

MENTORING PROGRAM

7TH GRADE CONFIRMATION

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church

Confirmation Mentoring Program

Welcome to our Mentoring Program!

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This is your Confirmand's Journal. A journal is a place where an individual can write down highlights, memories, and details of a journey. People keep journals of vacations, of school experiences, and of hopes and dreams for the future. A journal is something like a diary in that it tells what happened and what it might mean to the individual.

This journal is a guided journal. This means that you won't have to think up things on your own to write in it, but that you will be given directions for things to do, and questions to reflect on, that will help you get started in your writing.

There are six learning modules in this mentoring program. You will be experiencing each of the six modules with an adult guide whom we will call a Mentor. Your Mentor will be doing the same things you do throughout this process, and will be sharing his or her thoughts with you about those experiences, just as you will share yours. You and your Mentor are a team in this process.

Each learning module addresses a particular topic and includes several activities for you and your Mentor to do together. There is a lot of space left in the journal when there are questions to react to, or topics for which you will want to record your thoughts and feelings. This is your journal, so feel free to fill it up with your reactions to this process.

Once you have been paired with a Mentor, the two of you will want to work out a time to get together for the first module. Then, at the end of each meeting with your Mentor, you will want to look ahead a bit and see when you might want to schedule your next meeting. This is a very flexible process in that you and your Mentor can get together at whatever times and places work best for the two of you.

Work this program and it will work for you! This part of your confirmation experience can be both meaningful and memorable for both you and your Mentor. So enjoy yourself.

Session 1 Getting to Know You

1. Mentor and Confirmand meet in an informal setting.

Decide to go out to eat together, meet at one or the other person's house, or choose some other informal setting that is conducive to conversation. You might want to enjoy some activity together (like a sporting event or concert) as a way to start this time.

2. Find out something about each other's background. Take some notes to help you remember.

Where were you born? What was it like growing up? What are some of your best memories? How about one of your sad memories?

What is one thing you really like about your life today?

What is/will work be like for you? What are your hopes for the future about your work life?

3. Find out something about each other's faith experience.

Have you always been a church-goer? What is important to you about being a church member?

Try to identify times in your life when your faith has changed. How has it changed?

When did you first know you were a Christian? Do you ever wonder about whether you really are a Christian?

4. Talk about your expectations for this confirmation process.

What do you hope will happen during this time? What are you worried about regarding this process? Are you excited or nervous?

5. Close your time together with each of you saying a short prayer asking God to be with you in this confirmation process, and thanking God for your partner in the process.

Session II God & Holy Spirit

1. Read the following creeds together. Mark the words or phrases that you especially enjoy or find interesting.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth...I believe in the Holy Spirit.

From the Nicene Creed

I believe in one God: the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible...and I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spake by the prophets.

From a Modern Affirmation

We believe in God the Father, infinite in wisdom, power and love, whose mercy is over all his works, and whose will is ever good...We believe in the Holy Spirit as the divine presence in our lives, whereby we are kept in perpetual remembrance of the truth of Christ, and find strength and help in time of need.

From the Korean Creed

We believe in the one God, maker and ruler of all things. Father of all people, the source of all goodness and beauty, all truth and love...We believe in the Holy Spirit, God present with us for guidance, for comfort and for strength.

Which of the sections on God from the four creeds do you like the best? How about the Holy Spirit? Which creed makes the most sense to you when it talks about the Holy Spirit? Why?

Do you ever feel that God is with you in a very real way? When or where has that happened? Do you ever feel like God has left you alone? Talk about when and where that feeling has been with you.

2. Read II Timothy 1:14

Is it difficult to understand the Holy Spirit? What does it mean to you that the Holy Spirit is "within us?"

3. Read Genesis 1:27-31

According to this scripture, we are created in the image of God. God said that the creation is "good." Since you are a part of creation, how does this passage make you feel?

Session III Jesus Christ

1. For exactly one minute, write down every word you can think of to describe Christ.

2. As one of you reads Philippians 2:1-11, the other write down the words Paul uses to describe Jesus.

3. Using your memory, try to remember everything that happens during a service of communion. List as many things as you can remember. Don't worry about the order.

4. Attend a service where Holy Communion is celebrated.

What images of Christ were incorporated in the service? Where did you find these images?
Hymns, symbolic actions, things in the church, sermon, etc.

5. Talk about the service you attended.

How did the service focus on Christ? What was your favorite part of the service?

6. Look over the bulletin for the service you attended and try to pick out some of the places in the service that addressed the following topics:

God's goodness	Christ and faith
Sin and forgiveness	Sacrifice

John 3:16 is one of the most popular verses in the world. Why do you think so many people like it? What does it mean to you?

