

## WHAT'S INSIDE?

<i>Getting Started: Planning for your 2001-2002 Program Year</i>	6
<i>Christian Education Planning Grid</i>	13
<i>Light for the Journey: Parent/Teacher Training Workshop</i>	14
<i>Faith Practices for Teachers</i>	16
<i>Light Shine Rally Day Program Outline</i>	20
<i>A Ministry Covenant Teacher Installation Rite</i>	24
<i>Highlighting Faith Practices Through the Year</i>	25
<i>Bible Guide Presentation</i>	32
<i>Theme Clip Art</i>	35
<i>2001-2002 Planning Calendar</i>	37



### How to use this resource

*May God bless your  
congregation's  
disciple-making  
offerings in the  
year to come!*

Adapt this material in the way that works best in your setting. Let it be your guide as you plan and prepare for the 2001-2002 education year. Reproducible templates make it possible for group preparation and reflection. Permission is granted to recast or reproduce other content for use in your congregation.

Be sure to maximize your use of the Web page links offered throughout this resource. This resource is intentionally designed to be both a print and electronic resource. The basic information is available in print; more detailed programmatic offer-

ings and suggestions can be accessed through the Internet. The Web page address for all material related to this resource, including the full contents of the print resource itself, is found at: [www.elca.org/etteam/2001CEProgramPlanner](http://www.elca.org/etteam/2001CEProgramPlanner)

Take a long look at the Augsburg Fortress catalog delivered with this resource. You'll find curriculum and studies for people of all ages. Be sure to check out the latest exciting offering for children's faith nurture: Firelight. Go to [www.augsfortress.org](http://www.augsfortress.org) to find information and resources for all your education needs.

## *Fanning the Flames of Discipleship*

### 2001-2002 Christian Education Planning Guide

**Writers** Miriam Campbell, Brent Dahlseng, Myrah Fozard,  
Paul Lutz, Diane Monroe and David Poling-Goldenne

**Editor** David Poling-Goldenne

**Illustrator** Judy Swanson

**Designer** Sharon Schuster



Developed by the Christian Education and Evangelism Team of the Division for Congregational Ministries. Copyright © 2001 Division for Congregational Ministries, ELCA. All rights reserved. Contents of this planning resource may be reproduced for local congregational use.

# fanning

## t h e f l a m e s o f d i s c i p l e s h i p

*"Go, make disciples, baptizing and teaching..."* Jesus' words continue to be the primary guiding mandate for congregation leaders engaged in Christian education today. You have an awesome and important task! As a key leader in education ministry in your congregation you have the privilege and opportunity to mobilize others to teach the faith and nurture developing disciples.

Christian education is so much more than acquiring a basic knowledge of the Bible and Jesus' teachings. It's about learning to talk, act and live as one of Jesus' disciples today — 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. It's about relationships; nurturing people's discovery of who God is in their lives and discovering the gift of a community in which faith is shared, lives are touched and care is experienced. It's life-long, a journey in faith formation for the youngest to the oldest of Jesus' disciples. It's holistic, engaging all of the senses, and addressing a variety of learning styles. It happens beyond the classroom in worship, in small groups, through music, drama and dance; through acts of service; home activities and devotions; youth group and confirmation; and in the midst of daily life. You (and those you gather around you) have the privilege of choreographing it all!

Overwhelmed? Don't be. You have or will gather partners who will assist you in this ministry. More importantly, as you turn this over to God in regular prayer, you will discover you have your strongest support in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. You also have this guide to serve as your companion and friend.

What can this resource do for you? It is designed to serve as your one-stop, comprehensive planning tool for the year. Within these pages and through the Augsburg Fortress catalog accompanying this guide, you'll find dozens of ideas and suggestions to enrich and strengthen your learning year. You'll find a theme and artwork to help unify your Christian education offerings regardless of which curricula you use. You'll find helps for Sunday school planning, Rally Day, teacher training and installation, suggestions for highlighting the theme through the year, a planning calendar, and more. You'll even discover Web page links to dozens of other helpful resources.

### **Built on Living Faith: An ELCA-wide Call to Discipleship**

The ELCA-wide Call to Discipleship and its focus on seven faith practices serves as the backdrop for this year's theme for Christian education ministry. Dozens of congregations in virtually every synod have been highlighting the Call to Discipleship since the fall of 2000 and have asked for more support to carry this emphasis and its clear focus on faith practices into the next program year. Many others have begun their emphasis in early 2001 with a seasonal focus in Epiphany or Lent. Still many more are just now planning to engage the Call beginning with their fall 2001 programming.

The gift of the Call to Discipleship program materials is that they are flexible and adaptable to your congregation's needs and context. They are ready to use when you are ready to engage them. This program planning guide is designed to supplement and carry forward the Call to Discipleship and its focus on seven faith practices (pray, study, worship, invite, encourage, serve and give.) It can work as an independent resource or in conjunction with the Call materials delivered to each congregation in May of 2000.

## fanning the flames *continued*

If you can't find or don't have the original three-ring binder entitled *Call to Discipleship Congregation Planning Guide* an extra copy can be ordered from 800/328-4648, ISBN: 6-0001-1822-8, \$5.00 plus shipping and handling. The complete guide, graphics and other resources can be accessed from the Call to Discipleship Web page: [www.elca.org/init/teachthefait](http://www.elca.org/init/teachthefait)

If you have not yet had an opportunity to work with the original Call materials, you will discover some core resources (Bible study, assessment tools, bulletin inserts, worship resources, and more) you can use to enhance your planning for the 2001-2002 education year.

### What does it mean to fan the flames?

*You are the light of the world...Let your light so shine before others, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven (Matthew 5:14,16).*

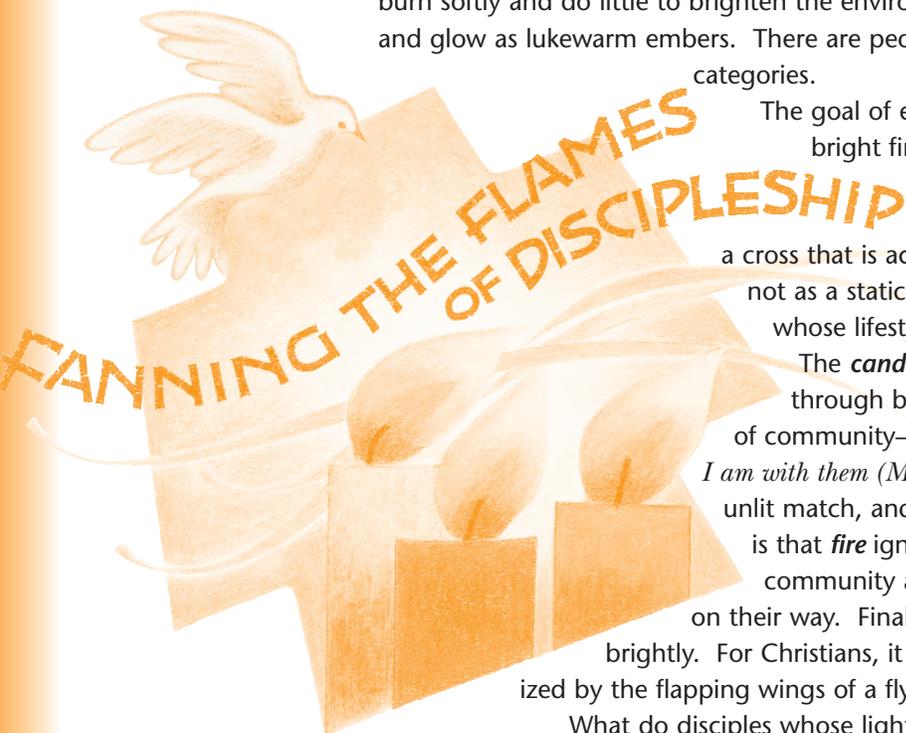
What does it mean to turn up the temperature, fan the flames, ignite the embers and fuel a learning year that carries forward Christ's call to discipleship? This year's theme boldly asserts that the journey of discipleship is lifelong and for all who follow Jesus. In baptism we receive God's grace and our commission. A candle is presented with the command to "let your light so shine..."

The flame is a powerful symbol for faith. It can burn brightly and be seen boldly. It can burn softly and do little to brighten the environment. Or it can, like a piece of coal, burn out and glow as lukewarm embers. There are people in most congregations who fit in each of these categories.

The goal of effective Christian education is to help light bold, bright fires of faith in all those who follow Jesus. How does this happen? Consider the theme art developed for this year's emphasis. It's centered on the *cross*, a cross that is active and moving. The invitation is to follow Jesus, not as a static body of information to be learned, but as disciples whose lifestyles are patterned on Jesus' teachings and example. The *candles* symbolize individual disciples gifted with light through baptism. Three candles emphasize the importance of community—*For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am with them (Matthew 18:20)*. Hold a burning match close to an unlit match, and what happens? A simple law of thermal dynamics is that *fire* ignites fire. Faith is lit, strengthened and nourished in community as those who are seasoned disciples mentor those on their way. Finally, it takes *wind and air* to make a flame burn brightly.

For Christians, it is the breath and wind of the Holy Spirit, symbolized by the flapping wings of a flying *dove*, that fans a bold faith and commitment.

