concert with Pastor Ede on Friday night.

**Family Camp #1**
June 21-24 – Family Blast
Overseers: Mudholk & Youth Wrestlers
with Nate H. & Dave Warden
Special Focus for Youth/Children

**Family Camp #2**
June 30 – July 8 – Family Blast
Overseers: Wake Up Week + Youth Wrestlers
with Nate H. & Dave Warden
Special Focus for Youth/Children

Family Camp #3
July 15
The Mission of God in the Old Testament
with Beth Ostraw-Roman, Carl String, & Jillian Jones

Family Service

11/18/18
Family Learning

Meal and Community Building
Part 1. Gathering and Prayer
Part 2. All Ages Learning Experience
Part 3. In-Depth Learning Experience
   Option 1. Whole Group (together)
   Option 2. Age Group (parallel)
   Option 3. Activity Center
Part 4. Sharing Learning Experiences and Home Application
Part 5. Closing Prayer
HI-life Gatherings...

Of 6th year of whole community catechesis on new Living a Moral Life. Our theme is Navigating Life with GPS – God’s Proven System. Christian moral life can be summed up as the recognition of the awesome gift of God’s loving 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 for living that life of love and faithfulness, including the ten commandments and the beatitudes. We encourage parishioners 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.
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 parishioners of all ages. At each table there might be a single adult, a family of four, a retired person, 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 choir for an opening prayer and an activity to set the tone for the evening, such as a story or video segment. Each household receives a HI-life theme and learns to use it throughout the evening.

Navigating Life with GPS – God’s Proven System

Content: Thematic
Holy Infant Catholic Parish, Durham, NC
Content: Liturgy & Lectionary  
St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Acton, MA

5. January: The Baptism of the Lord (Matthew 13-17)  
6. February: You are the Salt of the Earth - 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Matthew 5: 13-16)  
7. March: The Temptation of Jesus - First Sunday of Lent (Matthew 4: 1–11)  
8. April: Palm Sunday (Matthew 26: 14-27)
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
DEVELOPING A PLAN

Design Process

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<td>community</td>
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Developing a Design for Families

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Families</th>
<th>Parent Formation</th>
<th>Church or School</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Reading the Bible</td>
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<td>Extend</td>
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<td>2. Praying together and guiding</td>
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<td>Connect</td>
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<td>children/teens to pray</td>
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<td>Engage/Involve</td>
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<td>3. Eating together as a family</td>
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<td>Redesign</td>
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<td>4. Having family conversations</td>
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<td>Design</td>
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<td>and talking about faith</td>
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<td>5. Serving people in need as a</td>
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Ideas

1. Incorporate faith practices throughout the year: teach the practice through experiential activities and invite parents to reinforce at home
   • “Bible Story of the Month”
   • “Prayer Practice of the Month”
2. Create family immersion experiences around faith practices.

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/seths_blog/2016/08/marketing-in-four-steps.html)
Social Networks

Our social network is made up of all the people we’re connected to, all the people they are connected to, all the people they are connected to, and so on.

Our social networks tend to have clear boundaries, from people we care a lot about (in the center) to people we loosely know (on the periphery).

- **500** – Weak Ties (you know but don’t feel close to)
- **150** – Stable Social Relationships (know each of these people and which of them know each other)
- **50** – Communicate Group (aware of what’s going on in their lives)
- **12-15** – Sympathy Group
- **5** – Inner Circle (advice, emotional support, times of trouble)
Most of our communication is with people closest to us – at the center of our social network

- At least once a week
- At least once a month
- At least once every few months
- At least once a year
- Not guaranteed in any given year

Social Network

We have 4-6 groups formed around life stage, hobbies, and shared experiences.

- Each group usually contains fewer than 10 people; the average is 4 group members.
- It’s tempting to think we’re connected to a very diverse set of people but we’re connected to people like us.
- The people in each group know each other well, but they don’t know the people in the other groups.
1. Sharing is a means to an end. People share information because it makes life easier, builds relationships, and shapes how we appear to others. 80% of our communication is with the 5-10 people we are closest to.

2. Our social networks are made up of small, independent groups, connected through us. Each one of us uniquely connects multiple groups of people together. Connected groups of friends are required for ideas to spread.

3. The people closest to use have disproportionate influence over us. Most of us have 10 strong ties who hold influence over what we think and do.

4. We’re wired to avoid trying new things, especially when they don’t match our beliefs. Changing people’s attitudes is incredibly hard, but changing their behavior is easier. Starting with small requests for behavioral change often leads to attitudinal change.

5. People will increasingly turn to their friends for information.