

Youth: Rite of Affirmation Preparation

How Do We Live Our Baptism? Five Gifts of Discipleship

Affirmation of Baptism

Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in Holy Baptism:
to **live** among God's faithful people,
to **hear** the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,
to **proclaim** the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,
to **serve** all people, following the example of Jesus,
to **strive** for justice and peace in all the earth?

RESPONSE: I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.

Preparing for the Affirmation of Baptism

How do we prepare confirmands to answer the question: Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in Holy Baptism? That's a big question. Fortunately, the question in the Affirmation of Baptism includes a five-fold guide for living our baptism—the Five Gifts of Discipleship. (See Handout #1)

Arrange opportunities for the confirmands to explore each of the Five Gifts of Discipleship. How are these gifts from God? How do these gifts help us to follow Jesus? Adapt the following activities into a format which works best in your setting. Possibilities include a mini-retreat, two-sessions, or a five-week series. (See ELCA web page: www.elca.org/faithpractices for additional Five Gifts of Discipleship resources.)

Explore the Five Gifts of Discipleship! *These activities can be done alone or with a group.*

Live among God's faithful people

- *Interview 3 people who you admire for their faith. Sample interview questions: How has your faith helped you in life? What faith practices do you use on a regular basis?*
- *Pray for those you interview every day for a week.*

Hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper

- *Assist in worship (provide music, serve as greeters, select hymns, read lessons.)*
- *Visit someone who can't come to worship due to illness. Bring church to him or her!*

Proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed

- *Select people in your life who are discouraged and share the good news of God in Christ.*

Serve all people, following the example of Jesus

- *Choose a local non-profit agency who is serving the community. Find a way to help by serving food, reading books, cleaning up trash, or helping in some other way.*

Strive for justice and peace in all the earth

- *Select an issue of injustice which you feel strongly about and learn the facts. Then, share your findings with someone who can make a difference. In doing so, you make a difference!*

Create: What does it mean to *live our baptism*?

Show your answer by creating a collage, mobile, essays, diary, film, music or other project. Include at least one symbol of baptism, such as a cross or water. Display these projects at your church.



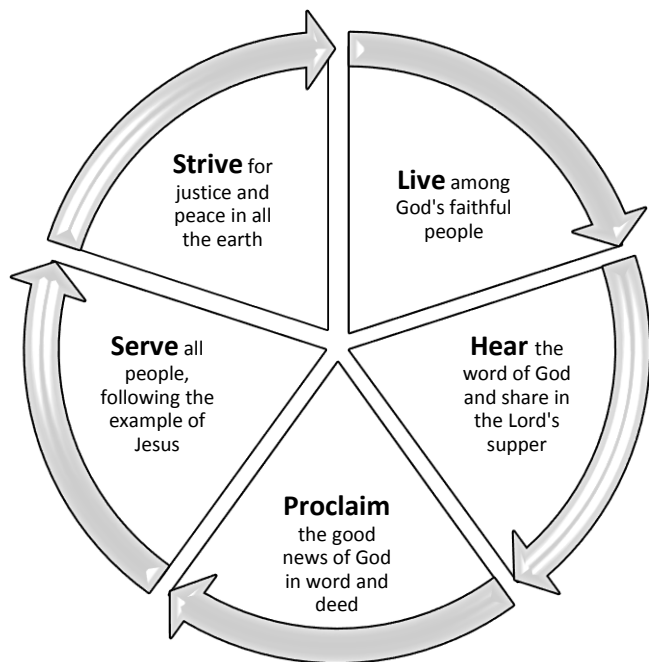
Affirmation of Baptism

Handout #1

Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in Holy Baptism:

- to **live** among God's faithful people,
- to **hear** the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,
- to **proclaim** the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,
- to **serve** all people, following the example of Jesus,
- to **strive** for justice and peace in all the earth?

RESPONSE: I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.



FIVE GIFTS OF DISCIPLESHIP

Inner Gifts:

LIVE among God's faithful people

HEAR the word of God and **SHARE** in the Lord's supper

Outer Gifts:

PROCLAIM the good news of God in Christ through word and deed

SERVE all people, following the example of Jesus

STRIVE for justice and peace in all the earth

How are these gifts to be used?

Each of the five gifts of discipleship has the potential to deepen our understanding of what it means to follow Jesus. The Holy Spirit provides these gifts of discipleship with each of the five gifts flowing and overlapping with the others.

On a daily basis, we are invited to live, hear, share, proclaim, serve, and strive—in the name of Christ. God guides and shapes us in the living of our baptism in the newness of life in Christ as we practice our faith each day. These five gifts help us to practice our faith and serve as a reminder of who has claimed us in baptism.

If we do not practice faith, it is easy to get confused, complacent, chase other dreams, lose focus, and wander away from God's calling—not reflecting our new life in Christ and the love of God. It is God's work, but our hands as we are sent out into the world to be a visible witness to the love of Christ.



