

**PARTICIPANT**

# Building the Christian Church

**REVISED EDITION**



**To Know, To Live,  
To Grow**





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REVISED EDITION

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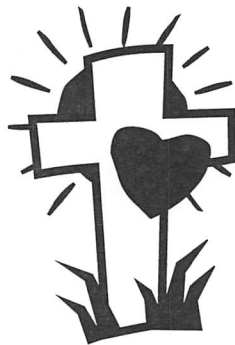
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**To Know, To Live,  
To Grow**

**Augsburg Fortress**  
MINNEAPOLIS

**PARTICIPANT**

## Building the Christian Church

REVISED EDITION

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## Session 1

# Who Will Be Our Guide?

### Scripture Text

Matthew 28:16-20

Luke 24:50-53

John 14:18-27

Acts 1:1-8

Acts 2:1-13

### Main Points

- **Jesus returned to heaven and left us with the Great Commission, our call to baptize, preach, and teach.**
- **Jesus promised us a gift, the Holy Spirit, to come be our guide. With Pentecost, the Holy Spirit comes and the Christian church begins.**

Open with prayer.

### Where Am I?

Form pairs for this activity. The leader will give clues, while the participants guess the location described. Each pair gets a map or atlas. Five points are given to the first pair to name the correct location; one point is given for each pair that guesses correctly.

### Starter Questions

- Have you ever been lost? What did you do? How did you find your way home? Do you like to read maps? Why or why not?
- Who has acted as a guide for you? Maybe he or she taught you something new or pointed you in a different direction.
- Name one person who has taught you about Jesus. What did he or she teach you? Why do you remember that person?

### Read Aloud

After Jesus died, his followers felt lost. They had come to rely on his guidance, but suddenly they were left without him. At times, many of us feel lost, just like Jesus' followers. But Jesus did leave us with guidance, through his teachings and through those he sent to begin the Christian church. In the coming sessions, we are going to look at the leaders who emerged to guide the people. But first, we will focus on who Jesus sent to guide us.



## Background Information and Context

After Jesus rose on Easter, he appeared many times over the next 40 days. He first appeared to the women at the tomb, then a group of disciples saw him twice. He joined friends on the road to Emmaus, and he helped some of the disciples who were fishing. After those 40 days, Jesus was taken up (ascended) into heaven.

- What challenge did Jesus give to the disciples? These were some of the last words Jesus said. How important do you think they were? See Matthew 28:16-20. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Describe what happened to Jesus. See also Luke 24:50-53. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Why did Jesus appear to these people after he rose from the dead? What instructions did he give them? See Acts 1:1-8. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The day of Pentecost was 50 days after the Passover feast. (The Last Supper took place as Jesus and his disciples were celebrating the Passover feast.) At Pentecost, people came from all nations to Jerusalem. This is the day that God chose for the Holy Spirit to come to earth. See Acts 2:5.

- Describe this event in your own words. If you had been in the room, what would you have thought? See Acts 2:1-4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- List the images described. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What promise did Jesus give the disciples before he died? What role would they have? See John 14:18-27. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What did the disciples do after they were filled with the Holy Spirit? What power did it give them? See Acts 2:5-13. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Options for Learning

- **Skit: "Lost Traveler."**  
**Act out being lost in a foreign country. You can't find someone who speaks your language. Then someone finds a bilingual dictionary, and you find a way to communicate. Like the bilingual dictionary, the Holy Spirit is a tool to help us understand how to live as Christians in this world.**
- **Read the Apostles' Creed. Memorize this creed as a summary of what the church believes about the triune God.**

## My Faith

- Reread Jesus' last words found in Matthew 28:16-20. How are you fulfilling this in your life? How is *confirmation* helping you learn how to do that?
- At baptism, we receive the Holy Spirit. How do you "live your baptism" or live as one filled with the Holy Spirit?

## Tools

### Choosing a guide:

#### Who do you ask?

- A good guide points to the truth.
- His or her words stand the test of time.

#### Where can you find help in choosing a guide?

- Read the Bible.
- Ask trusted friends.
- Pray to God.

After the Holy Spirit filled the apostles, they went into the streets and began preaching in different languages. On that day, 3,000 people were baptized and believed. It was the beginning of the Christian church. Notice the difference between a *disciple* and an *apostle*. A *disciple* is one who is a follower or student of a teacher. This was the name given to the Twelve who followed Jesus very closely. An *apostle*, on the other hand, is one who leads or is an advocate for a new cause. The disciples of Jesus were also apostles, but there were many other apostles as well.

## Discussion Questions

- If you heard these stories today, would you believe them? Why or why not?
- How are you living the command Jesus gave to his disciples?
- Do you believe the resurrection and ascension of Jesus is true? Why or why not?
- What makes Jesus' life so amazing?
- What did you learn today? How does it change your idea of Jesus' life?

Jesus walked this earth for about 30 years, spending only a few of them as a teacher. When Jesus left, he did not leave us alone. Jesus promised to send a guide or advocate to be with us so that God's presence would continue in the world. At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came in full force and has been alive in the world ever since. This is good news for us! And so the Christian church was born and continues today.

## Challenge Questions

- How is God revealed in the world today? As a group, make a list. Your challenge this week is to look for God in your world. Take a camera and shoot some pictures, write a story and share it with someone, or say a prayer of thanks to God.
- Who are people you know who are apostles today? What are they advocates for? How can you be an advocate for God? Your challenge this week is to do one thing on God's behalf in the world. Ideas: Invite someone to church or a church activity, reach out to someone who needs a friend, give something to a person in need, or write a letter to someone you've not talked to in a long time.
- Sometimes God asks us to be in places we don't want to be. When has this happened to you? This week, spend five quiet minutes each morning or evening listening to God's voice. At the end of the week, do one thing God has asked you to do.

**Close with prayer.**



## Session 2

# Do You Love Me?

Open with prayer.

### Starter Questions

- Why are names important? Who calls you by a nickname? Who do you call by a nickname?
- How do you show affection for your friends or family members?
- How much do you trust your best friend (with a secret, a snack, your life)? How much does he or she trust you?