What do disciples whose lights burn brightly do? They express their discipleship by engaging in specific faith practices. Seven are offered as a succinct description of the Christian walk. They are presented in three different modes on the following page to strengthen comprehension.



# The seven faith practices



## **PRAY. . .Prayer. . .Pray Frequently**

*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you (1Thessalonians 5:16-18).*



## **STUDY. . .Christian Education. . .Study Scripture Diligently**

*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path (Psalm 119:105).*



## **WORSHIP. . .Worship. . .Worship Regularly**

*I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul makes its boast in the LORD; let the humble hear and be glad. O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together (Psalm 34:1-3).*



## **INVITE. . .Evangelism. . .Invite Others Often**

*But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" (Romans 10:14-15).*



## **ENCOURAGE. . .Teaching/Mentoring. . .Pass on the Faith**

*Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action (1 John 3:18).*



## **SERVE. . .Social and Justice Ministry. . .Serve for the Sake of Others**

*For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45).*



## **GIVE. . .Stewardship. . .Give Freely**

*...give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back (Luke 6:38).*

These seven faith practices provide a helpful road map for disciples as they comprehend the basic moves or activities that comprise the life of discipleship. They are succinct and memorable enough to carry on a card in a wallet or a purse, yet comprehensive enough that volumes could be written to describe their full meaning. For more information on faith practices review the resources provided in the *Call to Discipleship Congregation Planning Guide*. A helpful, user-friendly description of each of the seven faith practices is found in "Faith Practices: assessing their place in your life," pages B-39 through B-42 in the guide. The same resource can be found on the Web page for this guide: [www.elca.org/etteam/2001CEProgramPlanner](http://www.elca.org/etteam/2001CEProgramPlanner). This 2001-2002 Christian education program planner continues to issue a basic call to discipleship built on the foundation of these seven faith practices.

The theme *Fanning the Flames of Discipleship* provides an overarching umbrella under which you can organize your Christian education efforts for the year. Congregations typically use a variety of curricula and studies to meet the education needs of the different age groups and learning times in their setting. Themes can vary from Sunday school to confirmation to small groups and adult learning. An overarching theme like *Fanning the Flames of Discipleship* helps to hold all of these pieces together in a more unified way. 



# Getting started

## planning your 2001/02 program year

Careful preparation and planning makes for a meaningful education year! You will want to begin this process early and engage partners who can be helpful in working many of the details.

### Basic planning steps

1. Get personally focused and on board
2. Convene a leadership team for evaluation and planning
3. Assess your needs and space requirements
4. Recruit teachers, assistants and helpers
5. Order curriculum and collect supplies
6. Provide teacher orientation and training
7. Provide Rally Day kickoff and teacher installation
8. Support teachers and learning efforts through the year.

### Suggested timeline

May 2001  
May - June, 2001  
June - July, 2001  
June - July, 2001  
July - August, 2001  
Late Aug.-Early Sept. 2001  
Varies by local custom  
Sept.2001- Summer 2002

## 1 Get personally focused and on board

You've been invited or have stepped forward to spearhead the planning effort for Christian education in your congregation for the next year. The first step is stop and prayerfully reflect on the opportunity God has given you. Seek God's counsel and guidance in prayer. Then take time to read this guide thoroughly and begin to imagine the possibilities. Begin to map out a time line that respects the culture and history of your congregation. Then, make a list of the tasks that need to be done.

## 2 Convene a team for evaluation and planning

Maximize ownership and creativity by inviting a diverse group into the planning process. Be sure to include some new players. A well represented team might include Sunday school teachers, parents, youth, church staff, those with property care responsibilities, those involved in music and worship, and a congregation council member. The size of your team will depend on the size of the congregation and the number of education offerings you will offer. Schedule to meet monthly for planning through the Summer or according to a pattern that works best for your setting.

At your first meeting, begin the planning process with prayer. Invite the team to walk through the educational space pausing to pray in several locations. Reflect on God's desire for each space? How might each learning space be a cradle for transformation in the lives of the learners and leaders?

Shape your vision for Christian education by creating a purpose statement that will move your congregation to a new and different future. Review any previously existing statements and reflect on the theme and artwork offered through this planning guide for input. Use this written statement as a launching place to celebrate where God has led you thus far and to assess your current situation. Let it be a guide for all of your planning.

Agendas for subsequent meetings could take their shape from this initial meeting and need to address the planning steps highlighted at the beginning of this section.



*Note:* The size of some congregations might warrant setting up separate sub-teams for planning. In these places a separate group may be responsible for Sunday school, confirmation and youth, and adult education offerings. Adapt this resource to work with whatever configuration you use to do your planning. It is primarily written from the perspective of the single planning team responsible for the overall education ministry of the congregation.

The resource *Hats off to the Sunday School Superintendent* (available through the Web site for this guide) provides a quick look at the various roles and tasks the planning team might consider.

### **3 Assess your needs and space requirements**

Take time to assess your needs for education. What will Sunday school look like for your congregation? What about youth and adult education? Confirmation ministry? What have been your patterns? What's working and what's not working? Are there needs for change?

Consider using the resource *Sunday School: We've Never Done it That Way Before* to evaluate your present approach and consider some new possibilities. (See Web link at the end of this section for this and other helpful tools you might access for planning.)

As you reflect on your needs, consider the following questions:

- Is group grading necessary? (smaller congregations)
- Is there a need for multiple sessions of Sunday school? (larger congregations)
- Is intergenerational learning an option for your setting?
- Is Sunday morning education working for your congregation? What might be alternate times?
- Is there a need for team teaching or cycle teaching?
- Is there an opportunity for a Sunday school opening or a Kid's Church experience before classes divide out?
- What about summer Sunday school or "School's Off" activities?
- What's working and not working with confirmation and youth?
- What considerations are addressed to welcome and include special needs learners and others with disabilities?
- What adult offerings might best address the discipleship needs of the congregation?

Make a chart listing all of the classroom and education spaces. Consider the following issues:

- How's the equipment, cleanliness and state of repair in your learning spaces? What needs to be attended to before learning begins again?
- Are learning spaces being used to their greatest advantage? Is there a need to share spaces? Are furniture and fixtures appropriate for the age group that will use them?
- Assign classes to learning spaces based on previous history, anticipated size of classes and any special needs you discern.

*to next page*

## Getting started *continued*

The following topics are available at [www.elca.org/etteam/2001CEProgramPlanner](http://www.elca.org/etteam/2001CEProgramPlanner) to further assist with assessment and planning:

- W Sunday School: We've Never Done It That Way Before
- W Hats Off to the Sunday School Superintendent
- W Confirmation: More than just Business as Usual
- W Motivating Adults in Christian Education
- W Intergenerational Learning Ideas
- W Three Steps to Better Adult Education
- W Engaging Parents in Adult Education
- W 101 Faith Place: A resource to strengthen the church/home connection
- W Resource Listing for Effective Christian Education
- W Special Needs Learners
- W Evangelizing through Children's Ministry
- W Christian Education Planner, Part 1 and 2
- W Reach Out Through Kid's Clubs

### **4** **Recruit teachers, assistants and helpers**

Use the reproducible grid on page 13 to map out your education program. Begin with Sunday school, but also include confirmation, youth, adult and other learning activities that may happen at different times than Sunday. You may wish to transfer the grid to a large poster board to facilitate healthy group interaction.

Based on your best estimates of class needs and sizes and the type of education program you are offering, develop a list of the number of teachers, assistants and helpers you will need. Pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance and inspiration in calling forward teachers in your congregation. Then brainstorm a list of potential candidates paying attention to people's spiritual gifts. Be sure to remember those who have faithfully served and wish to continue to serve, inviting new people to the table as well. Pick candidates and back up candidates. Then, decide on your method of recruitment. Set a time line and work to line up your staff as early as possible.

As you select candidates for teaching, think about other needs you may have during the year. These might include: storytellers, costume makers, craft leaders, supply organizers, writers, computer operators, record keepers, photographers, mentors and musicians.

The following topics are available at [www.elca.org/etteam/2001CEProgramPlanner](http://www.elca.org/etteam/2001CEProgramPlanner) to further assist teacher recruitment and support:

- W Drafting teacher job descriptions and covenants
- W Suggestions for ways to effectively recruit
- W Hat's Off to the Sunday School Superintendent

## 5 Order curriculum and collect supplies

You may want to appoint a mini task force to review and evaluate several curricula.

Be sure to invite public school teachers to share their expertise from a readability, age appropriate and practical point of view.

There are three primary Sunday school curriculum options available through Augsburg Fortress Publishers:

**The Firelight Bible Learning Curriculum** An exciting, creative, and flexible new curriculum which helps learners approach basic Bible stories from a variety of learning styles and perspectives. This resource lends itself well to a rotational model of Sunday school.

**Life Together** A comprehensive family of lectionary-based resources that brings together learning, worship and ministry in daily life

**Witness** A curriculum which builds a foundation for a lifetime of faith and Christian growth with a focus on biblical stories and faith sharing.

Review the accompanying AFP catalog for a further description of these resources. Each addresses the needs of congregations facilitating disciple formation today in a unique way. Chances are one of these three curricula will be just right for your needs and the particular orientation of your education ministry.