MINI-RETREAT

Host a mini-retreat. Plan a schedule which includes time for fun, fellowship, and of course great food.

Lesson Plan

Session 1: Called and Gathered

Focus: Inner Gifts of Discipleship of the Rite of Affirmation (*Live among God's faithful people; Hear the word of God; Share in the Lord's supper*)

Session 1

90 minutes

Supplies

Handout #1
Slips of paper (1"x 8.5")
Stapler or tape
Pens
Bibles
Small Catechisms

Warm-up and Opening Handout #1

Encourage each person to sign his or her own name on a slip of paper. Create a paper chain by connecting the slips of paper by tape or staples. If there is time, add a slip of paper for each family member.

Begin with the Affirmation of Baptism. Introduce the Five Gifts of Discipleship

People of The Word ... told through story

Celebrate the connection to God's faithful people. Let the confirmands have fun sharing how much they have learned through the confirmation learning process.

Story of the Bible—The Bible is a library of books which tells the stories of humanity at its best and worst. But more than that, the Bible tells the story of God's love and Jesus Christ.

1. *What are some of your favorite stories in the Bible?*
2. *When and where do you have a chance to hear the word of God?*

Add links to the paper chain: *favorite persons of the Bible*

Story of Reformation—Martin Luther wanted to reform the church. That included people having a greater understanding of their faith. He wrote the Small Catechism as a teaching tool. Take a moment to glance through Martin Luther's Small Catechism.

3. *What else do you know about the Reformation?*
4. *What tips did Luther give about living among God's faithful people? (See Small Catechism)*

Add links to the paper chain: *Martin Luther, his wife Katie*

Story of Church—Luther wrote in the Small Catechism that the Holy Spirit "...calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth and keep it united with Jesus Christ in the one true faith." Churches may vary in worship and beliefs, yet are united in Jesus Christ.

Add links to the paper chain: *other churches (both and far and near)*

Story of Your Congregation—Share the history and mission of your congregation.

5. *Why is it important to receive the Lord's supper?*

Add links to the paper chain: *those who have taught you the faith*

Review the Five Gifts of Discipleship Handout #1

In baptism, we have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever. Our future is secured by the grace of God. We are lifelong learners in the living of our baptism as we discover our God-given gifts to be used for the sake of the world.

6. *What does it mean to live among God's people?*
7. *What does it mean to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper?*

Conclusion—Prayer Chain Prayers: Conclude with a prayer which includes all those on the paper chain. Give thanks for the chance to live among God's faithful people, hear the word of God, and share in the Lord's supper.



Lesson Plan

Session 2: Sent

Focus: Outer Gifts of Discipleship of the Rite of Affirmation (*Proclaim the good news of God in word and deed; Serve all people, following the example of Jesus; Strive for justice and peace in all the earth*)

Session 2
90 minutes

Supplies
Handout #1
Candle and matches
Bulletins
Hymnals

Opening Prayer: Gather around the Light of the World

Light a candle and pray.

Read John 8:12, "Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life."

Briefly discuss the following questions:

1. *What Jesus said, "I am the light of the world", what did he mean?*
2. *What does it mean "to never walk in darkness"?*
3. *How does Jesus light our way when we go through tough times?*

The Role of Worship and Prayer

We gather with other believers for worship and in prayer so we might praise God, be inspired by the word of God, support others on their journey of faith, seek ways to serve Christ, and be encouraged to live our baptism. Take time to review the order of worship, bulletins, lectionary lessons, and hymnals as tools to grow in discipleship.

4. *How does worship help prepare us to proclaim the good news of God in word and deed?*

Sent to be Light

The following verse is often read at baptism, "Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, p. 231)

5. *What does it mean for a Christian to let his or her light shine?*
6. *What might someone learn about God from your words and deeds?*

Get Real!

Give examples of how a person in daily life might do the following and identify possible risks for doing so:

- **proclaim** the good news of God in Christ through word and deed
- **serve** all people, following the example of Jesus
- **strive** for justice and peace in all the earth

Review the Five Gifts of Discipleship *Handout #1*

In baptism, we have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever. Our future is secured by the grace of God. We are lifelong learners in the living of our baptism as we discover our God-given gifts to be used for the sake of the world.

7. *Which of the Five Gifts of Discipleship will be the easiest to discover and integrate into your life?*
8. *Which of the Five Gifts of Discipleship will be the most challenging?*
9. *How can we support one another as we follow Jesus Christ?*

Concluding Prayer

Use the Affirmation of Baptism (Handout #1) or Affirmation of Baptism prayer (See page 5.) For a keepsake, print prayer on cardstock or create a magnet.



LIVING OUR **BAPTISM**...*Five gifts of discipleship*

Gracious God,
Send your Holy Spirit. Awaken in me the gifts of discipleship:
to live among God's faithful people,
to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,
to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,
to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,
to strive for justice and peace in all the earth. Amen.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



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Living our Baptism: Affirmation of Baptism for Youth, written by Robin McCullough-Bade
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