

### Questions to Ponder

- What do you think of this story?
- How are you (or others) like the Gauls?
- When we are baptized we give our whole self, our whole lives to God. What do you think it means to give of ourselves to God?
- What do you think is hardest to give to God?
- What do you think is easiest to give to God?

### To Do

Think about what you have to give of your time, talents and resources. List those things below. Then I want you to think about your schedule during the week. How do you give of your time? How do you give of your talents? How do you give of your resources? Write an example from your week next to each list. Then make a plan of how you can give generously in the next couple of weeks.

*Make a list of...*

*Example...*

**Time**

**Talents**

**Resources**

**Plan to Give Generously**



## Faith Talk: Marks of Discipleship Mentor Conversations

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**The Mentor Experience**

Passing on the Christian faith from one generation to the next is the joy and responsibility of an entire congregation. The goal of the Mentor Experience is for students and mentors to have the experience of sharing their faith as they build relationships with one another. As we begin this mentoring time, please pray for each other. This can start now!

## How It Works

This booklet contains 6 conversations and activities for mentors and students to have together. Each of these conversations should be a separate meeting. Take time to look at the booklet before meeting, so you are prepared for any activities you might do together. Consider the questions and consider questions you might ask of your mentor/mentee.

You are free to meet at whatever time fits your schedule. If you would like to do several of these conversations during the Lenten season, feel free to meet before worship during the Soup Supper. Whenever you do meet, I would encourage you to meet in a public place where others are around.

Along with the conversations, you will be completing one service activity as well as attend one worship service together. For worship, feel free to attend a worship service of another church to see how it compares to St. Paul's. And if you'd like for your service projects, you're can pair up with other mentors/students to serve together. It is my hope that you will enjoy your time together.

### Sample Outline of a Mentor Meeting

1. **Catching Up.** Share your high and low from the last week. What has been going well? What have you been struggling with? The students are familiar with sharing highs & lows.
2. **Conversation.** Use the booklet to help you talk about the assigned topic. The "Questions to Ponder" are meant to be a guide, but feel free to venture off on your own. You don't need to answer every question. The purpose is to have

a conversation. Is there something about the topic that strikes you? Is there something you have struggled with in your own life? Is there a completely different topic that seems like it needs to be discussed? Go ahead. That conversation will likely be more meaningful than what is suggested.

3. **Planning.** Set your dates. When will you meet next? When will you attend worship together? What ideas do you have for a service activity? When might you do this? Think about these things together.
4. **Prayer.** End the meeting with prayer. You can either pray freely or use a memorized prayer, such as the Lord's Prayer. Consider praying for your highs and lows. "Thank you God for..." "Help me God with..."

## Meeting Schedule

Developing Relationships: \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer: \_\_\_\_\_

Worship: \_\_\_\_\_

Bible: \_\_\_\_\_

Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Giving: \_\_\_\_\_

## Our Theme: Discipleship

*"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples,*

*if you have love for one another.”*

*John 13:35*

As disciples of Jesus, we are called to love God and love each other. This is how we live as followers of Jesus. But what does this mean? How do we do this? One way to do this is by practicing the Marks of Discipleship. These are ways we can share our love for God and our neighbor. These marks will be our guide for conversation and action as we go through this Confirmation mentor time.

**As Disciples of Jesus, we believe we are called to...**

- **Pray Daily** – be in conversation with God and listen to God through daily prayer.
- **Worship Weekly** – attend worship to praise and adore God with other believers.
- **Read the Bible daily** – spend time in the Bible and devotional books seeking to better know Christ and what God has to say for our lives.
- **Serve at and beyond St. Paul’s** – by using the gifts God has given each of us, we set out to share our abilities and gifts for the sake of others.
- **Develop Spiritual Relationships** – encourage others in the faith. Share life’s journey with others. Share how God is moving in our lives and in the world.

- **Give of our Time, Talents and Resources**– share generously what God has so freely and wonderfully given to us: our time, our talents and our resources.

## **Developing Spiritual Relationships**

*One of the goals for our Confirmation mentor program is to develop relationships with people of faith outside of our family. These are people who will encourage you in faith in the good and difficult times along life’s journey. To be a disciple of Jesus is not easy nor is it something God calls us to do alone. Our hope is that over the next 6 conversations you will get to know each other and develop a spiritual relationship. Take time today to get to know your mentor/mentee.*

### *A Verse to Consider*

“For it was you who formed my inward parts;  
You knit me together in my mother’s womb.  
I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.  
Wonderful are your works;  
That I know very well.”