Search through the catalog for curricula, studies and resources for confirmation, youth education, adult forum, adult Bible studies and small group ministry. Continue to complete the grid (or your poster) on page 13 by adding your curriculum and resource selections.

Be sure to order resources in a timely way and certainly in time for your teacher orientation.

The following topics are available at [www.elca.org/etteam/2001CEProgramPlanner](http://www.elca.org/etteam/2001CEProgramPlanner) to further assist you in curriculum selection:

- W Evaluating Curriculum
- W Web link to Augsburg Fortress Publishers – Online Store
- W Small Group Resources
- W Adult Education Curriculum for Varied Learners
- W 10 Things You'll Want to Know About the People You Teach

*to next page*

**FANNING THE FLAMES  
OF DISCIPLESHIP**

## 6 Provide teacher orientation and training

It is helpful to bring as many teachers, assistants and helpers together as you can for a basic orientation and training in advance of your education year. This year, the teacher workshop provided through this resource encourages the possibility of including parents in your training time. This kickoff offers an overview of your educational program in a variety of ways. It provides an opportunity to:

- Review your congregation's vision for Christian education.
- Build team spirit by welcoming and introducing new and returning teachers to each other.
- Encourage teachers in their own personal discipleship and faith walk, emphasizing the importance of mentoring and modeling.
- Acquaint teachers with their classes, teaching spaces, curriculum, partners, the policies and procedures, special dates or emphases such as a Christmas program, supplies and any other special considerations unique to your congregation.
- Highlight any plans you might have for periodic or quarterly teacher training.

During this meeting it is particularly important to take time to talk about the hopes and expectations concerning a teacher's own personal discipleship practice. You might consider any one or all of the following options to facilitate this:

- Offer the combined parent/teacher training workshop *Light for the Journey* developed as a part of this year's program planner. See page 14.
- Provide a basic orientation to discipleship and the seven faith practices. Reproduce and distribute the resource *Ten Ways for Teacher to Follow Each Faith Practice*. See page 16.
- Provide a tool kit for each teacher containing some primary support resources. Some examples of what could be included are:
  - *Lutheran Basics for Teachers*, AFP, ISBN: 0806637188, \$2.49
  - *Doing Faith*, AFP, ISBN: 0806638737, \$2.49
  - A devotional guide
  - A Learning Bible
  - Small thank you gift (e.g. Call to Discipleship coffee mug or book bag)
  - A listing of helpful Web sites

The following topics are available at [www.elca.org/etteam/2001CEProgramPlanner](http://www.elca.org/etteam/2001CEProgramPlanner) to further assist you with teacher training:

- W Volunteers At the Heart of the Church
- W *EduNet-A* Newsletter of the ELCA Christian Education Network
- W Opening Your Spiritual Gifts Assessment Tool

## **7 Provide meaningful kickoff for program year**

Make early plans for a special kickoff to begin your program learning year. Rally Day can be a great way to set the stage for learning by bringing together people of all ages for a combined church school event.

Early planning might include mailing special invitations during the late summer to prospective students. A targeted community mailing might inspire unchurched families to get involved for the sake of their children. A community canvass by the youth group distributing a *Sing and Share* children's music cassette with information about your congregations education offerings can be a creative way to invite neighbors to come and see (see Web link below for ordering information).

Coordinate your Rally Day preparations with the congregation's worship experience. At the very least, make plans to install education leaders during worship on Rally Day. Use or adapt the *Ministry Covenant to Make Disciples* on page 24 for your installation rite. Greater value will come when several elements of the congregation's worship experience can highlight discipleship and the call to lifelong learning. Coordinate with your pastor/s and other leaders to encourage use of the theme *Fanning the Flames of Discipleship* in preaching, music and prayers.

Rally Day is often the time for students to visit their classrooms and meet their teachers. It is a festive day of commitment, heralding the beginning of another learning year. A special program for all learners is the best way to kick off a new learning year. Consider using the *Light Shine!* Rally Day program outline offered as a part of this planning resource (page 20) before learners head off to meet their teachers.

Information on the following resources is available [www.elca.org/etteam/2001CEProgramPlanner](http://www.elca.org/etteam/2001CEProgramPlanner) to further assist you with your Rally Day planning:

- W Sing and Share" evangelism cassettes
- W "A Child Shall Lead Them" guide for planning a Rally Day friendship welcome.
- W Rally Day Ideas

## **8 Support teachers, learning efforts year around**

Look for ongoing ways to support and encourage your teachers and helpers throughout the education year. You might consider the following possibilities:

- Periodic teacher training sessions to touch base, assess needs, fix problems and teach concerning discipleship.
- Building an Email list serve with all your teachers sending weekly updates or daily devotions.
- Taking intentional time each week to connect with one or two teachers for feedback and support
- Remembering each of your teachers and staff daily in prayer.

It is important to keep the Call to Discipleship and the notion of faith practices alive throughout your program year. Two excellent ways to do this are to utilize the art and promotional material developed to support the Call to Discipleship and this program planner. Consider ways to engage the monthly Sharing Sunday focus offered as a part of this guide (see page 25).

*to next page*

## Getting started *continued*

The Call to Discipleship program materials include teaching posters, book marks, refrigerator magnets, note cards, and more. These items become an excellent way to continuously highlight discipleship and faith practice for the whole congregation. You might consider ordering quantities of bracelets or refrigerator magnets for Rally Day. Order imprinted coffee mugs or book bags for your teachers. At the very least, place full color copies of the Faith Practices poster in each of your learning spaces. Ordering information accompanies this guide as a four-page mini-catalog. You may also access graphic art elements to create your own promotion and publicity materials at the Web site for this resource.

The *Sharing Sunday* section of this resource offers a unique opportunity to highlight one faith practice each month. Consider hosting a special monthly opening or emphasis with your learners utilizing some of the suggestions offered for each month. Be creative and let your imagination shape offerings which are reflective of your congregation's unique ministry. Plan your monthly emphasis utilizing the planning calendar at the end of this resource and help your teachers become aware of this ongoing offering through your initial teacher orientation.

You may also wish to consider special highlights or emphases linking education to worship and daily life during the year. Much of this is driven by local custom, but options include:

- A Reformation Day Festival utilizing suggestions in *Celebrating the Small Catechism*.
- A Christmas program or pageant.
- A seasonal focus on one of the faith practices.
- A World Hunger Education emphasis utilizing the "Open a World of Possibility," the *Giving Market* and other Hunger education materials.
- Hosting a special Family Ministry celebration or a series of family nights utilizing *Faith Family Style: Generations Growing Together*, (AFP, ISBN: 6-0001-3236-0, \$4.99), a resource which offers program modules for 10 intergenerational events designed to get families talking together about faith practices and faith lives.

The following topics to assist you with teacher support and encouragement, including links to the above mentioned resources, are available at: [www.elca.org/eteam/2001CEProgramPlanner](http://www.elca.org/eteam/2001CEProgramPlanner):

- W *Celebrating the Small Catechism*
- W A Year Full of Teacher Support and Affirmation
- W Leading Children and Youth in Prayer

## A "Presentation of the Bible" Program Module

For added value, this planning guide also contains a section providing encouragement and suggestions for sustaining or creating a tradition of gifting Bibles to learners in your congregation. You are encouraged to work with leaders in your congregation to consider how you might enhance or strengthen this practice which is central to the faith practice of "Study."





# Light for the journey

## a p a r e n t / t e a c h e r t r a i n i n g w o r k s h o p

This workshop strengthens the partnership between teachers and parents as they nurture children in faith. It may be used as your initial teacher orientation or as an event you might schedule during your program year. If used for initial orientation, be sure to also address some of the other concerns highlighted under teacher training on page 10 of this guide.

The full workshop with complete instructions and all activities is available at the Web site for this resource. If you are unable to access the Internet, call 800/638-3522 Ext. 2594 for a printed version of the full workshop.

*Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates (Deuteronomy 6:4-9).*

The Rite of Holy Baptism sets the stage for the partnership between parents and teachers:

- It identifies the specific roles of the church and the home in fanning the flames of a child's initial call to discipleship.
- As a baptismal candle is lit, children are invited to let their "lights so shine before people that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven (Matthew 5: 16).
- As a child grows to a fuller understanding of what that means it is important for the key players to join together in prayer, active partnership and support. It is God's intent to nurture faithful people to enable their faith-flow into every aspect of their daily lives.

### **Workshop format**

The workshop begins by exploring the theme and offering a brief orientation concerning the partnership that can exist between parents and teachers. Parents and teachers are then given the opportunity to meet separately to explore specific tasks related to the roles they play. A step-by-step list of tasks and responsibilities are outlined in the full Web version of this workshop for you to adapt and interpret in your context. The exercises, discussion and activities will take about 90 minutes to complete. If time will not permit you to use the entire workshop outline, suggestions are offered for shortening the training.

The material is adaptable to a variety of uses. Depending on the size of your Sunday school program, you may want to plan grade level or department meetings. You may also adapt the program to schedule individual workshops for teachers and parents to accomplish more specific objectives. The "Timeless Travelogues" could also be used as devotions for other meetings. A time for refreshments is also included in the workshop outline.