### Read Aloud

We express affection for our friends in different ways. Maybe a light punch on the arm is a sign of being a pal, or teasing a friend in the lunch room is cool. Maybe playing a trick on a friend at school is funny or sharing a locker is a sign of being good friends. But when it comes to needing a true friend, who you can trust? How do you know who to turn to? How do you build strong friendships? In the same way we try to build good friendships, Jesus built relationships with his disciples. Jesus was close to several of the disciples, but it seems one disciple stood out from the rest: Peter. Today, we look at what kind of relationship Peter and Jesus had, how Jesus challenged Peter, and how Peter acted as a leader in building the Christian church.

### Background Information and Context

Peter was not what many would consider a prime candidate to lead the church. Prior to following Jesus, he was a fisherman. His brother Andrew, who had followed John the Baptist, convinced Peter to come along and follow Jesus. His weaknesses included being hot-headed and speaking before thinking things through. Jesus challenged this rough man to define his beliefs and stand up for what he believed in. Read Matthew 16:13-20.

### Scripture Text

Matthew 16:13-20

John 18:15-18, 25-27

John 21

Acts 2:14-47

### Main Points

- **Peter confessed that Jesus is the Christ.**
- **Peter denied Jesus; Jesus forgave him.**
- **Jesus named Peter “the Rock” and he became one of the first leaders of the church.**

- Why might Jesus have asked his disciples this question? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Peter was the first to respond to Jesus. What did Jesus say to him in return? Was this good or bad news for Peter? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Options for Learning

- Map out the route of Peter’s journey.
- Create a “Peter Profile,” including important dates, facts, and so forth.

The Bible is clear that when Jesus met alone with a smaller group of the disciples, Peter was always present. Although we do not know for certain, Peter was probably the closest disciple to Jesus. We do know Jesus had big plans for Peter to help carry out Jesus’ mission for the church. But despite Peter’s bravery and his close relationship with Jesus, when it came to the hard times, Peter became a coward. See John 18:15-18, 25-27.

- In these verses, what did Peter do when asked about Jesus? Why do you think he did this? Have you ever done a similar thing? Explain. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Did this encounter change his relationship with Jesus? If so, how? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus worked to restore their relationship. Read John 21. What was Peter doing? What did Jesus do? What command did he give Peter? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What does Peter do next? Who is the first to begin preaching on the day of Pentecost? See Acts 2:14-47. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Peter's life changed once he began preaching. From that moment on, Peter dedicated his life to spreading the good news of Jesus. In addition to being given the gift of preaching, Peter was also given the power to heal in Jesus' name (see Acts 3). Peter started several churches and is credited as the author of two letters in the New Testament. But he was also the first of Jesus' followers to be beaten and imprisoned for his beliefs, and eventually he was crucified. He didn't have a glamorous lifestyle, but he did have a life filled with mission and purpose. What changed for Peter? We may never know, but once Peter confessed his love for Jesus, he'd given Jesus his heart and he never turned back.

## Discussion Questions

- If Jesus asked you, "Who do you say that I am?" what would your answer be? Why?
- What is your relationship with Jesus? How does it compare with other relationships you have?
- What did you learn in this session about how to restore friendships that have been broken or damaged?
- Did Peter live up to the name "the Rock"? Why or why not?

Regardless of whether you are called to be a leader in the church, Peter's story does raise the question of how you view Jesus. It is this ultimate question, "Do you love me?" that is at the heart of the issue. If you answer yes, Jesus does not ask for perfection, but rather action to take seriously your relationship and to follow his example in this world. This call to love and action is one key characteristic we need to keep in mind as we live as Jesus' disciples today.

## Challenge Questions

- If Jesus were to give you a nickname, what would it be? Could that nickname challenge you to change your behavior? Explain your answer. Pick a nickname for yourself that Jesus might choose for you. This week remind yourself of that nickname every day. See if it changes your behavior.
- What gifts do you have to "feed my lambs"? Make a list of things you like to do. Pick three things from that list that you would be willing to share this week to "feed my lambs." For instance, if you like to read, offer to read Bible stories in the church nursery. If you like to cook, bake some cookies and bring them to an elderly person in your neighborhood.
- Peter did not live alone, but rather with a community of believers. Who can support you as you work on your relationship with Jesus? Ask a friend or family member to pray for you this week and you can pray for him or her.

**Close with prayer.**

## My Faith

- **What have you learned in confirmation that will prepare you to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20)?**
- **How does the church help prepare you to "feed my lambs" or tell others about Jesus?**

## Tools

**How to act out your faith:**

- **Use your gifts to "feed my lambs."**
- **Make sure you have the support and encouragement of other Christians. Gain strength from God through prayer, worship, and praise.**
- **Be certain that obeying God comes first; see Acts 5:29.**

# Session 3

## Change of Heart

### Scripture Text

Acts 9:1-31

The letters of Paul

### Main Points

- **God can transform lives and change hearts. (God can use sinners.) Look at Saul's persecution of Christians versus Paul's leadership in the Christian church.**
- **Paul was a leader to the Gentiles (non-Jews) and was willing to give his life for the church.**

Open with prayer.

### Gossip Chain

Play "Telephone." Sitting in a circle, whisper a message from one person to the next. See how it changes once it's gone completely around the circle. Example: "Jim does not like sitting next to John in math class because John talks too much while Jim is trying to listen to the teacher."

### Starter Questions

- How do messages about people at your school spread?
- Why do people share information about other people? Is it mostly good or bad news?
- Can people change their image? If so, how? If not, why?
- How do you decide what other people are like?

### Read Aloud

Some people have bad reputations. Some bad reputations are based on people making repeatedly poor choices. Some bad reputations are based only on hearsay. Regardless of how a reputation gets started, it's hard to change. Unfortunately, people make poor choices from time to time, but that does not mean they cannot change their behavior. This session looks at a person with a very bad reputation, at least among the early Christians. Look at the story of Saul and see how God worked in his life and changed his heart.