-Psalm 139:13-14

### *Read*

“When I was six years old, my favorite comic book character was Superman. I admired his strength, his x-ray vision, his colorful uniform, and bright red cape. What captured my imagination most was Superman’s ability to fly. Many of my childhood fantasies were about flying. I wanted to fly! I honestly believed flying was still a possibility. I would talk my friends into playing Superman, and they would play for a while, but soon they would tire of the game because I wouldn’t let anyone else be Superman. I had to be Superman, I told them, because I knew more about flying than they did.

“Sneaking into my parents’ bathroom, I would find the stash of forbidden towels (the thick, new ones reserved only for guests). Once outside, with the towel tied around my neck and dragging on the dirt behind me, I would run as fast as I could and jump off the highest survivable launching pad I could find. With arms outstretched, cape billowing behind me, wind rushing past my ears, I believed I was flying.

“Then came a day when, without warning, without provocation, I woke up, never to wear a “cape” again. Wherever the knowledge came from, it came nonetheless, and from that moment on I knew flying was nothing more than a childhood fantasy. I would never fly...and there is no Superman.” (From *Dangerous Wonder*, Michael Yaconelli)

### *Questions to Ponder*

- Get to know each other. Likes/dislikes? Dreams/struggles? Hobbies? Family?
- Who was your childhood superhero? Why? What super power did you admire?
- What is something you feel you know a lot about? Why do you know so much about this?
- In the story he was passionate about flying. What are you passionate about? What do you love to do?
- What is something that you quit doing? Why?
- Who are your superheros today? What makes them so super?
- What gifts do you think your mentor/mentee can share with you?
- Our reading reminds us that we are all child-like in some way. Sometimes we like to hide that part of us. But in Matthew 18:1-5 (look it up), God calls us to have the faith of a child. What do you think this means? How do you have a child-like faith? Are there people you know that have child-like faith?

### *To Do*

Like our Bible verse says, we are fearfully and wonderfully made. God has made us all unique and special. Draw yourself as a superhero. Really! Be creative as you do this. What might the cape symbolize for you? How about your shield? What superpower do you have? What makes you special? Write down your “superpowers.” Share your drawing with your mentor/mentee.

## Prayer

*Prayer is our way of communicating with God. Many of the prayers you've heard are very formal in nature, like those prayers that the pastor says or the Lord's prayer. But really, prayer is our chance to have a conversation with God. You can talk to God like you would any of your friends or your parents. But like any good communication, it takes two. How does it feel if your friend does all of the talking and never lets you share about your life? Instead of only sharing our frustrations and requests, we must also take time to listen to God. What do you imagine God has to say to you?*

### *A Verse to Consider*

Jesus says, "So I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours."  
-Mark 11:24

### *Questions to Ponder*

- How would you describe prayer to someone who doesn't pray?
- The word "conversation" is used to talk about prayer. What makes for a good conversation?
- When do you pray? What do you pray about?
- When have you seen prayers answered? Did God say yes, no or not yet?
- Think about our verse to consider. Do you think that God will always answer our prayers the way we want them answered? Why or why not?  
(Note: The point is not that if you pray for something and it does not happen, you did not have enough faith. Rather, when you have faith, your prayers tend to line up with those things that God wants to happen. God wants us to pray, hears our prayers, and responds to them. *From Lutheran Study Bible*)

### *Read*

Read together Matthew 6:5-15.

- What does this say about prayer?
- What do we call this prayer?
- What does this tell us about how Jesus wants us to pray?
- What should we pray for?
- When is the Lord's Prayer used in worship?
- When has the Lord's Prayer meaningful for you?

### *To Do*

Create a prayer list together. What do we need to pray for in our family, our community, our church, our world? Include concerns as well as things you are thankful for. Take time to write prayers for these items or pray through your list together. Continue to use this list and add to it over the next few weeks.

### **Family**

### **Community**

### **Church**

### **World**

### ***Write a Prayer:***

## Worship

*In worship we are gathered around the means of grace – the Word of God and the sacraments (Holy Baptism and Holy Communion). We give thanks and praise to God for the many ways we have been blessed throughout our lives. Our focus is on God, so how do we worship in ways that bring God joy? Worship also serves as a way of filling our tank so that we might be strengthened and encourage for whatever lies before us in the next week. Just like a car, we need to be filled.*

### A Verse to Consider

“I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds. I will be glad and exult in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.” – Psalm 9:1-2

### Read

“If I had a dollar for every time I heard someone say, “I am spiritual but not religious,” then I might not be any wiser about what that means—but I would be richer. I hear the phrase on the radio. I read it in interviews. People often say it to my face when they learn that I am a religion professor who spent years as a parish priest.

