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Children, Youth and Family Ministry News February 2013



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Dear Friends,

This month our introduction comes from Kristin Johnson from Story City. Read on for some great insights!

A couple months ago I found myself going 'down the rabbit hole' of links on Facebook and found myself a part of a Facebook group called 'Killing Sunday School'. But here's the thing, it's not at all about finding ways to 'kill Sunday School'. Here is what Rich Melheim says it's all about: "We're working on a simple concept on this site: Sunday as the launch pad for a Cross+gen faith encounter and story, with Monday - Saturday as the intentional, committed continuation with the nightly faith practices. This is a paradigm shifter from church doing the work for you with parents on the sidelines, to church equipping parents to DO and BE what they once promised God they would DO and BE when they first brought the babe to the font. This is not the end of Sunday School. It is the birth of Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, etc., school. This is not the death of a 270 year old institution. This is the re-institution of something much more ancient and authentic: Deuteronomy 6 (when you lie down and when you rise) meets Acts 2 (they met in homes for Apostles' teaching, prayer, care) meets Luther (parents as bishops of the house)."

It is from this group that I learned about the '**Dear (Contact First Name), Faith 5**' - Every Night In Every Home. The steps are 1. Share, 2. Read, 3. Talk, 4. Pray, 5. Bless. The Faith 5 is a powerful tool that will help your family draw closer together, closer to God, and bring a sense of peace and joy to the constant ups and downs of life. It is so simple and yet it is so profound.

I began reading the stories of the youth workers and pastors who had introduced these simple 5 steps to their congregations and how it has been trans-formative in their ministries and in the lives of their families. And so since discovering the 'Faith 5' my husband and I have begun using it in our own home with our two little girls. I've also introduced it to the families that attended our Family Night, I've included it in our monthly newsletter and we've begun using it during our committee meetings as our opening devotion. People have really caught

on to it and have enjoyed getting to know their children and their fellow congregational members in new ways.

If you'd be interested in learning more about The Faith 5, here are a couple of helpful links, everything from handouts to provide your families to a video of how one congregation has incorporated it into their everyday ministry.

1 - [Faith Inkubators](#) - where this originated from

2 - [Faith Formation Journeys](#) - Weekly Faith 5 devotions that can be reproduced and inserted into a bulletin or service folder.

3 - Here's how [one church](#) in Longwood, Florida is designing FAITH 5 into the core of every ministry in the church. That's systemic!

Keep in touch,
Pastor Mark

Idea to Steal



An Idea to Steal:

At St. John in Farmersburg there is a banner in the back of the church where people who have received a blessing can pin a clipping, photo, or note to let the congregation celebrate with them. People have celebrated grandchildren, pets, a house being rented etc.

Fight the Fever

Saturday, March 16, Wartburg College is offering a Junior/Senior High event "Fight the Fever" which will focus on the ELCA Malaria Campaign. The day will include fun games, worship in the Chapel, dinner in the Mensa, a campus tour, and the day concludes with a Malaria Benefit Concert in the Levik Arena at 6:30pm. Registration for this event is only \$10.00 per person and the entire fee will be donated to the Malaria Campaign. More information and registration materials are available [here](#).

Young Adults Trip

Young Adults from around the Synod are invited on a Kayaking trip to the Apostle Islands July 31- August 4. For details and more opportunities see the TAB Facebook page [Decorah Area TAB](#). We gather at T-Bock's once a month to hang out and talk about different issues connecting our life and our faith.

PAST WEBINARS

Did you miss the any of the previous webinars earlier this year? You can view them and/or download the powerpoints [here](#).

BOOK REVIEW

"Lost Bremer County: Vanished Towns of the Cedar Valley" by Linda Betsinger McCann (2011)

Bremer, by land mass, is one of Iowa's smallest of the 99 counties. In 1850 it had 25 residents, in 1853 it had 80 voters, and by 1854 there were 180 citizens. By 1885 330 people lived in Bremer County and the immigrants just kept coming. Because a family could only be away from the farm for a part of the day between morning and evening chores the maximum distance they could travel for mail or supplies was 10 miles. Even when the interurban, a series of electric trains that connected all the towns in the Cedar Valley, was established it needed a station every 10 miles too. Therefore towns sprung up as the population grew so rapidly. Each town had a school, a creamery, a post office, a store or two, a train station, and of course, a church.

When agriculture and transportation both changed the population, the small town diminished as quickly as it had grown. Soon the creamery closed, the stores left, the school closed, the post office was eliminated, and all that was left was the church. In Bremer County you will find ELCA churches in Maxfield, Buck Creek, Crane Creek, and Oran, where there had once been a thriving community and now there is nothing or close to nothing. In fact, just this little county has 90 fewer towns than it used to.

What does this teach us? That if our evangelism strategy is to wait for new families to move to town and put their kids in Sunday School we are following a strategy that has failed for 125 years. On the other hand, congregations that embrace their identity as a center for mission will grow spiritually and numerically in spite of the demographics.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Feb 10	High School La Vida Lutheran Student Center, Cedar Falls
Feb 16-17	LYO Assembly Clarion Inn, Mason City
Feb 17	Working Together in Solidarity Webinar with Rozella White
March 2-3	Wazzup with Supper Retreat Ewalu Bible Camp

March 3 Hughes	Inculturating the Gospel Webinar with Dr. Colleen Windham -
March 7	Youth Worker Meeting St Petri, Story City
March 10	High School La Vida Lutheran Student Center, Cedar Falls
March 17	Dog Eating Chicken Webinar with Heather Hansen
April 4	Youth Worker Meeting Holy Trinity, Dubuque
April 5-7	Dirty Feet Retreat Ewalu Bible Camp
April 6	Juniors Riverside Blast Riverside Bible Camp
April 7	Going Public Webinar with Jeremy Myers
April 13	Junior High/High School Riverside Blast Riverside Bible Camp
April 14	High School La Vida Lutheran Student Center, Cedar Falls
April 26-27	A Hike with Martin Ewalu Bible Camp
May 2	Youth Worker Meeting St John, Charles City
May 12	High School La Vida Lutheran Student Center, Cedar Falls
June 6	Youth Worker Meeting St John, Cedar Falls

July 21-28

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Luther College

Sincerely,
Mark Anderson
Northeastern Iowa Synod, ELCA