### Background Information and Context

- Why was Saul going to Damascus? What were his views on Christians or people of "the Way"? See Acts 9:1-2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



- What changed Saul’s attitude? What did he do instead? \_\_\_\_\_

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- Who came to Saul with God’s message in Damascus? Did he want to go see Saul? Why or why not? See Acts 9:10-19. \_\_\_\_\_

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- What did Saul do after Ananias visited him? How was he accepted by people? By the Jews? By the apostles? See Acts 9:20-31. \_\_\_\_\_

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Paul, first known as Saul, was a Jew, a Pharisee, and also a Roman citizen. These were definitely strikes against him for being a leader in the Christian church. He was raised in a very religious home and had the best training available. He was an expert in the Old Testament and mastered several languages, which later helped him communicate to different populations. Paul trained many leaders in the early Christian church: Timothy, Silas, Titus, and Luke were a few. Paul was also trained as a tentmaker, a skill he used later in his life.

- Paul wrote the first 13 letters in the New Testament. The first is Romans and the last is Philemon. Make a list of the 13 books. All but four of Paul’s letters were written to cities. Name the four written to people. Then locate the cities on a map. \_\_\_\_\_

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- Pick one letter of Paul and list the issues Paul discussed with these people.

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### Options for Learning

- Create a “Paul Profile.”
- Skit: “Paul’s Conversion” (see page 11).

## My Faith

- **What is God asking you to do at church this year?**
- **Name some people of faith who are challenging you.**

## Tools

**What does it take to change your heart?**

- **Eyes to see the problem clearly.**
- **A willingness to change behavior.**
- **Just do it! Act!**
- **Carry a cross as a reminder of God's presence in your life.**

## Discussion Questions

- Why was God able to use Paul, a known enemy of the Christians? What does that say about God?
- What would it have felt like to be Ananias? Would you have trusted God and gone to Paul?
- If Paul lived today, how would he have communicated with people?
- If you heard a message like this today, what would you think?
- Are the issues of Paul's time similar to ours? Why or why not?

Whether we like it or not, God can use anyone as a leader in the church. Our history is not important. What is important is our willingness to open our hearts to God. Paul, once an enemy of the Christians, became a key leader in the development of the early church. He went so far as to risk his entire life to spread God's Word. Paul used his background, what he had been taught, and the skills he had developed to aid him in his leadership. What are you doing right now to prepare yourself to be a leader for God? Are you opening your heart to God? Are you learning about God's Word? Are you willing to help people around you? Whatever your gifts and skills, God has a place for you.

## Challenge Questions

- How can you open yourself to God this week? How can you develop one of your gifts and use it in the church? Make a list of things you can do, then after each gift, write one way you can use that gift in the church. This week, do one thing to either develop that gift or use your gift for God. If you like kids, teach Sunday school. If you can play soccer, volunteer to help at an after school program. If you are a good listener, practice listening to your family this week.
- Who do you need to forgive? Today, go to a person you're holding hard feelings against and offer your forgiveness. Then write the issue on a piece of paper and burn that paper. Now let it go!

**Close with prayer.**



## Paul's Conversion

**Characters:** Narrator, Saul, God, Ananias, Saul's three friends (non-speaking parts)

**Narrator:** *(As Saul walks on stage, dressed for traveling)* Saul was a very well-educated man of the Jewish faith. He was raised in a Jewish home and was considered an expert in the Jewish Bible. Holding strong to his Jewish beliefs, Saul was convinced that the Christian movement should be stopped, so he worked aggressively against it. Today we meet Saul on his way to Damascus to arrest Christians. *(Saul is joined on stage by three friends.)* Saul was in a hurry, for he was eager to capture the Christians and bring them back to Jerusalem to be put to death. Although his body was walking on the path, his mind was already making plans for the Christians he would capture. *(A spotlight blinds Saul.)* Suddenly, a bright light pierced through him and he fell to the ground. *(Saul falls.)*

**Saul:** Whoa, that was something! *(Still stunned.)*

**Narrator:** Before he could move, he heard a rumbling.

**God:** Saul, what are you doing?

**Narrator:** Barely able to comprehend the words, Saul answered.

**Saul:** What? Who are you?

**God:** Saul, I am God. Why are you against my people?

**Narrator:** Still wondering if this was a dream or reality, Saul continued to listen.

**God:** Saul, I want you to get up and continue on your way. But when you get to Damascus, wait for further instructions.

*(Turn off light.)*

**Narrator:** And with that, the light and voice vanished, leaving Saul helpless on the ground. As he rose, he looked for his traveling companions and realized he was blind. This was no dream; something or someone had indeed interrupted his journey. Not knowing what to do next, Saul's friends led him to Damascus. For three days Saul went without food or drink. Saul sat and prayed and waited for the next sign.

*(Clear stage and enter Ananias.)*

**Narrator:** Meanwhile, God spoke to a Christian named Ananias.

**God:** Go to Straight Street and find the man of the house and ask for Saul of Tarsus. He will be waiting for your arrival.

**Ananias:** But I have heard of this man. He certainly is not our friend. In fact, rumors are that he has come to capture Christians. Why would I want to visit him?

**God:** Do not worry, my friend. I have answered his prayer and told him you are coming in peace. He will not harm you. Trust me, I will protect you.

*(Ananias exits to find Saul.)*

**Narrator:** So off he went and to his surprise, things were just as God had said.

*(Ananias and Saul on stage.)*

**Ananias:** The Lord, the one you met on the road, has sent me to pray with you, filling you with the Holy Spirit and returning your sight.

**Narrator:** Saul's sight was returned. Expecting him to quickly return to his anti-Christian attitude, Ananias was surprised by Saul's reaction. Saul was convinced that this was the true God and he asked to be baptized as soon as possible. *(Ananias baptizes Saul.)* After being fed and gaining back his strength, Saul was a new man. He headed for the temple, not to capture Christians, but to preach the good news of Jesus Christ. Saul changed his name to Paul and began working as a leader of the Christian church, especially among the Gentile people.

# Session 4

## Many Gifts

### Scripture Text

Genesis 2:23

Acts 21:9

1 Corinthians 12:4-13

### Main Points

- **Our common ground:**  
We are joined into one community through our baptism, when we receive the Holy Spirit.
- **We all have gifts; the gifts are many and diverse, given to benefit the church and glorify God.**
- **The stories of women in the Bible provide illustrations of people using their God-given gifts.**

Open with prayer.