## Workshop outline

Timeless Travelogues I: Individual Journeys	(10 minutes)
Timeless Travelogues II: A Biblical Journey	(10 minutes)
Timeless Travelogues III: Baptismal Journeys	(10 minutes)
Light for the Journey	(10 minutes)
Flickering Lights	(10 minutes)
Rest Stop for Refreshment	(10 minutes)
Individual Meetings for Parents and Teachers	(25 minutes)
Closing	(5 minutes)

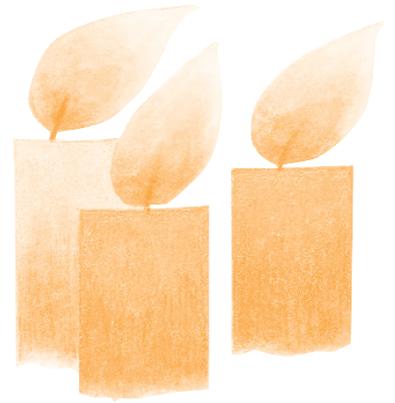
Access the complete version of this workshop module, including all of the learning exercises and activities, by going to [www.elca.org/eteam/2001CEProgramPlanner](http://www.elca.org/eteam/2001CEProgramPlanner)

## Remember . . .

To be most effective, Christian education must be seen as more than a one-stop shop. This event will affirm discipleship as a life-time adventure that we all have the option of experiencing as we encounter Christ in formal and informal faith communities. 

# Ten ways

for teachers to follow each faith practice



*Copy and distribute the following lists of suggestions as part of your teacher training and orientation or during the year as an ongoing way to touch base with your staff. These lists are offered as seeds to stimulate personal and local creativity and practice. Be careful not to expect each teacher to fulfill each suggestion.*

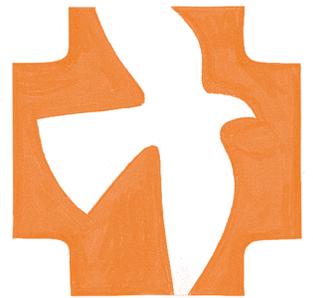
---

*Note: the youth section of the original Call to Discipleship notebook offers dozens of suggestions on how to strengthen faith practices for those who work with youth.*

# Ten ways

teachers can pray. . .

- 1 Pray for one or more of your students by name each day.
- 2 Teach your students the prayerful exchange: "The Lord be with you"...  
"And also with you."
- 3 Set aside a daily time of prayer and meditation that works best for you.
- 4 Pray for one family of the students in your class each week and let them know you hold them in your prayers.
- 5 Adopt a short prayer to pray at different times of the day; e.g., "Jesus, Son of God, have mercy on me."
- 6 Pray for yourself and your own call to discipleship each day.
- 7 Pray for God's will to be done in your life and through your teaching.
- 8 Pray for your congregation and pastor at least once a week.
- 9 Pray daily for your class and your upcoming learning time.
- 10 Pray or sing the Lord's Prayer at least once a day.



# Ten ways

## teachers can study. . .

- 1 Read a portion of the Bible each day and help excite your students to reading their own Bibles.
- 2 Attend at least one short-term Bible study each year.
- 3 Read at least one book that will nurture your faith each quarter.
- 4 Discuss faith questions with other teachers from your church.
- 5 Review the biblical background for each lesson you teach.
- 6 Learn about the age-level characteristics of your students.
- 7 Read books or attend events that help you keep on the cutting edge of educational theory.
- 8 Listen to the music your students like. Watch the movies they attend. Play video games with them. Know how culture is influencing them.
- 9 Read a book on faith development. Be aware of what stage of faith your students are likely to be in.
- 10 Know what resources are available through the Internet at [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org) or [www.augsburgfortress.org](http://www.augsburgfortress.org) to help you with your teaching.



# Ten ways

## teachers can worship. . .

- 1 Set an example for your students by worshiping weekly.
- 2 Set aside a special place at home where you can spend a quiet time in personal worship each day.
- 3 Listen to or sing songs of praise when you are in your car or in your home.
- 4 Think of all your life as an act of worship dedicated to God.
- 5 Place the sign of the cross on the foreheads of students you teach each week.
- 6 Teach your students to show praise through movement and dance.
- 7 Look at some part of creation and give God thanks for its beauty; share this with your students.
- 8 If you have access to a prayer labyrinth, walk it regularly—or use a finger labyrinth.
- 9 Be sure each lesson you prepare contains an element of worship.
- 10 Learn all the verses of a hymn each month and teach it to your class.



## Ten ways teachers can invite. . .



- 1 Invite one or more parents to your class to share about their work or talents.
- 2 Invite a friend to worship with you.
- 3 Encourage your students to invite their friends to class and welcome them warmly.
- 4 Invite someone from your class or congregation for a meal.
- 5 Invite another teacher to study the Bible and pray with you.
- 6 If you have students whose parents do not attend worship, invite those students to attend and to sit with you.
- 7 If someone is having a problem, offer to listen.
- 8 Invite a new or inactive member of your congregation to a social function.
- 9 Invite your pupils to share their talents with the rest of the class.
- 10 Invite other teachers to attend a conference, synod, or regional training event with you.

---

## Ten ways teachers can encourage. . .



- 1 Each week, send a note to one of your students sharing one thing about him/her for which you are thankful.
- 2 Send periodic notes home with your students giving parents an idea of ways their family could become closer to each other and God.
- 3 Encourage students to talk about the ways they are being disciples during the week
- 4 Teach and encourage your students to talk about their faith.
- 5 Give a new teacher encouragement by listening to him/her and sharing your experience in handling a similar situation.
- 6 Encourage yourself. Some weeks don't go as well as others. Keep things in perspective.
- 7 Be aware of people around you who are hurting, especially in you classroom setting. Be willing to listen and to love them.
- 8 Ask your class to write a letter to someone in a mission field. Pray for that person each week.
- 9 Remind your students that they can come to your for anything.
- 10 Encourage your students to keep Jesus at the center of their lives.

# Ten ways teachers can serve. . .



- 1 Develop the heart of a servant in your own life and with the students you teach.
- 2 Become aware of the needs of people in your community. Pray for guidance as you determine what you and your class can do to help them.
- 3 Remember that teaching Sunday school is an act of service.
- 4 Take your pupils to a soup kitchen or food pantry.
- 5 Teach your students to perform at least one intentional act of kindness each day.
- 6 Pick up trash near your church and talk with your students about environmental stewardship.
- 7 Call an older (or younger) person in your congregation and thank him/her for the way that person helped your faith grow.
- 8 Take your class to a local nursing home to visit or play games with the residents.
- 9 Listen to your students. Listen to your students. Listen to your students.
- 10 Identify your talents and look for other areas of the church or community in which God is calling you to serve.

---

# Ten ways teachers can give. . .



- 1 Give a percentage of your income regularly.
- 2 Teach first fruits giving to your students.
- 3 Engage your students in a giving project that helps them address the needs of others.
- 4 Make preparing your Sunday school lesson a priority.
- 5 Send a card to one of your students each week.
- 6 Give your students your love and make them feel they are special.
- 7 Give of yourself: be willing to share your experiences with your students, especially the times when you know God has been active in your life.
- 8 Give to yourself: set aside time each day to spend in quiet meditation and contemplation.
- 9 Make Jesus first in your life.
- 10 Give your Sunday school leaders and others special "thank yous" for all the support you receive.



# Light shine. . .

## Rally Day program outline

“Light Shine” is an interactive program for children, 3 years old-6th grade, and their families. The program may be used as an event to celebrate the beginning of the church school year or it can be adapted to enrich other occasions throughout year. It may also be divided into independent activities or events to develop this theme in other ways. Light Shine could easily be adapted to include the entire congregation.

The intent of this program is to conceptualize faith as a flame that glows for all the world to see. It will affirm the importance of individually practicing the activities of faith as we grow in faith and community. The seven faith practices highlighted in the ELCA Call to Discipleship are a central to the content of this resource as we “fan the flames of discipleship” in 2001-2002 and nurture ways people of all ages can shine for Jesus. The theme is based on the following Bible verses:

*I am the light of the world...Whoever follows me will have the light of life and will never walk in darkness. —John 8:12*

*“You are the light of the world....Let your light so shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven. —Matthew 5:14,16*

### Planning your Light Shine Rally Day celebration

The outline for this program includes:

- A large group celebration entitled “Light Shine”
- Learning centers with craft activities that highlight each of the seven faith practices
- References to songs and other activities

“Lightshine” outlines a 15 minute intergenerational worship celebration which includes a skit entitled “Fanning the Flames”, songs, readings and a litany of light. It may be used at the beginning or the ending of your Rally Day celebration. The full contents of this program are printed in this resource.

The craft activities are designed to work in seven different learning centers known as the “Light Shine” factory, each one highlighting one of the seven faith practices. The activities could be used to engage children and their families as they gather. In this case, the program would follow. Another option might be to begin with the program and then move to the activity stations. Adapt these options in ways that work best for your setting. You’ll also want to consider how you work in introductions of teachers and/or visits to classrooms.

