



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Evangelism

The simple act of sharing the good news of God's love in Jesus.

Faith Stories

Creating Opportunities to Share Your Faith

When asked to share a faith story, do you ever wonder if you actually have a faith story? Chances are, you have many faith stories. A faith story is simply an encounter with God.

These encounters with our amazing God can happen through an exchange with another person, through what one might call a coincidence, through a vision or dream, through that still small voice whispering within you, through happenings that come together in a way that makes you shake your head and smile, through nature, and other various ways. Below are thought starters to help you identify *your* faith stories. After you have identified one of your faith stories you will be given a chance to share it one-on-one with another person. Don't worry if you get emotional while sharing. An encounter with a God as magnificent, gracious, powerful and merciful as our God *is* emotional. What a privilege to identify these stories and tell them! May the Holy Spirit empower you as you discover and share.

- + Tell about a time when you didn't think you could have made it through a situation if God had not been there to bring you through it.

- + Tell about a time when you felt God very close to you...right there present with you.

- + Tell about a time when you heard God speaking to you through another person or a situation.

- + Tell about a time when you experienced God's angels watching over you or guiding you.

- + Tell about a special time of prayer that you had with God.

+ Tell about a time when you were really worried about someone or something. How did you feel God's presence?

+ Tell about a time when you knew God was enabling you to use your God-given gifts to bless someone.

+ Tell about a time of forgiveness or reconciliation. How was God involved? Tell about a time that you were frightened or afraid. How was God involved?

+ Tell about a time when the Holy Spirit was empowering you to do something.

+ Tell about a time when you created a new thing, idea, event, artwork, writing, etc. How was God involved?

Creating an Opportunity to Share Your Faith and/or Invite

The Holy Spirit gives us opportunities every day to share our faith and/or to invite someone to meet Jesus in or through us or our congregation. Many of these opportunities are occasions for "planting seeds." How and if these seeds grow is the work of the Spirit. However, we have the privilege of being the sowers. In our daily conversations, we can respond in common, ordinary ways or we can respond in ways that sow seeds. The challenge is to think before we respond. As you are considering the conversations below, create responses within your conversation with the other person or group which include words like, "God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, faith, blessing, prayer, church, etc."

Scene: You are sitting in a doctor's office and you strike up a conversation with the person next to you. This young woman says to you, "I am worried about my little boy. He just hasn't felt well for a long time." *What is your response?*

Scene: It's Monday morning at work and a co-worker asks you what you did over the weekend that was fun. *What is your response?*

Scene: You are visiting with some co-workers and they invite you to go see a movie after work. You are tempted to go out with them, but you would rather go home and spend some time with your family. *What is your response?*

Scene: A neighbor has not been feeling well or has just arrived home from the hospital, so you take some food over to their house. They invite you in to visit for a few minutes. In the conversation, the person says to you, "It is so nice of you to bring this food." *What is your response?*

Scene: Your child has a friend over for supper and you bow your heads to pray. When you are finished, the friend asks, "Why do you pray? We don't do that at my house." *What is your response?*

Scene: A friend says that she/he has not gone to church for a long time. In fact, they are mad at God, feeling that God has abandoned them. *What is your response?*

Scene: Someone overhears you talking about going to the Lutheran Church and asks, "What is a Lutheran?" *What is your response?*

*Pastor Nancy Nyland
Director for Evangelical Mission
Indiana-Kentucky Synod, ELCA
nnyland@iksynod.org*