### Famous Women

Match the women listed below with the gift they have given our society.

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| ___ Rosa Parks           | a. First woman mentioned in the Bible             |
| ___ Betsy Ross           | b. Old Testament judge                            |
| ___ Eve                  | c. Challenged discrimination on a bus             |
| ___ Amelia Earhart       | d. First woman to attempt to fly around the world |
| ___ Marilyn Monroe       | e. Made the first U.S. flag                       |
| ___ Florence Nightingale | f. Former Prime Minister of England               |
| ___ Deborah              | g. Former Prime Minister of India                 |
| ___ Mother Teresa        | h. Red Cross nurse                                |
| ___ Margaret Thatcher    | i. Actress and singer                             |
| ___ Golda Meir           | j. Worker in Calcutta, India, among the poor      |

As a group, list 20 people who have made significant contributions to our society. List their gifts after their contribution.

### Starter Questions

- Name several people who have impacted your life. Describe how.
- Do men and women each have unique gifts? If so, why is this important?
- Does society define our roles in our culture or do we have the freedom to make choices?

### Read Aloud

Historically, it's been easier for some people to hold important offices or positions in our society. Yet people who don't fit that pattern have overcome many obstacles to make their mark in our culture. This session focuses on our gifts, our God-given abilities to share with those around us. Some of us may have an easy time sharing our gifts, while others may have to overcome great odds. We will use stories about women in the Old and New Testaments to highlight this point.

## Background Information and Context

- Paul wrote to the people of Corinth about gifts. In your own words, summarize his teaching. See 1 Corinthians 12:4-13. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- In the beginning, God created man and woman. How do you think God intended for these people to work together? See Genesis 2:23. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

In the Jewish culture at this time, women were often treated as second-class citizens, but Jesus crossed those boundaries and treated all people equally. The role of women in the history of the church is often overlooked, but women were active in the early Christian church. Women were creative in using their gifts to help the church grow. This session highlights some of these women and the gifts they shared.

Many of the women in the Bible are noted for being the mother of an important figure. This truly is a gift, but there are other gifts as well. Look up the following verses and list the gifts these women shared with the world.

### Strong Mothers

- Exodus 1:5-16; 2:1-10; Numbers 26:59 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 1 Samuel 1; 2:21 \_\_\_\_\_

- Luke 1:26-38 \_\_\_\_\_

### Prophets and Teachers

- Judges 4:4-9; 5 \_\_\_\_\_

- Luke 2:36-38 \_\_\_\_\_

- Acts 18:2, 18, 26; Romans 16:3 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Acts 21:9 \_\_\_\_\_

### Other Gifts

- Joshua 2 \_\_\_\_\_

- Ruth 1:16 \_\_\_\_\_

- Acts 16:13-15, 40 \_\_\_\_\_

## Options for Learning

- Create a profile of one female character from the Bible. Focus on her gifts.
- Create a timeline for the women in the Bible. Include as many women as possible.
- Complete a gifts inventory.

## My Faith

Name women who have been important in your faith life. How have they influenced you?

## Tools

How to discover your gifts:

- **Try many things. Don't be afraid of failing. How will you know if you are good at something unless you try?**
- **If you find something you like to do, practice it over and over again. Remember, practice makes progress.**
- **Ask others what they think your gifts are. You might be surprised what someone else sees in you.**
- **Ask God to help you find your gifts and how you might share them with others.**

## Discussion Questions

- Who among these women was familiar to you? Who was not?
- Are these women important to our history? Did their gifts add to the church?
- Are women role models important in the church? Name two or three women you know who are leaders in the church today.
- From this session, what did you learn about giving your gifts to the church?

This session touched on only a few important gifts and women of the church. The Bible is filled with characters who played key roles in leading the church to where it is today. Some of these characters devoted their entire lives to helping the church, while others gave only a few hours or days, but all were changed by their giving. A short encounter with Joshua and his leaders challenged a prostitute to change her life. Moses' mother gave up parenting her son so he could free her people from slavery. The challenge for you is to look for opportunities to share your gifts with those around you to continue to advance the church. We can all use our gifts to serve God. What will you do?

## Challenge Questions

- What gift or gifts is God asking you to share with the body of Christ? How can you use your gifts to add to the whole? This week, tell someone about God by living your faith, telling someone about what you did at church, praying for a friend, or asking someone at school what they believe about God.
- Who is a person of faith you respect? Why? Talk with that person this week or write him or her a letter. Find out more about that person's life.
- How can people in our family influence our faith? Name one family member whom you have been challenged by in your faith. Let that family member know that she or he is important to you by writing a special note, calling that person, or bringing him or her flowers.

**Close with prayer.**



## Session 5

# Issues of the Church: Past and Present

Open with prayer.

## Real-Life Issues

Make a videotape of (or read through) the following situations. Discuss what you would do in the situation and what resources you would use for help.

- Your friends have been going to parties and using alcohol. Some are stealing it from their parents, others are getting older kids to buy it for them, and one is even hiding it in her locker at school. You have hung around these people for many years and consider them good friends. They invite you to join them at one of their parties this coming weekend and you want to say no.
- Your parents keep on you about going to church and want you to get involved in the church youth activities. You are not interested. You believe in God, but see no need to be a part of a group that talks about it. It's become a huge issue between you and your parents.
- You have been involved in a church most of your life and consider yourself a Christian. Lately, however, school activities, sports, and friends seem to take up most of your time and you haven't been going to church for the past year or so. Some friends at school who also go to your church have noticed your behavior is starting to change. They confront you about it and challenge you to rethink some of your choices.

## Starter Questions

- What issues do you face in your life? What part does your faith play in those issues?
- Who or what are the resources you use when you are faced with hard choices? Do you ever use the church, the Bible, or prayer as resources? Why or why not?
- Does it make a difference in your everyday life that you believe in God? Explain.

## Starting a New Church

Your group is given the charge of starting a new church. What will you do first? Who will be your leader? How will decisions be made? Make a list of issues you will face and ideas about how you will address them. What problems might come up? How will you deal with them?