Complete instructions for the seven craft stations with reference to all the supplies needed and special scripture texts are available at <http://www.elca.org/christianeducation/programplanners/2001CEProgramPlanner/index.html> activities include:

- W “Fanning the Flame” Sun Catchers: An Invitation to “Let it Shine.”
- W Prayer Braclets
- W Signs of Encouragement (creating a door hanger)
- W “At Your Service” Towels
- W Learnin’ to Shine! (creating a Power Source Bible Promise Sheet)
- W Give-A-Care Cans (creating special offering cans)
- W Celebration Stations (creating a devotional worship candle and station for home use)

# Light Shine: An intergenerational celebration

**Opening Song:** *This Little Light of Mine*

**Lessons for the Day:** *John 8:12 and John 1:1-5,9*

*(Display a Christ candle or another large candle for everyone to see. If it is not already lit, light it as you read the first text and stand next to it as you read the second text.)*

**Skit:** *“Fanning the Flames” (See next page)*

**Song:** *“This Little Light of Mine”*

## **Litany of Light**

*(Provide small candles with drip guards or battery-operated candles for each participant)*

**L.** Jesus said, *“You are the light of the world....Let your light so shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven (Matthew 5:14,16).*

**G.** Shine on me! Lord, shine through me!

**L.** Paul in his letters to Christians in Bible times encouraged them to imitate Christ’s love and lifestyle (Hebrews 9b-12).

**G.** Shine on me! Lord, shine through me!

**L.** It’s easy to show our love for Jesus when we’re at church, but Jesus wants us to sing and pray and live each day, learning about God’s special ways.

**G.** Shine on me! Lord, shine through me!

**L:** When we worship, learn and pray, serve and give, and encourage or invite others to join us along the way, we are letting God’s love and light shine through us! As we do, we fan each others’ “flames” and keep each other going as we grow together in faith and community. It begins with Jesus, our eternal light and it is passed on to each one of us as we let it shine!

*(Introduce the song “Pass It On” as you explain the procedure for the candle-lighting ceremony. Using the Christ candle as your source, light other candles to pass the spark to all other participants.)*

**Song:** *“Pass It On”*

*(You might also consider “Shine, Jesus Shine” or others songs with similar themes.)*

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Help us to shine for you as we follow your lead each day. Help us to look for opportunities to honor you in all we say and do. Thank you for bringing us all together and helping us grow to be your faithful followers and disciples.

**Benediction:** May the Lord bless us and keep us, may his face shine upon us and give us peace. In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. *Amen.* 



# Skit “Fanning The Flames”

**Cast:**

*A Game Show Host for “Keep Those Candles Burnin’!”  
7 candle characters to represent the 7 faith practices*

**Setting the Stage:**

*Candle costumes:* Use white pillow cases of various sizes/lengths to simply slip over the heads of the characters. They may be custom designed to accommodate individual facial features (eyes and mouth). Use yellow and orange construction paper or craft foam to make large flames to attach (staple, pin or sew) to the top of each pillow case.

*Host Costume/Accessories:* The host should be dressed to look like a business person. He/She will also need a microphone. (Use a real one or make one with tissue paper rolls and aluminum foil.)

*Game Sign:* Poster board, newsprint or shelving paper maybe used to make a large sign to say “Keep Those Candles Burnin’!” Display it as a backdrop on center-stage.

*Opening Scene:* Six candles stand in a line, bent over in various ways to indicate a sense of weariness and exhaustion. Candle #1 stands straight up with hands on hips

**Script:**

**Host:** *(Walking onto stage with a microphone)* Hello and welcome to “Keep Those Candles Burnin’!”... where candles strive to shine through some of life’s most challenging times. *(Walking toward the candles)* Let’s meet our contestants...

**Candles:** *(Each candle, one after another, yawns, sighs and weakly expresses a way to shine.)*  
Pray...Serve... Give...Worship... Encourage... Learn...Invite...

**Host:** Wait a minute! *(Looking at the shape the candles are in with total disgust)* Hold the show! Turn those cameras off! What’s going on here?

**Candle #1:** We’re just too tired to do this anymore!

**Candle #3:** Maybe we just weren’t meant to shine through it all!

**Candle #5:** Yeah,...We can’t even stand up straight!

**Candle #4:** I’ve run out of words to say and prayers to pray!

**Candle #2:** I’ve given all I got to give!

**Candle #7:** I’ve invited so many people to “come and see” that I can’t even remember what they’re coming to see!

**Candle #6:** And I’ve been encouraging people for so long I’m the one in need of encouragement!

**Candle #3:** We’ve just gotten so out of shape!

**Candle #1:** Hey...speak for yourself! I’m still looking pretty good.

**Candle #6:** Oh yeah? Look in the mirror!

**Host:** Sounds like you need a new little spark to get you going again!

**Candle #3:** We need more than a spark! We need one of those batteries from that big pink bunny to keep us going!



- Candle #7:** What are we doing this for any way?!!
- Candle #2:** Couldn't we just take the day off?
- Candle #4:** What are we supposed to keep shining for?
- Host:** So that people will be inspired by the way you can keep your candles burnin'! Come on! Time's a wastin'! Straighten up! Let's get with the program!
- Candle #6:** Sorry...no go.... I just can't do this on my own any more!
- Candle #1:** "I can do all things in him who strengthens me!"
- Candle #5:** Say what?
- Candle #1:** In Philippians 4:13, it says, "I can do all things in Him who strengthens me!"
- Candle #3:** Who's "him"?!
- Candle #1:** Jesus! Jesus is the one who keeps me shining!
- Host:** Thank you candle #1 for that very fine reminder! Yes, folks! Jesus is the light of the world! He came to be the source of life and this life gives light to all people!
- Candle #1:** Jesus is my power source. I just let him shine through me!
- Candle #4:** You mean we don't have to keep trying to do this on our own?!
- Candle #1:** We're just here to reflect God's eternal light!
- Host:** *(Looking in a book)* Alright, according to your contract, in Matthew 5: it says, " May your lights so shine before people that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven."
- Candle #3:** But we're so out of shape, how will we ever be able to shine that bright?
- Host:** According to your contract, on page 5475, in Thessalonians 5:11, it says that you need to encourage one another and build each up.
- Candle #5:** Hey yeah... Look at you *(Looks at candle #6)* Here let me help you– you're leaning a little bit to one side, here.
- (The other candles begin to encourage each another and straighten each other up until they are looking pretty good again! They compliment each other on their renewed stature and give each other high fives, etc.)*
- Host:** Now that's more like it! Are you ready to shine!
- Candles:** We're ready!
- Host:** Alright! Let's go...Lights! Camera! Action! *(Walking onto stage with a microphone)* Hello and welcome to "Keep Those Candles Burnin'!"... where...candles strive to let God's light shine through some of life's most challenging times! *(Walking toward the candles)* Come on and let your little lights shine!
- Candles:** *(Each candle shouts out a way to shine, with enthusiasm, and strikes a confident pose as they go down the line)* Pray! Serve! Give! Worship! Encourage! Learn! Invite!
- Host:** Alright! Come on! Let's keep those candles burnin'!

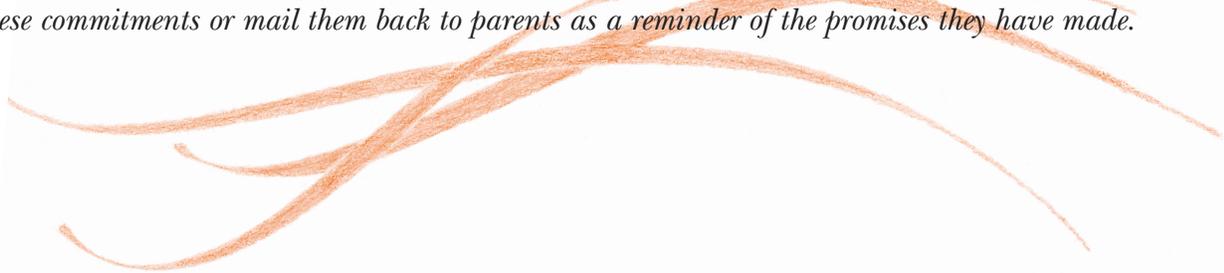
# Ministry Covenant

## Teacher Installation Rite

Duplicate this ministry covenant below to be used two ways:

- 1 As a discussion tool for a teacher-orientation meeting
- 2 And, as a rite of commitment and recognition during worship.

For use in worship, reproduce copies to insert in each bulletin. Invite teachers, assistants, helpers, and small group leaders forward following the sermon or hymn of the day. Following the covenant, encourage participants and parents to sign their covenant and place it in the offering plate as a sign of personal commitment. You might find a creative way to display these commitments or mail them back to parents as a reminder of the promises they have made.



FANNING THE FLAMES  
OF DISCIPLESHIP



### A Ministry Covenant to Make Disciples

*You are the light of the world...let you light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven (Matthew 5:14,16).*

- A:** The following teachers have been selected to teach and disciple in our midst this year: (names are read and teachers come forward)
- P:** The Apostle Paul tells us in Ephesians 4 that "each of us has been given grace according to Christ's measure...some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry and for building up the body of Christ," which is the church (4:7, 11-12).
- Our Lord Jesus commands us to make disciples of all people. We understand from the teachings of Jesus that a disciple is a faithful follower of God who is seasoned with love, empowered by forgiveness, committed to serving others, and bold in giving witness to faith in Jesus. Do you accept the responsibility to use your gifts to teach the Word of God, to encourage faith, maturity and obedience to our Lord?

