

FaithTrek



Children's Ministry for 3 Year Olds through 5th Grade



Why FaithTrek?

Some time back, a child boldly announced she did not want to go to school on Sunday. Unfortunately, *Sunday School* translated as being school to her. It was apparent something needed to change. The first thing we did was changed the name from *Sunday School*, for 3 year olds through 5th grade, to *FaithTrek*.

The name change, however, was just the beginning. A change in methodology was also made. *FaithTrek* moved from a program-based ministry, popular in the 60's, to a spiritual formation-based ministry. It was time to be in ministry with children, rather than doing ministry to children. Our goal with our children's ministry is to educate and encourage children to be authentic faithful disciples of Jesus.

At First Lutheran, the "teacher telling" approach has evolved into an experiential approach where questions are expected, encouraged and pondered together in a multigenerational community.

We encourage "so what" questions. What do I do with this story I am reading in the Bible? How do I respond to the injustice I see? How do I welcome, walk with and advocate for my neighbors? That's moving from God-in-a-box to a living faith that drives one's words and actions on a daily basis.

Why *FaithTrek*? Because we made a promise. We have been entrusted with the huge responsibility of nurturing children in Christian faith and helping them live in the covenant of baptism and communion with the church. Amen.

We Are Disciples

Our approach to children's ministry is a bit unique. Based on First Lutheran's vision statement, we acknowledge we are all disciples. The word "disciple" means a follower or student of Jesus. As students, we are learning, exploring God's teachings and being mindful of how God is at work through the Holy Spirit. We are growing in our ability to serve like Jesus and looking for ways to share our God-given gifts. And, as disciples, we worship and pray. Prayer is how we grow in our relationship with God. Prayer is talking with God, not at God, sharing what's on our mind and listening to what God has to say. Yes, we *are* disciples of Jesus Christ transforming the world!

Sundays 9:30-10:30 am

September 2018 -

May 2019

Register online at:

**[www.flclincoln.org/learn/#
faithtrek](http://www.flclincoln.org/learn/#faithtrek)**

Contact Sunni at

sunni@flclincoln.org

***We are in ministry
with children***

not just for children.

***Our goal is to help children
grow as disciples of Jesus.***

***It's about serving children,
caring for them and***

***forming them into people
who serve one another***

and the world

in the way of Jesus.

FaithTrek Basics

- Is First Lutheran's Sunday morning learning opportunity for 3 year olds through 5th grade.
- Teachers are called Guides. They guide the process as they learn and grow with the children. We use first names with the title of Miss or Mr. for Guides.
- Begins promptly at 9:30 am in the Sanctuary. Please sit quietly if musical groups are practicing. Eat snacks before you come to Opening. No food is allowed in the Sanctuary.
- Ends at 10:30 am. Guides will wait with children until a parent/adult picks them up in the classroom. Please be on time. We will be working around the building construction so we may, from time to time, be in different classrooms. A sign with the week's classroom assignments will be posted by the Sanctuary doors.
- An annual registration form is required for all children. Find it on line at www.flclincoln.org/learn/#faithtrek.
- There are four class groupings: Preschool, K-1, 3-2 and 4-5. Sometimes we may divide for activities or combine grades. The curriculum is age appropriate, caters to the needs and interest of the students and syncs with activities at First Lutheran.
- We do not take an offering so please help your child participate fully in Noisy Offering with their own gift. Noisy Offering is the first weekend of every month during worship. The children's gift, added to the gifts offered by others in the congregation, goes to support a project from an agency or ministry beyond our doors.
- Is a Bible based, experiential learning ministry. It is Gospel driven, drawing on stories from the Old and New Testament. Utilizing creative arts, music, drama, prayer, storytelling, problem solving activities and questions, the children are provided the opportunity to grow spiritually. Multigenerational relationships are developed. Children learn to be good stewards and servants of the Lord. As disciples, we want them to see how they can actually transform the world.
- We understand families are busy and children may not be in *FaithTrek* every week. But, we also know growing young



disciples requires intentional time for faith conversations and learning. The number one faith formation leader is the family. We encourage you to build discipleship time into your week. Do grace before meals and/or a return of thanks. Make bedtime prayers a nightly routine. Add faith based books to your library. Ask your children about their *FaithTrek* time, songs they are singing in choir or what they heard in the Children's Message in worship. Most important, be a role model, sharing how you engage in worship and prayer, learning and serving.

- A Family Resource will be posted on the website each month with activities, books, recipes and other ideas to help you build on the *FaithTrek* focus of the month.

Questions are always welcome! Learning is built on asking questions. For faith formation program ideas, *FaithTrek* details or other questions, contact Sunni Richardson, Director of Discipleship and FaithTrek Coordinator at sunni@flclincoln.org.

Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Month by Month

September 2018 - STORY

We are disciples in training! Jesus calls us to come and follow, join the adventure and be God's hands and feet in the world. Along the way, we will learn how to be storytellers, sharing God's story and our own stories of faith.

October 2018 - COMMUNITY

We live in a variety of communities and each is unique. We have a community at school, church, with family, the neighborhood, at dance classes and on sports teams. In each case, accompaniment is the key. We will explore welcome, diversity, respect, honesty and advocacy.

November & December 2018 - JOURNEY

We are all on a journey. Sometimes we know exactly where we are headed, other times we wander and sometimes we end up lost. We will dig in to stories about Biblical people on a journey, including Mary and Joseph.

NOTE: Christmas congregation celebration will be Sunday, December 16, 9:30-10:30 am. Please save the date. *FaithTrek* will not meet December 23 or 30 for the holidays.

January 2019 - EPIPHANY

January 6 is Epiphany. Why is it called Epiphany and what does it mean to us as followers of Jesus? Our "practice exercise" will include being mindful of how God is at work in the world.



February 2019 - PARTICIPATE

Participate means to "take part". What does it mean to actively participate in worship, the congregation, in Lent and with faith formation rituals at home? How do we do our part?

March 2019 - TRANSFORMATION

The premise behind a Transformer toy is that the toy's parts can be shifted to change dramatically in form or appearance. Dramatic shift — sounds a death to life story. We will see why transformation is the grounding of Christianity and explore ways we are transformed as disciples of Jesus Christ.

NOTE: We will not have *FaithTrek* March 10 as Lincoln Public Schools is on spring break.

April 2019 - WAIT

Who likes to be told to wait? No one! We read many "wait stories" in the Bible and most of the time they involve waiting for a king or waiting for freedom. Easter is the story of Jesus, King of Kings, and how he gave his life for our freedom.

NOTE: We will not have *FaithTrek* on Easter, April 21.

May 2019 - STORY

God's stories, our *FaithTrek* stories and individual stories of spiritual formation ...it is always about stories! How can we be God's storytellers over the summer?

NOTE: May 19 will be the last day of *FaithTrek* for this school year. Plan on attending the learning celebration on that day. You will appreciate the stories the children will have to share with you at 9:30 am.

"FaithTrek is about helping children live as committed disciples of the radical way of life Jesus calls us to."

Children's Ministry In The Way of Jesus

Expectations and Assumptions

Just like school, we have expectations about how we will work together as a community. One hour is not a lot of time and making disciples takes time. We all have bad mornings and tough days, but consistent behavior problems limit our ability to engage in the planned lesson. Please review these guidelines with your child and help us create a good place for everyone to learn.

- Be welcoming. Introduce yourself to others, call people by name, invite someone to sit next to you, assist others with projects and include them in all activities.
- Be respectful of others. That means listening to others, taking your turn, sharing supplies, saying please and thank you and helping with cleanup. Be respectful of personal boundaries and keep your hands to yourself.
- Be engaged. Disciples try new things and are willing to be part of the group. Jesus did not let the Disciples opt out because they didn't feel like it. Participate fully in activities.
- Be a servant. Volunteer to hand out supplies, be a team leader or read scripture.
- Be a prayerful disciple. Pray for the Guides and the children in your class. Listen carefully when others share their prayer concerns so you can pray for them. You can add your special prayers to the First Lutheran Prayer list. Just fill out a prayer card you can find in a slot in each pew in the Sanctuary.
- Be ready to learn. Arrive on time, eat breakfast before you come to church and have a smile on your face.

God has chosen to do nothing without our help."

Children's Ministry In the Way of Jesus

Being A Worship Assistant

Children of all ages are invited to be worship assistants. We are very adaptable and will find a way to help a child do a job they are interested in.

Communion Presenter

Communion Presenters carry the bread and wine forward with the ushers when they bring up the offering. Instructions and a signup sheet can be found on the Kiosk in the Commons at the church.

Noisy Offering Presenter

Once a month we have Noisy Offering. We need 1-2 children to take the Noisy Offering bowl up front, along with the other offering. Signup by contacting Sunni.

Bible Bearer

The Bible Bearer wears a white robe (alb) and processes in and out with the pastors. They carry the Bible to the pulpit and carry it out at the end of the service. If a child needs assistance getting the Bible on the pulpit, we can make that happen. Signup on the *Resources* page of the First Lutheran website

Acolyte

Like the Bible Bearer, the Acolyte wears a white robe and sits in the front with other worship assistants. The Acolyte lights the candles before worship, receives the offering, refills the wine pitcher, if needed, and puts the candles out after worship.

Reader

This is a job for a little older child, although we do not have any age restrictions on readers. Lessons are mailed out in advance. Practicing ahead of time with the microphone is strongly encouraged. We can have a stool available if the reader needs a boost to reach the microphone. Signup as a reader on the *Resources* page of the First Lutheran website.