## Scripture Text

New Testament letters

## Main Points

- **We are sinful.**
- **God is gracious.**
- **The Bible (God's Word) was a resource tool in the past and still is today.**
- **Issues of the church fall into three main areas: relationships, Christian community, and behaviors.**

## Read Aloud

Imagine for a moment that you had access to a time machine and the opportunity to visit the early Christian church. What do you think you would find? What main issues would the people be facing? Now, think about what's real in your world today. What issues are common here? Amazing as it may seem, there have always been hot topics in the church, and there probably always will be. Equally amazing is that the Bible did and still does speak to the issues people of the church face. This session explores what the Bible, and in particular the New Testament, has to do with the issues we face today.

### Options for Learning

- Write letters about issues facing the church today. Give the letters to a pastor or church leader and ask for his or her response.
- Using the real-life situations on page 15 and a concordance or index, find out what the Bible says about these situations.

## Background Information and Context

In the Old Testament, God lived somewhere “out there.” The people had God-given laws to help them understand how they should live. That worked for a while, but soon the people got caught up in the details of the law and began to miss the spirit of it. Jesus came into the world to clarify how we as God’s people are to live; the law received new meaning. When Jesus died, the Holy Spirit came to be our guide. We are filled with the Holy Spirit. God is no longer “out there;” God lives in us and wants to be a part of our lives.

- Humans are sinners. Read Genesis 3 and Romans 1:20-32 and write about what it means to be human. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- How did sin become a part of our lives? Is sin about God or about us? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- God loves us no matter what. Look up the following verses to see what they say about God’s part in our relationship.

Romans 8:35 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 2:14, 19-22 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 12:13 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1 John 4:7-10 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- But how can God love us no matter what? Why would God love us even when we walk away? See Romans 5:6-8 and Galatians 3:26; 4:6-7. \_\_\_\_\_

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- What part does faith play in all this? Look up the following verses and see what each says about faith.

Galatians 5:6 \_\_\_\_\_

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Ephesians 2:8-10 \_\_\_\_\_

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Hebrews 11:1, 6 \_\_\_\_\_

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## My Faith

**How has confirmation and/or Sunday school equipped you to face the real issues in your life?**

## How We Are to Live: The Real Issues

After each of the following categories, list issues you face. Pick one and use a concordance to see what the Bible says about that issue.

- Relationships \_\_\_\_\_

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- Christian community \_\_\_\_\_

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- Behaviors and attitudes \_\_\_\_\_

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## Discussion Questions

- What did you learn from the Bible about a particular issue that you didn't know before?
- Do the words of the Bible speak to you today? Why or why not?
- What issues are common for all Christians, past and present?
- How can you learn more about how God wants you to live?
- Why does God want you to live in a certain way?

## Tools

Ephesians gives us ideas to help us prepare for life.

Read Ephesians 6:11-18.

Spiritual tools:

- *Truth:* We can rely on God's Word.
- *Righteousness:* We can use God's Word as a guide for behavior.
- *Gospel of peace:* We can use Christ's actions as an example of speech and action.
- *Faith:* We can ask for God's help to see clearly and for God's reassuring presence.
- *Salvation:* We can live in the knowledge that we are saved by our faith, not by our actions.
- *Spirit:* The Holy Spirit walks with us through life.
- *Prayer:* We can communicate with God.

Copy these tools and post them where you can see them each day.

God loves us no matter what and wants us to live lives that are worthwhile. But we are sinners and we live with other sinners in this world. It is sometimes hard to understand how we are to live. Living a life of faith is not easy and it is not a one-time decision. It starts with God's love in our lives and God's presence with us every day. Philippians 3:12-14 reminds us that we press on toward the goal and the reward is far beyond what we can understand in this world. There's nothing greater than living a life of faith and making a difference in the world we live in.

## Challenge Questions

- How can you acknowledge God's presence in your life? Would acknowledging God change your decisions or actions? Make a commitment to acknowledge God's presence in your life each day this week.
- How important are goals in our lives? How do goals help guide us in our decisions? Make a list of goals you have for your life right now and for the next year. After each goal, name one or two ways your faith connects with that goal.
- If we acknowledge God's presence in our lives, does that mean our lives are easier? What difference does it make to acknowledge the presence of God in your life? Interview two or three people (preferably older than you) and ask them these questions.
- How do the Ten Commandments fit into how we live? What connection do they have with the ways of life suggested in the New Testament letters?

Close with prayer.



# Session 6

## Come One, Come All

Open with prayer.

### Starter Questions

- What were your favorite toys when you were young? Do you play with them today? Why or why not?
- How is your neighborhood different now from when you moved in? What's changed? How long have you lived there?
- What was church like when your parents or grandparents were young? How is it different now? Has it changed since you've been involved? How?

### Read Aloud

Models, forms, and structures are only good if they serve a function. Certain forms worked for us when we were younger. Think about your elementary school. Maybe you were in a class with a certain number of students and one teacher for the whole day. You had recess and maybe even had to hold hands when going to the lunch room. Imagine your school day now and how much has changed. Your classes are harder, you have more teachers, and you have more choices. School is just one example of how our forms change as we change. The church has changed over time as well. This session focuses on reforming the church, highlighting Martin Luther and the time of the Reformation.

### Scripture Text

Isaiah 40:6-8, 28-31

Luke 5:36-38

Romans 1:16-17

Revelation 21:1-5

### Main Points

- **Look at the reformation that has taken place in the church: in Jesus' time, in Martin Luther's time, and today.**
- **We need leaders today! The apostles were leaders in the early church. Martin Luther was a leader in his time. The message is still the same: Who are our leaders today?**

## Background Information and Context

After Paul and Peter's time, the church continued to grow and spread to many parts of the world. As it grew, more formal structures were created. Certain leaders were given the role of overseeing the churches. During the same time period, rulers, kings, queens, and other political leaders were going through stages of change. The population was increasing and the needs of the people were also changing. Many crises arose and structures were put into place to deal with them. Christianity, once a small Jewish sect, became the official religion of the Roman Empire. In many areas, church leaders were even chosen for political reasons and made decisions based on their political bias. This was the atmosphere in Europe in the 1500s.