**Teachers:** I accept this responsibility, with the help of God!

**L:** Will you remember this covenant and keep those you are teaching and discipling in your prayers?

**Teachers:** I will, with the help of God.

**P:** (to the congregation) These people are willing to give witness to the Good News of salvation and make disciples through our congregation's education ministry. Will you commit yourselves to them in your daily prayers?

**C:** I will support them with my prayers and encouragement.

**P:** (to the parents of children) Will you disciple your child/ren at home through a daily time for prayer and the study of God's Word?

**Parents:** I will, with the help and grace of God.

**P:** Let us pray. Most gracious God, you have blessed your church with many gifted people. We thank you now for these teachers who have dedicated themselves in service to you. May their words be your words. May their hands be your hands. May their hearts be filled with your compassion and love. Give them insight through your Holy Spirit so that your church may be equipped and built up to witness and serve our world for your purposes. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

Signature

Date

Covenant may be signed by any who nurture faith: teachers, parents, pastors, etc.

# Highlighting

## Faith Practices Through the Year

### Monthly Sharing Sundays

When we were baptized, we received the gift of faith and began the journey of discipleship—a journey which, like a fire, needs to be nourished and tended. Parents, pastors, neighbors, teachers, mentors, heros, siblings, and peers either feed us or block us on the journey.

As we grow, we bear responsibility for the forks we choose on the road we travel. We choose to respond to God's call to discipleship or to ignore it.

Sometimes we don't know quite how to respond or what steps we should be taking. The seven faith practices—pray, study, worship, invite, encourage, serve and give—are a helpful way to identify those steps.

As we continue to grow and to travel the discipleship path, an important element is the act of sharing where we are on the road and how we got there. Sunday School is a perfect place for this to happen. Developing a Sharing Sunday provides the opportunity.

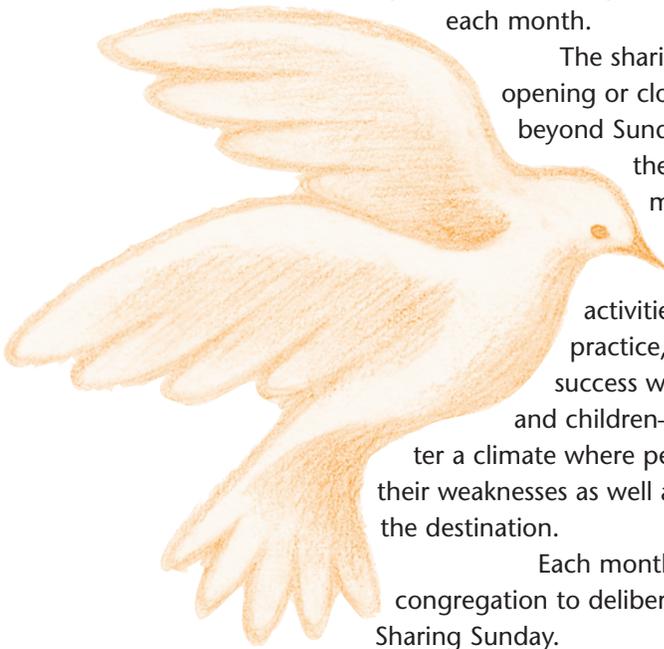
Set aside one Sunday per month as a Sharing Sunday. Look at your calendar to see which Sunday has no conflicting activities or festivals in the school year, perhaps the first Sunday of each month.

The sharing can be happen in the classroom, intergenerationally, at the opening or closing, or with partners. You may wish to see how this could move beyond Sunday school into the congregation's worship life. (Note: a number of the following suggestions are made with the wider congregation in mind.) Coordinate with your pastor and worship leaders to see how ideas and suggestions might be brought before the congregation.

Suggestions include: printing an announcement and a list of activities on a bulletin insert, a special prayer recognizing the specific faith practice, a sharing time by children during the children's sermon, etc. Best success will occur when all members of the congregation—adults, parents and children—consider and experience these practices together. Be sure to foster a climate where people feel loved and accepted and where they feel free to share their weaknesses as well as their successes. Emphasize the importance of the journey not the destination.

Each month, highlight one or more aspects of discipleship. Challenge your congregation to deliberately focus on it and to be prepared to share their experiences on Sharing Sunday.

The following suggestions are a combination of the faith practices and the *ELCA Calendar of Emphases*. Use these ideas or make up your own. Other ideas, especially for use at home are found between pages B-39 and B-58 in the *Call to Discipleship Congregation Planning Guide*.



to next page

## September **Make daily Bible reading a priority in your life**

### STUDY



- Identify a Bible Verse of the Week for all members of the congregation to memorize.
- Invite your nearest Lutheran campus pastor to visit and share his/her ministry. Ask members to adopt a student, to pray for him/her, send cards, cookies, etc.
- 2001 is the year of Luke in the lectionary. In Advent, we begin the year of Matthew. Read/study both Gospels during the 2001-2002 Sunday school year. Ask members to sign a poster when they are finished. Hang the poster in a prominent place.
- Be in touch with the college students of your congregation and invite them to study with you via E-mail or instant messaging.
- Invite members to set aside a place in their homes to read the Bible. It can be as simple as a table with a candle, the Bible, a notebook and pen for writing thoughts, a good light and a favorite chair. Encourage them to develop a consistent time to read together.
- Ask congregational youth to meet for lunch after worship to discuss the Gospel lesson and sermon.
- Emphasize the importance of life-long learning through temple talks, newsletter articles, or a feature on your Web page.
- Sponsor a Bible Quiz night. Form teams of Sunday school classes, women's or men's groups, and committees to compete against each other.
- Ask a member of your congregation to form a weekly or monthly Bible crossword puzzle for your newsletter or Web page.
- If your congregation has a school or early childhood learning center, ask the students to draw pictures of their favorite Bible stories. Hang them in the narthex or in the halls or use them as bulletin covers.

## October

### ENCOURAGE



### **Highlighting mission in the United States**

- Encourage members to pray for a specific mission congregation each week. Go to the web site at [www.elca.org/do](http://www.elca.org/do) for more information on ELCA missions.
- Ask the youth of the congregation to prepare a Reformation Festival. Give any money raised to the support of a mission congregation.
- Research the costs of starting a new congregation in your area. Consider how you might sponsor or partner with others in starting a new congregation.
- Invite members of a local mission congregation to visit and share their joys and frustrations.
- Look at your congregational and Sunday school statistics. Are you growing, stagnating or declining? What is God calling you to do in this time and place?

## November



### **Giving freely through faithful stewardship**

- Ask your stewardship committee to produce a litany which could be used in your Sunday school each week.
- Ask members to write a paragraph on what stewardship means in their lives. Make them into a booklet to be distributed to each family.
- Ask the youth to write a script about stewardship in daily life and present it to the congregation.
- Make a graph depicting the number of volunteer hours that are spent in each area of the congregation's ministry. Include it in your newsletter and your Web site.
- Ask the youth to sponsor the *Real Meal Deal* and implement programs like the *Giving Market* or the new Sunday school program, *Open a World of Possibility* (ELCA Hunger Appeal materials).
- Ask the congregation to fast one meal a week and give the cost of the meal to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal.
- Make a collage or display depicting how the ELCA Disaster Response effort has helped people here and abroad.
- Ask someone from the Women of the ELCA to share the concept of their Thankoffering with Sunday school students.
- Invite confirmands to make a graph representing the amount of money given by numbers of families each week, i.e. four families give \$1.00 per week, 20 families give \$20.00 per week, etc. No names or identification, only numbers.
- Sponsor a short-term study on stewardship for adults and youth.
- Make a "Blessings List," a place where people can write down the things for which they are thankful. Post it on a wall for everyone to see.

## December



### **Honoring Christ through worship and praise**

- Challenge all in the congregation to attend worship every Sunday in Advent and on Christmas Eve.
- Ask your Worship and Music Team to include children as ushers, greeters, and readers.
- Sponsor a live nativity for Christmas.
- Explore the different parts of the liturgy and what they mean in your Sunday school openings or closings.
- Ask the youth to tape (video or audio) the worship service, take it to a shut-in and worship with him/her.

*to next page*

## Highlighting faith practices *continued*

### December

*continued*

- Provide and distribute the “Home Altar” devotional resource to each family in the congregation to encourage Advent prayer.
- Give each child an Advent Calendar which encourages and makes suggestions for family devotions.
- Teach pupils liturgical dance. Help them worship with their bodies.
- Before each practice for the Christmas program, take time to pray. Conclude with a circle prayer and invite the children to pray.
- Have confirmands make a graph of worship attendance for the past five years. Identify reasons for the trends.
- Explore ways your worship service(s) can reach more people. Radio? TV? A different format?

January

**INVITE**



### Passing on the faith through global mission

- Hold an Epiphany Celebration, beginning with a pot luck supper and a program on global mission.
- Invite a missionary to visit and share mission experiences.
- Identify your synod’s companion synod and learn what needs exist there.
- Collect offerings during Sunday school for a special need in your synod’s companion synod.
- Do a study of the country in which your companion synod is located.
- Select a mission in your companion synod and urge members to pray daily for the missionaries and leaders.
- Urge your council to give at least 20% of any interest or dividends from investments or endowments to be sent to Lutheran World Relief or the ELCA World Hunger Appeal.
- Place a large world map in a prominent place in your building. Ask different congregational groups to identify and do research on mission efforts throughout the world. Display your findings.
- Develop a list of addresses or E-mail addresses of missionaries and ask people in your congregation to become pen pals.