Session IV Saints

1. Read Hebrews 11:1-12:1.

This passage has been called the "great roll call of saints?" What is a saint?

2. Make a list of some of the people who have been important in your life of faith.

After each name on your list, make a brief note as to how they affected your spiritual life, and include at least one quality in him or her that you admire.

3. Read I Corinthians 1:1-9.

Are you a saint? Why or why not? How does the last part of Verse 2 in this passage seem to define a saint?

4. Make a timeline of your own faith experience.

We know that faith changes over time, just as we change over time. How has your faith changed? How is your faith different from what it was two years ago, five years ago, and when you were a very small child? How do you think your faith might be different five years into the future?

How can saints, both those with us and the great Christians of the past, encourage us in our faith?

Session V Ministry

1. Read Matthew 25:31-46

What do you think Jesus was saying in these verses? What are the key words and phrases from the passage?

2. Make a list of ways Jesus ministered to the people.

3. Make a list of at least three ways your church ministers to its own members.

4. Make a list of at least three ways your church ministers to those outside of its immediate membership.

5. Make a list of ways that you minister to others already. Then add some ideas for new

ways you could minister to people.

6. Prepare to be involved in a ministry outside of your immediate church setting.

What ministries are taking place in your community outside of your church (i.e. soup kitchens, shelters, meals on wheels, drop-in centers, food shelves, clothing distribution centers, etc.?)

Choose one that you will volunteer to work in together at least once during your confirmation experience.

Discuss how you feel going into this activity. Nervous? Excited? Uncomfortable?

MENTORING PROGRAM

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DISCUSSION SHEET FOR SESSION 1: GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Your Name: _____

Your Partner(s): _____

1. Find out something about each other's backgrounds. Take some notes to help you remember.

Where were you born?

What was it like growing up? What are some of your favorite memories?

What is/was school like for you?

What is the one thing you really like about your life today?

What is/will work be like for you? What are your hopes for the future of your work life?

2. Find out something about each other's faith experience.

Have you always been a church-goer? What is important to you about being a church member?

Try to identify times in your life when your faith has changed. How has it changed?

Draw a picture of how you imagined God when you were about 5 years old.

Draw a picture of how you image God to be now.

How has your picture of God changed over the years?

Read the Apostles' Creed together. What picture of God do you get from this Creed? How does it compare to your own pictures of God?

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of his Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
And is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

3. Talk about your expectations for this Mentor/Confirmant process.

What do you hope will happen during this time? What are you worried about? Are you excited or nervous?

4. Each of you make a bookmark using one of the common symbols for God or the Trinity. Exchange bookmarks and keep them in your Bibles as a reminder to read the Bible daily and to pray for each other.

5. Close your time together with each of you saying a short prayer asking God to be with you during the next few weeks, and thanking God for your partner in this confirmation program.

6. FOR NEXT WEEK: Read Chapters 1-6 of the Gospel of Luke. Make note of any reactions or questions to discuss with your partner.

7. Next week's topic: Worship and the Sacraments

DISCUSSION SHEET FOR SESSION 2: WORSHIP AND THE SACRAMENTS

WORSHIP

1. Read Psalm 95:1-7. What first comes to your mind when you hear the word "worship"?
2. If you could pick out the most important part of a worship service, what would it be?
3. How many parts of the worship service can you remember? Make a list of everything that happens in our regular worship services. Then find a worship bulletin (or page through the LBW) and see how well you did.
4. Think of one or two examples of worship services that were especially meaningful to you in some way. What made them significant?
5. How many seasons of the Church year can you name? What do they mean? Which is your favorite season of the church year?
6. Draw a rough picture of our main sanctuary. What does the architecture of the church convey? Make note of any symbols that are used. What do those symbols mean?
7. Why do you think it's important to attend worship services regularly? Why or why not?
8. In what ways does worship affect your day-to-day life?
9. What suggestions do you have for improving our worship services?

THE SACRAMENTS

10. What happens in baptism? Why do you think the baptismal font is located near the entrance of the sanctuary?
11. What difference does it make to you to know that you have been baptized?
12. Read Romans 6:1-4. What does baptism mean for your daily life?
13. What does Holy Communion mean to you?
14. How do you feel when you receive Holy Communion?
15. What difference does receiving Holy Communion make in your daily life?

BIBLE READING

Discuss your reading of Luke 1-6. What were the most memorable parts for you? Did you learn anything new?

FOR NEXT WEEK: Read Luke 7-12.

Next week's topic: Prayer and Bible Reading

DISCUSSION SHEET FOR SESSION 3: PRAYER AND BIBLE READING

There are many aspects to Christian spirituality. Last week's session focused on two of them: worship and the sacraments. This session will focus on two more: prayer and devotional reading.

