

Living Faith @



Dear Fellow Soul Shapers,
I remember the day that I was confirmed very well. It was Palm Sunday. The sun was shining, there had just been a rain and the ground was squishy. All of my grandparents, cousins, aunts, and uncles would be joining us for worship and then for the big dinner at our house. Weeks before, my mother, grandmother and I had went shopping for the perfect dress to wear, it was pink.....it was a very big deal.

In our congregation we had our first communion at the affirmation of Baptism. I remember worrying about all kinds of things. Tripping was at the top of the list, a close second was what the wine would taste like and what would happen if the wafer got stuck on the roof of my mouth (I was 12, what do you expect). None of those things happened, but what did happen has stayed with me for the rest of my life....I became a part of a very important community. Every time I go forward for communion it reminds me that I am a part of something bigger than myself. I am, as you are, a part of the priesthood of believers, claimed in the waters of Baptism and sealed by the Holy Spirit and Marked with the Cross of Christ forever and sent into the world as witnesses for the sake of the Gospel. This month looks at some ways to celebrate first communion and remember baptism. Blessings on the Journey, *Elayne Werges, Mom, Grandma, DM, and MA*

Baptismal Promises

“...To bring them to the Word of God and share in the Lord’s Supper ...”



First Communion

As congregations, parents and sponsors we promise at Baptism to “Bring them to the word of God and share in the holy supper”. What an exciting day when this happens.

Many Congregations support parents in keeping that promise with a Milestone recognition that includes instruction, activities, presentation of a gift, and a special blessing during a worship services where youth and their families are invited to come forward to receive Holy Communion as a family. The age that one begins taking communion is varied and is dependent on the decisions of the family and the congregations and are guided by “*The Use of the Means of Grace*” (ELCA, 1997). The document that we use as a guide to consult us as we seek common understanding and practices.

Ideas that can be used at home or at church:

- Celebrate the day by making a banner. Include their name, date, and symbols such as a chalice and bread.
- Make a communion chalice (cup). Go to your local art council for direction. Many will sell you the clay and fire it for you.
- Ask your pastor if you can bake the communion bread that day. Make the bread as a class or as a family.
- Explore meal stories from the Bible such as the Passover, Israelites and Manna, Feeding of the multitudes, the Last Supper, find some more.



This information has been prepared for you by the

Northwestern Iowa Synod-Home Life Network

for use by families and local congregations. For more ideas about how you can pass on faith in your homes go to: http://www.neiasynod.org/synod_resources/YouthFamilyResources.asp
If you have a comment or suggestion for future newsletters or are interested in joining the Home-Life Network please contact the synod office. Find us on Facebook!

Bake Bread Together

Idea: Bread is a universal food, eaten in all cultures. Look up bread and find out more. Then make a loaf that your family will eat together. Use your favorite recipe or try this one.

What you will Need: flour, yeast, sugar, salt, oil, water, a big bowl, and a baking pan.

Directions: The night before, make the bread. Just before meal, bake the bread. This recipe is SUPER easy and the kids can help.

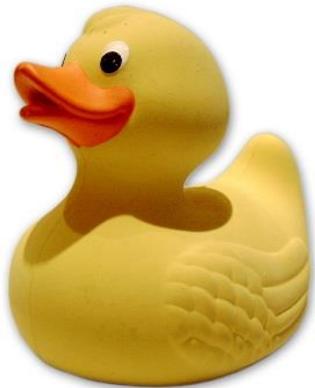
- 3 cups all purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon oil (vegetable or olive)
- 1 ¼ teaspoons salt
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoons yeast
- 1 ½ cups water

Combine flour, salt, sugar, and yeast in a large bowl. Add water and oil. Stir until combined. The dough will look 'shaggy'. Cover with plastic wrap. Let raise over night (the longer the better). When you are ready to bake the bread, preheat the oven to 450 degrees. Place the baking pan (stoneware works really well) in the oven while preheating. Roll out the dough out onto a floured board and knead a few times to make a ball. Cover the bowl and let rest until the oven is hot. Cut a cross slit on the top. Place the loaf on the preheated board in the oven. Bake for 30 minutes. Check the bread. Bake a few more minutes if needed. When done, remove the bread from the oven and placed on a cooling rack to cool.



Rustic Bread

Celebrating the Baptism of Jesus



Idea: The Lectionary text for the First Sunday of Epiphany is Matthew 3:13-17. the Baptism of our Lord. This day is a perfect opportunity for congregations and families to remember and celebrate baptism.

Things You Will Need:

- A bowl or tub of water
- Plastic rubber duckies, wash clothes, sponges, soap, bath things.
- Mementos from the day of baptism such as the candles, outfit, bulletin, pictures, baby book, cards, letters, shells, and perhaps even a gift that was received.

Directions:

As a congregation, invite conversation about Baptism by having an cross-generational event that celebrates water using a bath theme complete with rubber duckies, wash clothes, and sponges. Ask someone to make a backdrop to take photos of families by painting on an inexpensive shower curtain. Encourage people to share their faith stories

At Home, Dip your fingers into the bowl of water and make the sign of the cross on your forehead, saying the words "you are a beloved child of God, Sealed by the Holy Spirit and Marked with the Cross of Christ Forever". Talk about the day of Baptism, what are your memories, talk how Baptism informs faith. Encourage each other to tell your faith stories or share a favorite story of faith from the Bible. Finger paint with shaving cream colored with food coloring. Wash hands as a family.

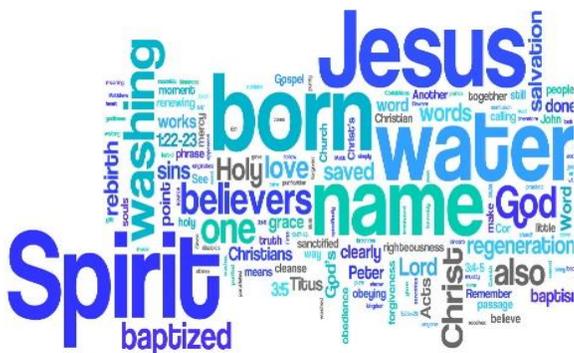


Table Talk...



Conversation Starters to use when you gather for a meal, as you are driving in the car, or as you are preparing for bed.

- ✓ How does it feel after a bath. How is baptism like a bath?
- ✓ Think about all the times you eat bread during the day, make a list.
- ✓ Sing some of the songs that are sung during communion.