“In that context, people are usually trying to tell me that they have a sense of the divine depths of things but they are not churchgoers. They want to grow closer to God but not at the cost of creeds, confessions, and religious wars large or small. Some of them have resigned from religions they once belonged to, taking what was helpful with them while leaving the rest behind. Others have collected wisdom from the four corners of the world, which they use like cooks with a pantry full of spices. Plenty of them are satisfied, too, even as they confess that they are sometimes lonely.” (From *An Altar in the World*, Barbara Brown Taylor)

### Questions to Ponder

- Why do you go to worship? Why are you part of the church?
- Are there things you can relate to in the reasons people are not part of the church?
- What do you think it means to be spiritual but not religious?
- Why is worship important to our faith?

### To Do

Attend worship with your mentor/mentee. Feel free to attend a worship service other than those at St. Paul’s. Talk about the service and fill out the worship notes together.

| Worship Notes   |   |
|---|---|
| Name  | Date  |
| Liturgical Season and Color   |   |
| What Bible verse did you notice the most as it was read?  | What Bible reading was the sermon based on? |
| What was the point of the sermon in 3-4 sentences?  |   |
| How does the sermon apply to your life?   |   |
| What is something another family member learned from, or appreciated about, today’s service?                                  |   |
| Parent/Adult Signature<br><i>(by signing I acknowledge I have read over the answers &amp; this is the students best work)</i> |   |
|   |   |

## **Bible**

*The Bible is an amazing collection of many types of literature, written by many people and brought together over thousands of years—all with the purpose of telling one grand story about who God is and who we are. The Bible is God’s work of inspiration that tells the story of God through real people in real places. The Bible was written by humans who were inspired through the Holy Spirit to share this story. Today it becomes a tool for faith and sharing God’s story.*

### *A Verse to Consider*

“All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.”  
-2 Timothy 3:16-17

### *Read*

Read The Five Biggest Misconceptions About the Bible from *The Lutheran Handbook*. On the next page.

### *Questions to Ponder*

- The Bible is a book. What is your favorite book/series to read? Why?
- What do you think of these 5 misconceptions? Were any of these misconceptions you had about the Bible?
- Why is the Bible important for us? What do we learn from the Bible?
- When and how often do you read the Bible? Why?
- How do the different kinds of literature (i.e. history, poetry, letters, prophecy, songs, stories) effect how you read the Bible?
- What difference does it make to know the background or context of what is written in the Bible?

### *To Do*

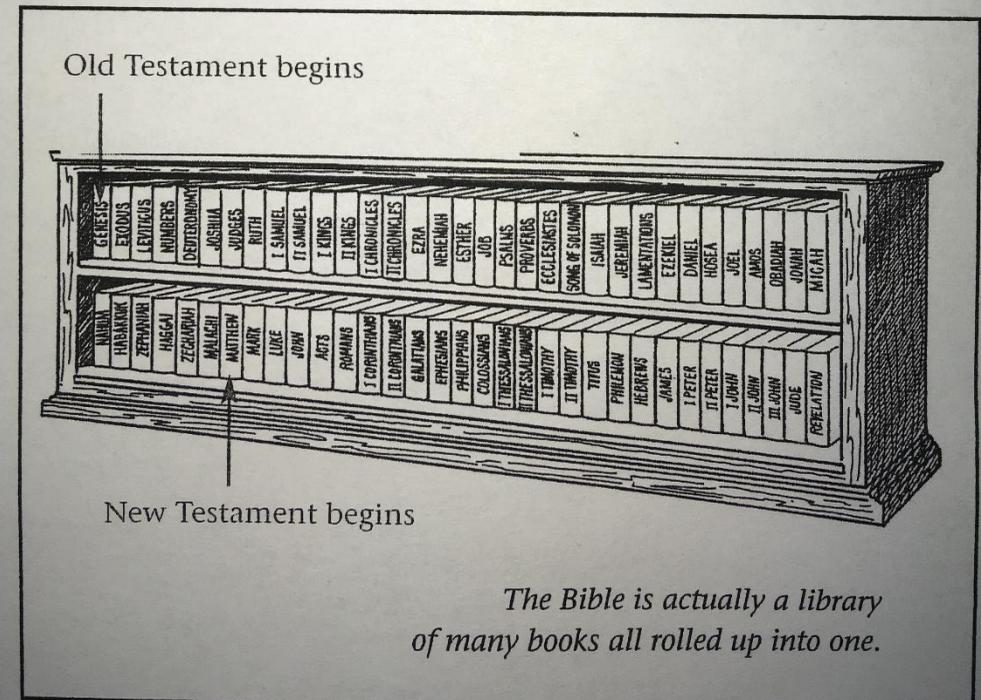
Share your favorite Bible story with your mentor/mentee. Read the story together from the Bible. Why do you like this story? What does it mean to you? Is there a time in your life when this story was especially significant to you?