### Options for Learning

- Read an article or other material about Martin Luther.
- Look at a copy of Luther's Seal and learn about its meaning.
- Invite someone to talk to your class about what church was like when they were young, highlighting both the similarities and differences.

### Who Is Martin Luther?

Using your resource material about Martin Luther, complete the following information on Luther, as well as the timeline in the column on page 21.

Luther was born in the year \_\_\_\_\_. He studied \_\_\_\_\_ at age 18, because his father wanted him to become a \_\_\_\_\_. At age 23, he became a \_\_\_\_\_ and at age 28 a doctor of \_\_\_\_\_. Luther was married to \_\_\_\_\_. She was a former \_\_\_\_\_. Together they had \_\_\_\_\_ children and they took in many orphans as well.

Luther was concerned about how the church had moved away from a focus on the Bible and God's grace and had gotten caught up in "good works." Worship and Scripture had become foreign to the general public because worship was in Latin and priests were the only ones who could read the Bible. So, on October \_\_\_\_\_, Luther nailed \_\_\_\_\_ to the door of Castle Church in Wittenberg. This was Luther's attempt to reform the Catholic church. These ideas centered on three areas:

- Protesting against the abuse of the pope's authority.
- Challenging the pope on the issue of purgatory.
- Denying the sale or use of indulgences and focusing instead on the gospel.

What resulted was not a reform of the Catholic church; instead, Luther was excommunicated from the church, and the Protestant movement began.

Pick two of Luther's reforms and explain them below:

- Church and state \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Sacraments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- German Mass \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Bible as primary authority \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Priesthood of all believers \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Augsburg Confession \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Finally, what resulted from Luther's challenges became the Lutheran church, just one of the many churches to come out of the Protestant movement. In addition to the above reforms, Luther wrote more than 400 works, including commentaries, catechisms, sermons, and a German translation of the Bible.

Luther also wrote hymns, many of which we still sing today. And just as we do today, Luther wanted all people to have access to God's Word and worship. Luther contributed to the formation of our church and his example still leads us to ask hard questions about what needs to be reformed in our church today.

- Read Romans 1:16-17. How are these verses a summary of Luther's life? What do these verses say to us in the church today? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Timeline

- 1483 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1501 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1507 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1512 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1517 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1521 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1523 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1525 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1526 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1546 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1580 \_\_\_\_\_

## What Needs Reforming Today?

Read Isaiah 40:6-8, 28-31; Luke 5:36-38; and Revelation 21:1-5 and answer the following questions.

- Why would someone tear a new garment to repair an old one? Why doesn't that work? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What are some examples of people trying to put new wine in old wine-skins? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What are the promises God makes to us on earth? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- What is one area the church of today needs to reform? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## My Faith

**How does the church need reforming today? What can you do to become a reformer?**

## Tools

**Martin Luther based his life on three concepts: Scripture alone (2 Timothy 3:15-17), grace alone (Ephesians 2:8-9), and faith alone (Romans 1:17). Read the verses for each of these concepts and think about how to use this as a tool for your life. Use “Bring It Home” on pages 23-24 as a tool this week.**

## Discussion Questions

- What was similar in Jesus’ and Luther’s cultures?
- What was similar in the early church culture and Luther’s culture?
- What promise is constant throughout the ages in our church?
- What does it take to change the form through which we present God’s message?
- How do you make the invitation to God’s house open to all people?
- What does it take to be a reformer?

Just like in the days of Martin Luther, our church is continually in need of reforming. Luther wanted to make God accessible to all people and he gave us some tools to do that. Who is reforming the church today? How are we living out Luther’s challenge to keep our focus on Scripture—studying our Bibles and inviting others into Christian community? These are the keys to keeping our church alive and active in the world today.

## Challenge Questions

- Who can you welcome into God’s family? How can you make God’s Word available to others? Make a list of people you can welcome into the church. This week, make God’s Word available to one person on your list.
- What does it take to be the kind of leader Martin Luther was? What are some key characteristics he had? This week, do something to develop your skills as a reformer. Ideas include learning more about Scripture, asking questions of some church leaders, or making your faith alive in your actions.

**Close with prayer.**



## Bring It Home

**Day One—Dreams for the Future:** Dream about your life in five years. Where will you live? How will you spend your time? Who will be the important people in your life? What things from your present will be a part of this future? Read Jeremiah 31:31. God has promised each of us a new future. This week reflect on what future God is challenging you to live. Write down your image of your life in five years. Place it on a mirror in your house, reviewing it each day.

**Day Two—Reviewing the Past:** Make a list of family traditions you experienced growing up, then add an emotion describing how you felt about those traditions. Reflect on how these traditions influence your life today. Read Jeremiah 31:32. We, as Christians, have a history. The Old Testament stories do have something to do with us today. Pick one story from the Old Testament and read it. It could be an old favorite or one you have never heard. After reading the story, find one thing from that story that might be a lesson for your life today.

**Day Three—Reflecting in the Present:** What one thing or person in your life right now gets you excited? To whom or what do you give the most energy? This day is here only once; how will you choose to live it? Read Jeremiah 31:33. Each day is a gift from God. Each day God invites us to live life to its fullest. In Jeremiah, God promises to write this message in our hearts. How are you doing at paying attention to God's message? Today your challenge is to share this verse with someone else. Some ideas: write it on a piece of paper and give it as a secret note, share a smile at school or work, or give a special surprise gift to someone you love.

**Day Four—Reforming the Future:** Look at your dream paper from Day 1. In light of what you have read and talked about these past few days, what are your feelings about that dream? We are challenged to dream big—big enough to reflect God's vision for our lives, not our own visions. Is your dream big enough? Read Jeremiah 31:34. This is one of God's dreams for us, one that would reform our future. Consider your dream for the next five years. Write out your dream and carry it with you today.