February

**PRAY**



**Calling all to pray frequently**

- Sponsor a short-term study on prayer.
- Provide simple prayer journals to students and invite them to record their prayers for the month.
- Publish the names of your shut-ins. Ask every member to choose one shut-in to pray for each day.
- Develop or expand your prayer chain.
- Develop a list of special prayers to send home with Sunday school students. Memorize one or two over the month. Encourage families to use these prayers regularly.
- Invite Sunday school students to write and offer petitions during the prayers at worship.
- Ask members to pray the Small Catechism, either alone at home, as a family or at a separate time at church.
- Develop an adult class to study the Lord's Prayer.
- Form a weekly Prayer Breakfast at a local restaurant.

March

**SERVE**



**Caring for women and children across the world**

- Sponsor an evening when women can gather in small groups and share their joys and frustrations.
- Develop a support group for single mothers.
- Ask youth to provide free babysitting for mothers who may need a night out.
- Develop a support group for widows.
- Hold a seminar on money management.
- Distribute copies of the ELCA statement on economic life, "Sustainable Livelihood for All." Ask members to respond via E-mail and letters. Post them on a bulletin board.
- Research ways your congregation can help victims of abuse.
- Become aware of legislation which affects women and children at both the state and federal levels. The Lutheran Office of Governmental Affairs can help at [www.loga.org](http://www.loga.org).

April

INVITE



**Welcoming through hospitality and evangelism**

- Ask people to be visitor spotters. Set a goal to have at least three people talk to every visitor to your services.
- Develop a visitor packet and offer a temple talk explaining how the members might invite others to worship.
- Give a gift to every visitor to your Sunday school or worship services; e.g., a video about your congregation, a mug, a candle, a storybook, etc.
- Designate April as Friendship Month and host a specific Friendship Sunday Celebration. Ask members to invite at least one person to worship.
- Invite people to an evening of faith sharing in small groups. Make it intergenerational so that older Sunday school students can hear their parents talk about their beliefs.
- When you invite people to dinner—at home or in a restaurant—pray before you eat.
- Set up a coffee pot near the entrance where most parents drop off their children for Sunday school. Invite them to stay for a cup of coffee (or come back for one.) Post a list of adult classes nearby.
- Designate children and youth as Sunday school greeters for each entrance.
- Invite a celebrity or community leader to an evening forum. Ask them to speak about how God has been part of their life.

May

SERVE



**Helping others through social ministry**

- Ask each Sunday school pupil to make several drawings of their hands to remind others that God wants us to serve. Give a drawing to every family.
- Take older classes to work in a food pantry or soup kitchen.
- Adopt a nursing home. Arrange for groups of people to go several times a month to visit with the residents.
- Gather clothing, health kits, layettes, etc. for Lutheran World Relief.
- Visit the social ministry organizations which relate to your synod.
- Give food or fruit baskets to people at times other than Thanksgiving, Christmas or Easter.
- Enlist families in the congregation to serve as part of a servant event: e.g. building a Habitat house, a community clean-up project, etc.

June

**ENCOURAGE**



**Supporting others on their journey**

- Invite Sunday school students to create thank you notes for your pastor(s) and pray daily for all church leaders.
- Identify the seminary to which your synod relates. Has your church donated any money in the past year? Discover why or why not.
- Celebrate a "Vocation Sunday." Ask everyone to wear an item of clothing which represents their ministry in daily life. Host a special vocation fair for Sunday school students inviting members to share about their work.
- Dedicate a Sunday during which Sunday school classes pray for those whose ministries are in specialized settings; e.g., chaplains in the Armed Forces, in nursing homes, etc.
- Get to know the youth in your congregation or community. Eat together after a service. Pair youth with adults and provide suggested topics for discussion.
- Visit the church camp to which your synod relates. What happens there? How can you or your congregation be of help?
- What environmental issues are prevalent in your community? How can your congregation enhance your stewardship of creation?
- If your congregation does not have a Men in Mission group, explore ways this might benefit your men.
- Develop a relationship with a congregation in a setting different from yours (rural, urban, suburban, or in another part of the world.) Get to know each other and how your cultures differ. 

**FANNING THE FLAMES  
OF DISCIPLESHIP**

# Presentation of the

# Bible



## A guide for strengthening congregational practice

*Place in their hands the Holy Scriptures.* A recent survey shows that over 80 percent of ELCA congregations place the Holy Scriptures in the hands of children. Some congregations present Bibles to third graders during worship on Reformation Sunday after a Bible survey class. Other congregations hand a Bible to students on the first day of confirmation camp. Some congregations involve children and parents in a family Bible study. Other congregations help parents select a Bible to give their child as a first communion gift. Whatever the practice, congregations and parents are finding ways to honor what is promised at baptism and to pass on to their children this chief symbol of the faith.

“Presentation of the Bible” is a guide for congregations with an existing Bible giving practice as well as congregations considering one. The ideas, resources and approaches presented here offer a variety of possibilities to consider. “Presentation of the Bible” can be used by an education committee, congregational council, special task force or group of parents looking to create or improve an intentional Bible giving tradition.

Invite a group of adults to read this resource (You have permission to photocopy and distribute these pages) and respond to the following questions:

- *What is our current practice of Bible giving?*
- *What does our practice teach children and adults to think, feel and wonder about the Bible?*
- *What kind of experience do we want our children to have to foster a lifelong use of the Bible?*
- *How will we create the experience we seek?*

### The book

*Bear his creative and redeeming Word.* The Bible is the living word of the living God. It is where Christ’s disciples go to ask what God has done, is doing and is yet to do. It witnesses to God’s gracious activity in the world, and to the faith of God’s people over time. It shows us a God who loves us and helps us see our own need for God. As such, it is fitting that congregations help children to read, study and meet God. The presentation of the Bible is a powerful congregational practice that can lead to a lifetime of Bible reading, study and revelation.

### The children

*Provide for their instruction in the Christian faith.* Children do not understand the Bible as adults do. They understand the Bible in ways characteristic of children. Even so, God meets children as they read the Bible. Children think, wonder and feel about this meeting and this God. The church’s task is to guide children so they continue to engage the Bible both now and as adults. The presentation of the Bible can be an occasion when we call children with their abilities, limitations and experiences to consider what we cherish. It can equally be an opportunity to call the whole congregation to continue to engage the Bible throughout life.

## **The adults**

*You have presented these children with the Holy Scriptures, do you intend...* "There is no greater or nobler authority on earth" than the teaching office of parents, wrote Martin Luther. Parents are the first and primary teachers of their children. How adults use the Bible sets forth not only biblical content but a way of thinking, feeling, exploring and wondering about the Bible. The presentation of the Bible can help turn the home into the first church; a place of mutual conversations between adults and children about matters of faith. Classes preparing for the presentation of the Bible can offer adults opportunities for their own Bible study, as well as providing skills and resources to share the Bible with their children.

## **Presenting Bibles to youth in your congregation**

The presentation of the Bible can be an occasion for children, adult, family and congregational education. Consider the following possibilities for your setting:

**Before** Invite parents and other interested adults to a class, a series of meetings, or a retreat. You might also consider a meeting or series of meetings with children and parents. Another option is to gather a class with just the children.

**At the class** Provide a brief overview of the Bible. Review Bible reading, devotion and study resources for individuals, families and small groups. Provide a Bible study and family devotion experience that can be done in the home. Ask families to frame a Bible verse that reflects their understanding and commitment to God. Demonstrate similarities and difference between various Bible translations. Discuss the Bible's role in worship and Christian education. Invite parents to write their own dedication or words of encouragement to be spoken when the Bible is presented. Create a devotional reading chart for the entire congregation. Involve children and their parents in writing a Presentation of the Bible blessing or litany than can be used at worship.

For a class model and a list of resources to assist with these suggestions go to the Web site for this guide: [www.elca.org/etteam/2001CEProgramPlanner](http://www.elca.org/etteam/2001CEProgramPlanner)

**On the day** Invite families forward for the presentation of the Bible. Include children as lectors and other assisting ministers. Ask children and adults to share their favorite Bible story with the congregation. Have families write commitments to set aside time to read the Bible together, and include such promises in the offering. Invite the congregation to follow a daily or weekly Bible reading schedule.