Pick a Psalm that has meaning for you. Read the Psalm together. What does it mean to you? Is there a time when this has been important to you?

# THE FIVE BIGGEST MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE BIBLE

- 1** The Bible was written in a short period of time.  
Christians believe that God inspired the Bible writers, the first of whom may have been Moses. God inspired people to write down important histories, traditions, songs, wise sayings, poetry, and prophetic words. All told—from the first recordings of the stories in Genesis to the last decisions about Revelation—the entire Bible formed over a period spanning anywhere from 800 to 1,400 years!
- 2** One person wrote the Bible.  
Unlike Islam's Koran, which was written by the prophet Muhammad, the books of the Bible claim the handiwork of many people. Much of Scripture does not identify the human hand that wrote it, so some parts of the Bible may have been written by women as well as men.
- 3** The entire Bible should be taken literally.  
While many parts of the Bible are meant as descriptions of actual historical events, other parts are intended as *illustrations of God's truth*, such as Song of Solomon, the book of Revelation, and Jesus' parable of the good Samaritan. So when Jesus says, "If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away" (Matthew 5:29), please do not take the saying literally!

- 4** People in Bible times were unenlightened.  
During the 1,400 years it took to write the Bible, some of history's greatest thinkers lived and worked. Many of these philosophers, architects, mathematicians, orators, theologians, historians, doctors, military tacticians, inventors, engineers, poets, and playwrights are still quoted today and their works are still in use.
- 5** The Bible is a single book.  
The Bible is actually a collection of books, letters, and other writings—more like a library than a book. There are 39 books in the Hebrew scriptures, what Christians call the "Old" Testament, and 27 books (mostly letters) in the New Testament. There are seven books in the Apocrypha (books written between the Old and New Testaments), or "deuterocanonical" books.



## Service

*In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus tells about an injured man who is passed by many times before a Samaritan stops to help him. To the Samaritan's actions, Jesus says, "Go and do likewise." We're called to love and serve our neighbors no matter who they are. This is one of the marks of being a disciple of Jesus.*

### *A Verse to Consider*

"For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."  
-Galatians 5:13-14

### *Read*

*Read the story of the Good Samaritan from Luke 10:25-37.*

### *Questions to Ponder*

- What can we learn from the Good Samaritan?
- What do we learn from the priest and Levite?
- What does it look like for us to "Go and do likewise."
- What does it mean to serve others?
- What are ways you can serve others?

### *To Do*

Plan and participate in one service project together. This can be anything that you do together for someone else. It doesn't need to be complicated but I would encourage you to be creative in your serving. What would give you joy in serving others? Do something that would feed into that passion. You're welcome to team up with another group, if you'd like, to complete this service project. When you complete your project be sure to fill out a Service Note.

## Giving of Time, Talents & Resources

*Stewardship is a word we use in the church to talk about how we give of ourselves: time, talents and resources (AKA money and stuff!). As Christians we sometimes want to keep things for ourselves rather than giving this away to God. Being disciples is about giving away all that we have and entrusting it to God. So often when we do that, God gives us back so much more than we ever had in the first place. Giving of our time, talents and resources is about trusting God.*

### *A Verse to Consider*

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.  
- Matthew 6:19-21

### *Read*

"The Gauls were a warlike people who in ancient times inhabited what is now France and Belgium. They spoke a Celtic language and were Druidic by religion. By the time of the Christian era they had been conquered by the Roman Empire and were supposedly under its control. The extent of this control varied, however, for the Gauls never did take too well to being conquered and there were numerous Gallic uprisings.

"A number of Christian missionaries ventured into Gallic territory and, over time, many of the Gauls became Christians. As the story goes, when a converted warrior was baptized in a river or stream, he would hold one arm high in the air as the missionary dunked him under the water. This seemed a peculiar custom and the missionaries soon learned the reason for it. When the next battle or skirmish broke out, the warlike Gaul could proclaim, "This arm is not baptized!", grab up his club or sword or ax, and ride off to destroy his enemy in a most un-Christian manner.

"As I've indicated, this story is probably not historically authentic. My guess is that it's a medieval version of what we would call an "urban legend" and I certainly do not intend to cast any aspersions on the Gauls or their descendants by repeating it. I just find the *image* so compelling: the picture of someone—anyone—trying to keep one part of their body, one aspect of their identity, free from the influence of baptism." (From *Giving to God*, Mark Allan Powell)