**Day Five—Word Alone:** The world is filled with many messages about what reforming our lives might look like. Martin Luther was a reformer who spent most of his life challenging Christians to take seriously the call to live their faith every day. Read 2 Timothy 3:15-17. God's Word is made available to us to show us how to live. Today, add to your dream from yesterday: list two tangible ways you can use God's Word in your life. Ideas include: start each day with reading the Bible, take a Bible class, read through a book of the Bible, or use the Bible as a guide to answer some of the questions you may have about life.

## Materials

**You will need a notebook or journal to complete these activities.**

## Challenge

**Reforming our lives and our dreams is an ongoing process. Save what you have written. Six months from now, go through the process again.**

**Day Six—Grace Alone:** Working harder will not increase the amount of love God has for each of us. Read Ephesians 2:8. Nothing we do can change the fact that God has given us this gift called grace. Add to your dream: how will you work less and love more? Practice today letting love rule your decisions.

**Day Seven—Faith Alone:** Ultimately, reforming our lives comes down to an issue of faith. Does God rule in your heart and direct your decisions? Will you dream God's dream? Does God lead your ways? Read Romans 1:17. These words changed Martin Luther forever: "The one who is righteous will live by faith." End your dream with a commitment to live by faith. Write down what that means to you. Then do an act of faith today. Try something new, reach out to meet a new friend, offer help to someone on the street, or pray for God to change your heart.

# Session 7

## A New Day of Grace

Open with prayer.

### Starter Questions

- What religious rituals does your family celebrate? How did they get started? Who participates?
- How were you welcomed into God's family? How old were you? What do you remember?
- Have you ever been forgiven for something really big? What was that like?

### Read Aloud

Humans tend to want laws and rules to live by, to know what's fair or just, or what they need to achieve. Think about it. What would the world be like if everyone could do whatever he or she wanted and then ask for and be granted forgiveness? What if everyone was invited to be a part of one group with no distinction between "good" people and "bad" people. Suddenly all are the same. Keep this concept in mind as you explore the sacrament of Holy Baptism. See how baptism changed the world!

### Why Sacraments?

One of the things humans have had throughout history is rituals. Individuals have rituals, families have rituals, societies have rituals, and religions have rituals. Individuals have certain ways they prepare for a sporting event; families have special meals to celebrate special occasions; society has ceremonies marking significant events like marriage or birth; and churches have their own ways to commemorate important times.

One thing rituals give us is a sense of order. A ritual is a form for a ceremony or a customary procedure. Throughout the Jewish and Christian traditions, rituals have played a key role. Some rituals are decided by individuals, while others are agreed upon by a group of people. Churches have rituals that they hold in high regard, but they also have something called *sacraments*. Sacraments are more than rituals in that they are sacred, or "of God." They have earthly or tangible aspects and divine aspects, and Jesus initiated them here on earth.

### Scripture Text

Genesis 17:9-14

Matthew 3:11, 13-17; 28:19-20

Luke 2:21

Galatians 5:6

### Main Points

- Define *sacraments* as rituals initiated by Christ that have both earthly and divine elements.
- Look at the sacrament of Holy Baptism, its origin in the Jewish tradition, and both the similarities and differences from its Jewish roots.

- Read Galatians 5:6. What ritual is named here? What do these verses say about this ritual? What changed the importance of it? Who is invited to be a part of God's family? \_\_\_\_\_

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### Options for Learning

- **Show a video of or watch an actual baptism.**  
Notice the words used, the blessing, the people present, the symbols, and the actions of the person being baptized.
- **Why are we baptized?**  
Create a video of the group describing the significance of Holy Baptism. Include the characteristics of the water, the words used, and the promises given.

### Why Baptism?

God's Spirit is hard to see or touch or feel without something tangible added. So God gave us two ways to access that Spirit of unconditional love. The first way is through baptism. In the Jewish tradition, male babies are welcomed into the faith when they are circumcised and then blessed on the eighth day. This began in Abraham's time. Circumcision is an outward sign of a family's inner faith. See Genesis 17:9-14 and Luke 2:21.

- See Matthew 3:11, 13-17, and 28:19-20. If all are welcomed, and circumcision is not needed, why be baptized? What changed? \_\_\_\_\_

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- How is baptism different from circumcision? How is it similar? \_\_\_\_\_

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### What's Baptism?

- According to Luther's Small Catechism, what is baptism? \_\_\_\_\_

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- What benefits are offered through baptism? \_\_\_\_\_

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- What is the earthly element? What is the divine element? \_\_\_\_\_

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### Water

Water has great significance in the Bible. Listed below are several Bible verses about water. Read them, then write in your own words what importance water has and why it might be used for baptism:

- Genesis 6:13, 17 \_\_\_\_\_

- Exodus 7:14-17 \_\_\_\_\_

- Psalm 42:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_

- Isaiah 32:2 \_\_\_\_\_

- Matthew 3:1, 5-6 \_\_\_\_\_
- Mark 9:41 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Peter 3:20-22 \_\_\_\_\_
- Revelation 21:6; 22:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_

### Word

God's Word is also important. Look at *Lutheran Book of Worship* to see what words are spoken in the sacrament of Holy Baptism.

- What words or promises of God are spoken? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What promises are made by the sponsors and/or the person being baptized? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Discussion Questions

- What importance does your baptism have for you today?
- What difference does it make if someone is baptized?
- Why would parents baptize their children?
- Why is water an important symbol in baptism?

Yes, a new day is here! Jesus Christ came to offer life to all people. Baptism is significant because it equips us to live a life of faith, filled with the Holy Spirit, cleansed of our original sin. In baptism, we are joined with Christ to be heirs to the kingdom of God and receive eternal life. Water is powerful stuff; joined with God's promises, nothing can overcome it!

### Challenge Questions

- How is your life influenced by having been baptized? What freedom does that give you? Today, write out Matthew 28:19-20 and place it on a mirror in your room. Every time you see these words, remember that you are an heir to God's kingdom.
- Why are sponsors important in baptism? What is their role? Who are your baptismal sponsors and how have they influenced your faith journey? Today, write a note of thanks to your baptismal sponsor(s). Include some of your thoughts about what it means to live your baptism every day and why you want to reaffirm your baptismal promises on Confirmation Sunday.