The presentation of the Bible can take place in a variety of ways with a variety of words. Consider the following as you create your own practice:

A representative of the congregation (parent, teacher, pastor) presents a Bible to each child with these or similar words:

*"As disciples of our Lord Jesus, we acknowledge the Holy Scriptures as our source of truth and life. They open up for us the heart of God. On behalf of (name of congregation) receive this Bible. Hear God's word with us. Learn and tell its stories. Discover its mysteries. Honor its commandments. Rejoice in its good news. May God's life-giving word, sweeter than honey, inspire you and make you wise."*

## **P r e s e n t a t i o n   o f   t h e   B i b l e** *continued*

### **When to present the Bible**

Customs vary from place to place. Some of the most common include:

- When the child begins to read
- Entering first grade
- As part of preparation for Holy Communion
- At the beginning of confirmation instruction
- Whenever a child is welcomed into membership
- At public affirmation of baptism (confirmation)

### **Appropriate times to present Bibles during the church year**

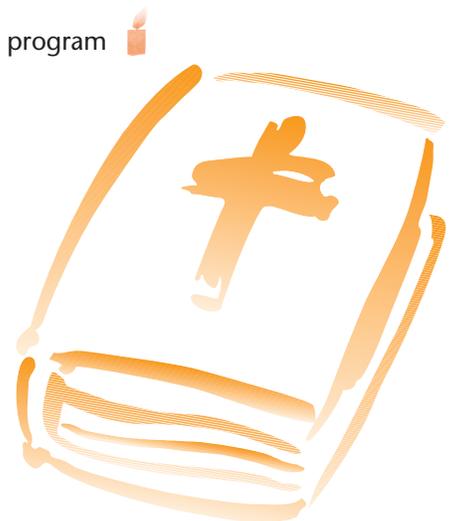
Again, customs vary. Consider the following possibilities in your preparation and planning:

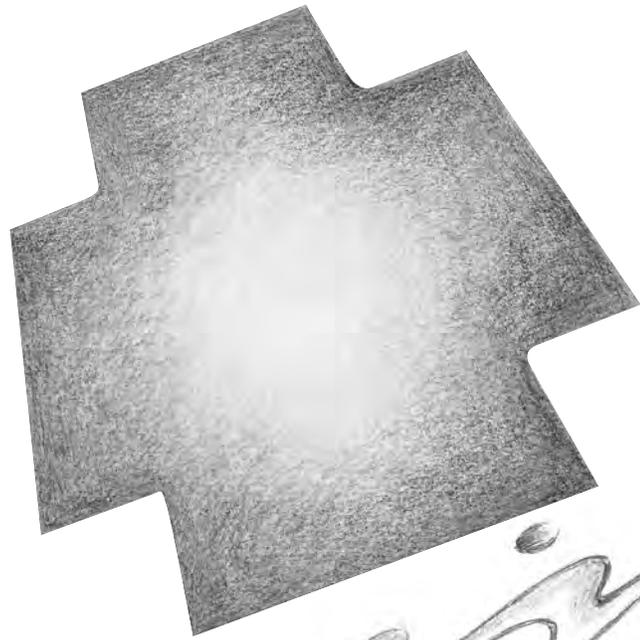
- Rally Day—the Bible as the source of all Christian education
- Reformation Sunday—the Bible as sola scripture (word alone)
- Pentecost—the Holy Spirit brings the written word to life
- Lent—Bible study as preparation for baptism or affirmation
- Easter—the Bible as the book for Easter people
- Anniversary of Baptism—the Bible as a tool for fulfilling baptismal promises
- Anniversary of the Congregation—the Bible as a primary symbol of faith community

### **Resources to support a Bible presentation emphasis**

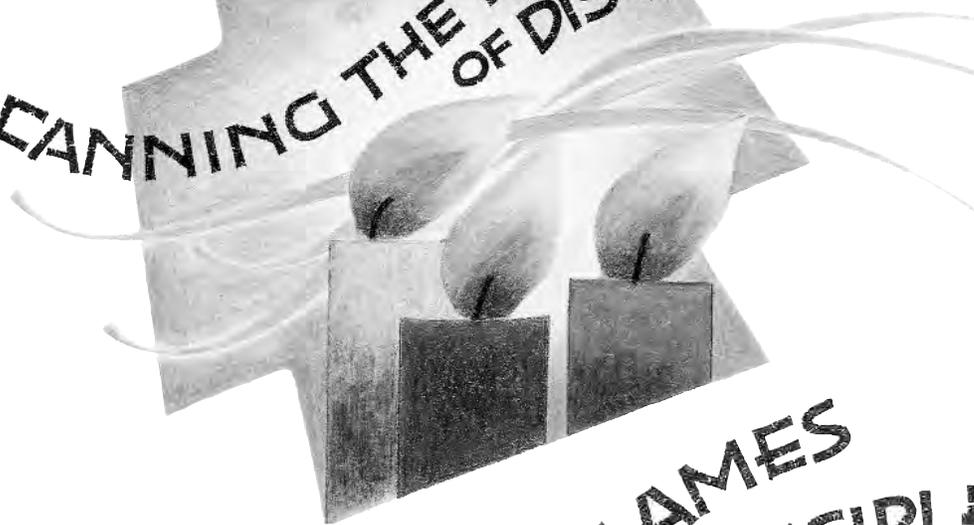
Go to the Web page for this planning guide, [www.elca.org/etteam/2001CEProgramPlanner](http://www.elca.org/etteam/2001CEProgramPlanner) for more information that may be helpful to you in your planning efforts. Articles and resources include:

- Tips for reading the Bible together at home
- Tips for selecting a child-friendly Bible
- A book and resource list to enhance your Bible presentation program 





**FANNING THE FLAMES  
OF DISCIPLESHIP**



**FANNING THE FLAMES  
OF DISCIPLESHIP**

*Faith Practices*

# Faith Practices



PRAY

STUDY



WORSHIP

INVITE

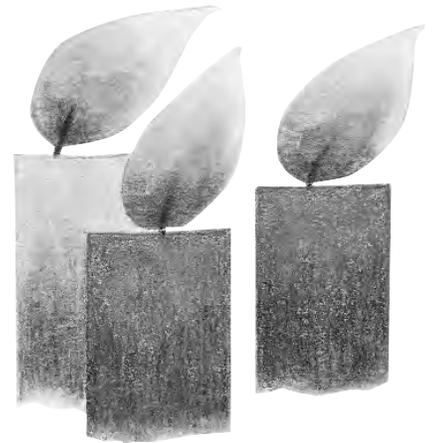


ENCOURAGE

SERVE



GIVE



## LIVING FAITH · ELCA-wide Call to Discipleship



# Fanning the flames of discipleship Planning calendar

Utilize these pages to plan and schedule you congregation's activities and offerings in Christian education and discipleship. Use the left side of the planning sheet to highlight emphases connected to worship, thematic planning, etc. Use the right side of the sheet to indicate special classes, gatherings or offerings you are scheduling. Highlight your monthly "Sharing Sunday" emphasis and any other special activities on these pages before copying and distributing them to your teachers.

## JUNE-AUGUST 2001

### Plans, preparation

---



---



---



---

## SEPTEMBER 2001

### Activities, classes, emphases

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 9 \_\_\_\_\_ *13th Sunday after Pentecost*  
 16 \_\_\_\_\_  
 23 \_\_\_\_\_  
 30 \_\_\_\_\_

---



---



---



---



---

## OCTOBER 2001

### Activities, classes, emphases

7 \_\_\_\_\_  
 14 \_\_\_\_\_ *18th Sunday after Pentecost*  
 21 \_\_\_\_\_  
 28 \_\_\_\_\_ *Reformation Sunday*

---



---



---



---

## NOVEMBER 2001

### Activities, classes, emphases

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
 11 \_\_\_\_\_ *All Saints Sunday*  
 18 \_\_\_\_\_  
 25 \_\_\_\_\_ *Christ the King*

---



---



---



---

## DECEMBER 2001

### Activities, classes, emphases

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 9 \_\_\_\_\_ *1st Sunday in Advent*  
 16 \_\_\_\_\_  
 23 \_\_\_\_\_  
 30 \_\_\_\_\_ *1st Sunday after Christmas*

---



---



---



---

**Planning calendar** *continued*

**JANUARY 2002**

**Activities, classes, emphases**

6	_____	_____
	<i>The Epiphany of Our Lord</i>	_____
13	_____	_____
20	_____	_____
27	_____	_____

**FEBRUARY 2002**

**Activities, classes, emphases**

3	_____	_____
	<i>4th Sunday after Epiphany</i>	_____
10	_____	_____
17	_____	_____
	<i>1st Sunday in Lent</i>	_____
24	_____	_____

**MARCH 2002**

**Activities, classes, emphases**

3	_____	_____
	<i>3rd Sunday in Lent</i>	_____
10	_____	_____
17	_____	_____
24	_____	_____
	<i>Palm Sunday</i>	_____
31	_____	_____
	<i>Easter</i>	_____

**APRIL 2002**

**Activities, classes, emphases**

7	_____	_____
	<i>1st Sunday after Easter</i>	_____
14	_____	_____
21	_____	_____
28	_____	_____

**MAY 2002**

**Activities, classes, emphases**

5	_____	_____
	<i>5th Sunday after Easter</i>	_____
12	_____	_____
19	_____	_____
	<i>Pentecost</i>	_____
26	_____	_____
	<i>Holy Trinity</i>	_____



**JUNE 2002**

**Activities, classes, emphases**

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 9 \_\_\_\_\_ *2nd Sunday after Pentacost*  
 16 \_\_\_\_\_  
 23 \_\_\_\_\_  
 30 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**JULY 2002**

**Activities, classes, emphases**

7 \_\_\_\_\_  
 14 \_\_\_\_\_ *7th Sunday after Pentacost*  
 21 \_\_\_\_\_  
 28 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**AUGUST 2002**

**Activities, classes, emphases**

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
 11 \_\_\_\_\_  
 18 \_\_\_\_\_  
 25 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