PRAYER

1. Define prayer. What does prayer mean to you? How does it help you?
2. Do you pray very often? When and where do you usually pray? What things do you usually pray about?
3. Read Matthew 6:5-15. What does Jesus say here about prayer?
4. If God knows what we need even before we ask, then why do you think we need to pray?
5. How can the Lord's Prayer be a model for all of our prayers? (Think about what kind of things are included in the Lord's Prayer.)
6. Does God answer every prayer? Why do you think that is?
7. How might a daily time of prayer affect your attitude towards the world and people around you? How could you make a daily time of prayer a regular part of your life?

BIBLE AND DEVOTIONAL READING

8. Why do you think it's important to read and study the Bible on your own? Why or why not?
9. Do you normally read the Bible regularly? What makes it difficult to read the Bible regularly?
10. What tools can you use to help you understand the Bible better?
11. How has your reading of the Gospel of Luke been going? Has it been easy or hard for you to do? Discuss the reasons why. Share what things have helped you, or that might help you read the Bible more regularly.
12. Do you ever read any other Christian books, magazines, or other materials? (other than when you're at church!) What about listening to Christian music or watching Christian videos?
13. How might regular Bible study and devotional reading affect your prayer life, and your life in general?
14. Discuss your reading of Luke 7-12. Be sure to look at Luke 11:1-13, which deals with prayer.

FOR NEXT WEEK: Read Luke 13-18.
Next week's topic: The Church and You

DISCUSSION SHEET FOR SESSION 4: THE CHURCH AND YOU

THE CHURCH

1. Why do people join a church? What are the good things about being a church member?
2. In one minute, write down all the good things that you can think of about our church. Compare your lists.
3. Read Ephesians 4:1-7. What is it that we share as Christians in this congregation? What binds us together?
4. Read Ephesians 4:11-16. What gifts has Christ given to us as we join together?
5. In what ways do you see the members of the congregation working together to get something done?

6. The Church is often called “the Body of Christ.” Read Romans 12:5-8. What part of the “body” are you? What are some gifts God has given you?

7. Draw a picture of the Church as a “body”. Assign different leaders, groups and programs of our church to the different parts of the body. (For example, the Community Ministry Committee may be a hand, because it reaches out to serve the needy.)

8. Which part of the body you have drawn describes your role in the church today? How might you become a more active part of the body?

9. Discuss how you would respond to a person making this statement: “I think somebody can be a good Christian without being a part of a church.”

STEWARDSHIP

Christian stewardship does not just refer to the money we give to support the Church. Stewardship refers to how we manage everything that we have.

10. Read the following offertory prayer from the communion liturgy and discuss what it implies about stewardship:

“Merciful Father, we offer with you and thanksgiving what you have first given us, ourselves, our time and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

11. Read the Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25:14-30. How can you be a good steward (manager) of the talents and gifts God has given you?

12. How do you use your gifts and talents at home, schoolwork, community, church?

13. Discuss some ways that you could make better use of your gifts.

14. Do you regularly give some of your money as an offering to the church? Why or why not? How do you decide what to give?

Discuss your reading of Luke 13-18.

FOR NEXT WEEK: Read Luke 19-24.
Next week's topic: Hope and Growth

DISCUSSION SHEET FOR SESSION 5: HOPE AND GROWTH

HOPE

1. Read Romans 8:31-39. How does being a follower of Christ give us hope?

2. What hopes for the future do you have? What difference does your faith make in how you view your future?

3. Read I Corinthians 15:51-58. Do you ever think about death? What do you think heaven will be like?

4. Have you ever had to deal with the death of someone you loved? Tell about one such experience.

5. How does your Christian faith give you hope in the face of death?

GROWTH

6. Read Matthew 16:24-26; 20:20-28 and John 13:34-35. What do these passages say about being a disciple?

7. Write your own definition of what being a Christian disciple means. Begin your definition with "A Christian disciple is..."

8. Read Romans 12:1-2. What do these verses say is the goal of Christian growth?

9. How have you seen yourself grow over the years in your understanding of God?

10. How do you feel about your relationship with God at this point in your life?

11. List some of the ways our church gives people an opportunity to grow in their faith. In which of these areas have you participated in the past?

12. Which ones do you think you will take advantage of in the future?

13. Discuss your reading of Luke 19-24. How has your reading through Luke during these past weeks helped you to grow as a Christian? Then think back through the major events in the Gospel of Luke and make a rough outline of Jesus' life.

EVALUATION: This is the last night confirmands and mentors meet together. How has it gone? Do you have any suggestions for improving the confirmation Mentor program?

Share with each other what you have most appreciated about these sessions together. Close with a prayer mentioning those things.

Submitted by Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church