**Close with prayer.**

### My Faith

**What happened to you at your baptism? Why reaffirm your baptismal vows?**

### Tools

**How to live your baptism every day:**

- Each morning, dip your finger in water and make the sign of the cross over your chest.
- Say, "In the name of the Creator, the Savior, and the Holy Spirit, I will live this day."
- Close this ritual in prayer, asking God to be with you throughout your day, in your decisions, in your friendships, and in your attitude.



## Session 8

# Remembering, Reverence, and Responsibility

### Scripture Text

Exodus 12:1-30

Luke 22:7-20

1 Corinthians 11:17-32

### Main Points

- **Sacraments unify Christians of the past, present, and future.**
- **In Holy Communion, we remember what Jesus did for us, we connect with the holiness of God, and we receive the forgiveness of our sins.**

Open with prayer.

### Starter Questions

- What was hardest about the opening activity? Easiest?
- What helped you work as a team?
- What helps you remember things? What things do you easily forget?
- Make a list of key events you want to remember in your life.

### Read Aloud

Each of us has key memories from childhood. They may be happy memories or painful ones. Regardless of what our past holds, it helps shape our present and our future. Jesus wanted to remind his friends of the past they shared, not only the past few years, but the faith history they shared as he had his last meal with them. This session focuses on the meal Jesus gave us to remember what his time on earth was all about. We'll look at the human and holy side of the sacrament we now call Holy Communion.

### Remembering

- From Luke 22:7-20, why were the disciples gathered together? What instructions did Jesus give them? \_\_\_\_\_

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- What happened at this meal? What did Jesus tell them was to come? \_\_\_\_\_

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- What specifically did Jesus say about the bread and the wine? What are we to remember about this meal? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Why do you think Jesus used this meal to make a new covenant with us? What is the history of the Passover? See Exodus 12:1-30. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The Passover is a very special time for the Jewish people. It reminds people of their years as slaves and that God was the one who led them out of their slavery. Passover is also a time of expectation: a time when God is revealed. The years between Moses' time and Jesus' time were many, yet each Passover the people were still hopeful that it might be this meal that God would come and once again save the people. It was not an accident that Jesus used this meal of remembrance to reveal himself and remind us of his role here on earth. This meal brought together the history, the present, and the future all in one, unifying God's people. We remember that communion does this for us today.

## Reverence

- *Reverence* means "holy" or "of God." What parts of this sacrament are holy? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What does God promise in this sacrament? How does it help us touch God? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Responsibility

It wasn't long after Jesus' death that people were forgetting why communion was important to them. Instead of focusing on remembering Jesus' death and resurrection and the holy part of what this meal is about, the people of Corinth were using it as a time for partying, drinking too much, feasting on the bread, and fighting among themselves. Paul reminds these people, as he does us today, what our part is in participating in communion.

- In 1 Corinthians 11:17-32, what does it say about our participation in communion? Why participate? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- How do we prepare ourselves today for the sacrament of Holy Communion? What in our worship helps us to prepare our hearts? See *Lutheran Book of Worship* for assistance.

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## My Faith

How important is communion in your faith life? Why do you want to be confirmed or reaffirm your baptism? Write it out!

## Tools

When we celebrate Holy Communion:

- we remember our faith history.
- we revere/praise God.
- we accept our faith responsibilities.

## Discussion Questions

- Why is communion so important that we participate in it not only once in our lives, but many, many times?
- How does communion help us live our baptism?
- Why do you need communion?
- Are you keeping the reverence in communion?
- Do you practice your part of communion? Why or why not?

A sacrament is sacred; that is, of God. It's tangible, and it's initiated by Jesus. Jesus gave us two sacraments as tools for helping us live lives of faith. Jesus, having walked on this earth himself, made the ultimate example of giving our lives over to God, to God's wonders, to God's promises, and for God's purposes. Are you ready to live by faith? Will you let Christ be your example? Many have given up their lives to God, not to lose them, but instead to find life in its fullest. It is our challenge as Christ's church to continue to build the church today, starting with our own lives.

## Challenge Questions

- What does it mean to live life by faith? What have you learned about living by faith from these last few sessions? This week, do one thing to live by faith. Ideas include: promise to read your Bible each day, pray on a regular basis, let God help you make decisions in your life, or invite someone to come to church with you.
- How does communion bring people together for Christ? How can you practice this characteristic of Jesus in your life? Repair a damaged relationship by offering or accepting forgiveness, or start a new relationship and try to live out what Christ modeled.

**Close with prayer.**

## Session 9

# Review

### **Open with prayer.**

Begin by going around the group, sharing one thing you learned about the history of the Christian church, and one hope you have for living out your faith.

### **Read Aloud**

This session ends our study of *Building the Christian Church*. We have covered much history, almost 2,000 years, highlighting key times in the Christian church and specifically within the Lutheran tradition. Pentecost and the Reformation were key events we learned about. Peter, Paul, and Martin Luther were influential leaders who impacted the church. Some things have changed over those years and other things have not. Scripture has been constant. God's forgiving message continues today as it did in Jesus' time. Holy Baptism and Holy Communion, the sacraments, continue to be part of our worship life together. So, while this is a reforming, changing church, this is also a church that holds to certain beliefs and practices.

### **Main Points**

- **Review the main points from the previous sessions.**
- **Personalize the material you have learned in *Building the Christian Church*.**

### **Options for Learning**

- **Host a talent show, with participants preparing something to present to the group on one of the previous themes. Ideas: sing a song that shares the meaning of Holy Communion, make a drawing about Pentecost, or do a drama on Luther's life.**
- **A trivia game is a great way to review.**

## Challenge Questions

- What questions do you have for the church—about its history, the future, or our specific church?
- If you were a leader in the church today, what areas would you want to work with? What concerns would you have? What would you change and what would you keep the same?

Close with prayer.

## My Faith

Write a statement about what you believe the Christian or Lutheran church is about.







To Know, To Live,  
To Grow

Apostles' Creed  
Building the Christian Church  
Jesus of Nazareth  
Lord's Prayer  
Meaning of Service: Living in Love  
My Faith  
New Testament  
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Ten Commandments  
What Is a Lutheran?

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