



Dear Faith Shapers,

During this season of Advent I invite you and your family to take a journey together—every night. You won't need to leave your home, you won't even need to leave your couch. But it's a journey by which blessings will overflow. The journey is called Faith5. In this month's issue of Living Faith I am excited to share with you information about the Faith5 because I believe in its ability to draw a family closer together. And I've learned this from first-hand experience of practicing the Faith5 with my own family. The Faith5 is NOT about SPENDING more time with your kids. Rather it's about INVESTING in your kids. Because when you invest you see results.

For families with young children – look ahead in time. What would it be worth to you to have a teenager one day who wouldn't go to sleep without talking to you? Praying with you? Blessing you? Would it be worth five minutes? Every night?

For families with teens – what would happen to your family over time if you were able to keep open, caring communications going every night throughout adolescence?

So take the next 6 weeks of Advent and give the Faith5 a try. I promise you that the time with your family will be well spent.

*Kristin Johnson
Associate In Ministry*

FAITH5

1. Share

Share the high and low of your day

2. Read

Review the Bible verse or story of the week

3. Talk

Talk about the Bible verse and story

4. Pray

Pray together as a family, thanking God for your highs and asking God to help you with your lows

5. Bless

Make the sign of the cross on each other's foreheads as you give a blessing

Every Night in Every Home!

This information is prepared for you by the
Northeastern Iowa Synod-Home Life Network
for use by families and local congregations.



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FAITH5 (Faith Acts In the Home) - When done over time, FAITH5 carries the power to enrich communication, deepen understanding, aid sleep & promote mental, physical & spiritual health.



SHARE: Sharing your highs and lows with a loved one has a very important and healthy psychological effect. Doing this provides a safe place for us to identify, name, and work through our emotions. Individuals will learn that “I am not alone.” Incredible empathy will develop as children and parents learn that when you hurt, I hurt. Sharing highs doubles our highs and sharing our lows reduces that burden as we carry it together.



READ: The power of God’s word is not realized if it is just a leather bound book that collects dust on the shelf. The inspired Word of God has power and strength only when we open it. The easiest way to read/teach scripture to young children is through words and motions. Make the motions up if you like or use it as an opportunity to learn sign language. Teaching your children motions and gestures to go with Scripture will help it become cemented in their minds and hearts (and yours too!) As we create and become families who live in God’s Word we are strengthened, renewed, enriched, balanced, grounded, and refreshed.



TALK: In Advent we hear the name of God—Emmanuel. The literal meaning is “God with us.” As we share our highs and our lows, read a bible verse, and then talk about how they connect, God is incarnational—He comes to us and lives with us. Talking about the verse and our day is a way for all of us to begin to look for God in everyday. God becomes real and these bible verses begin to apply to my life—not just some people who lived 2,000 years ago. Connecting the text of scripture to the context of our lives is a constant reminder that God values us. We see that we are loved by God and by our family. With practice this can become the most significant time.



PRAY: Prayer is the glue that holds it all together! Prayer is the catalyst for God’s activity. It is here, as we pray for one another, that God’s presence is evident. As we listen to one another—as we have heard the sharing of our days, our being informed by the scriptures and seeing the connections—we have the privilege and the opportunity to place our hearts before God.



BLESS: Blessing one another as families is a kiss from God as we turn out the lights. It helps us to recognize that God is in the midst of our everyday lives. It will not take away our pain. It won’t pay the bills. But blessings do inform those pains. Blessings shape families and people. They shape our attitude and shift our perspective. You can make up your own blessing, or use one of the following: as you make the sign of the cross on their forehead say ‘Remember you are a baptized child of God’. Or “Remember God loves you and so do I”. And then have your child do the same to you. As you can see from the side picture, even a baby can give a blessing.

HELPFUL TIPS/LINKS

- Whoever goes to bed first calls the family by saying, “Faith5 time”!
- Choose a central location or alternate children’s bedrooms.
- Keep a record of your family’s highs and lows and look back over them once a year as a way to remember the journey your family has taken.
- Find more at www.faith5.org or at www.faithink.com