

## *Your Role as Witness-Bearer*

As leaders, teachers, parents, and neighbors we have a joy-filled privilege and awesome responsibility of nurturing faith in others. One way we do that is by first sharing our own faith. We dwell in the midst of a wonderful love story experienced daily as we encounter a God who loves us so deeply that nothing can separate us from that love. But we cannot simply be content to let God's love dead-end in our hearts. We need to let it be mirrored in our thoughts, words, and actions so others, too, come to know that love. Adults who nurture children and youth must be attentive to fostering the spirit-driven occasions where children and youth are led to lead others in their own style of witness.

For Lutherans, grappling with why and how we witness to our faith begins with our understanding of baptism where we are named and claimed as God's own. From that moment we recognize God's activity in our life and our place in the on-going story of salvation and grace.

### **A Quick Faith Sharing Tip**

Sometimes it is not easy to share our faith with others. It may feel uncomfortable, inappropriate or even "pushy" so we just ignore the opportunity God has placed before us. When you find yourself facing such a reluctant-witness moment use Paul's letter to the Colossians (4:3-4) as a three-part prayer to "jump-start" a bold and confident invitation, beckoning others to a relationship with Christ.

*At the same time pray for us as well that God will open to us a door for the word, that we may declare the mystery of Christ, for which I am in prison, so that I may reveal it clearly, as I should.*

**Colossians 4:3-4**

### **Pray for:**

- 1. The opportunity** (that God will open to us a door for the word)
- 2. An open reception** (that we may declare the mystery of Christ)
- 3. Clarity and confidence** (so that I may reveal it clearly, as I should)





### Faith Sharing Opportunities

Here is a starter list of entry points for faith sharing. Add to the list and share it with others!

#### At home

- Love, encourage, support, and listen!
- Regular family devotional moments
- Use the ordinary rhythms and realities of daily life as a time to celebrate God's presence.
- Hold the family accountable for the descriptors they use to name others or to tell jokes.
- Use the discipleship calendar found on page 27.
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#### With those you teach

- Be intentional about setting aside time for prayer (use *Heart Ignite* available from [www.youthandfamilyinstitute.org/](http://www.youthandfamilyinstitute.org/)).
- Encourage the class to "bring a friend."
- Be willing to incorporate these two prompts in every lesson:
  - where you saw God working in your life this week
  - where you saw God working in the world this week

- Over time, ask the class to respond to the same prompts.
- Introduce the class to age-appropriate Christian music.
- Carry your Bible to church and open it!
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#### In day-to-day encounters

- Invite a neighbor, friend, or relative to church with you.
- Wear a cross, prayer bracelet or Christian symbol on your keychain.
- Don't be shy about ending a casual conversation by asking if you might pray for the other person.
- Use volunteer or hobby activities as a time to bring God into the conversation.
- Acknowledge and verbalize God's activity in creation, as you listen to other's "stories," in current affairs, and in times of sadness or grief.
- Chronicle your faith journey. It doesn't need to be linear. Keep a small notebook or your palm-pilot at hand to jot down random "faith thoughts": questions, memories, occasions where God's presence is felt, fears, disappointments, prayers.

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