

# FaithTrek



Sunday Morning Christian Education for 3 Year Olds Through 5th Grade



## We are Disciples for the Sake of the World

Our approach to learning is a bit unique. First of all, we see ourselves as disciples. A disciple is a follower or student of Jesus. As lifelong learners exploring God's teachings we learn to be mindful of the Holy Spirit at work in the world. We are growing in our ability to serve like Jesus and use our gifts. Gathering with the community for worship and prayer is part of our daily lives. We are learning to be disciples for the sake of the world!

**Sundays 9:30-10:30 am**

**September 2019 -**

**May 2020**

**Register online at:**

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

**Contact Sunni at**

**[sunni@flclincoln.org](mailto:sunni@flclincoln.org)**

## 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.

***"Parenting, like faith, is learned only in the doing. Faith must be practiced. We aren't called to be perfect. We are called to be faithful and take it one step at a time.***

***(Faithful Families Creating Sacred Moments at Home – Traci Smith)***

# 10 Important FaithTrek Basics

1. FaithTrek is a Christian Education ministry for 3 year olds through 5th grade. A child can join FaithTrek any time during the year.
2. Children must be registered before they can participate in FaithTrek. A new registration form is required annually. Register online at [www.flclincoln.org/learn](http://www.flclincoln.org/learn) and click on FaithTrek.
3. We meet Sundays at 9:30-10:30 am. The morning begins with an opening in the Activity Center (our current worship space). A sign-in sheet is located at the table by the entrance to the Activity Center. Children need to be signed in by an adult. Preschool, K-1 and 2-3 grade children must be picked up by an adult at their classroom by 10:30 am.
4. Teachers are called Guides. They guide the process as they learn and grow in their faith, along with the children. Guides use their first name, along with Miss or Mr. We do background checks. Our goal is to always have two adults with each classroom for safety reasons.
5. To make life easier for everyone please have your child stop by the restroom before coming to the opening. Finish snacks and drinks before coming into the Activity Center so they are ready to participate with the group.
6. Stewardship is about using our resources wisely. This includes our time, talents and dollars. We do not take offering in FaithTrek. Instead, we invite children to bring their offering the first Sunday of the month for our Noisy Offering during worship. The children, along with the congregation, are invited to put their change in the Noisy Offering bowl. Each month we designate a project or agency to be the recipient of this special offering.
7. We understand your child may not be in FaithTrek every week. That being said, young disciples need intentional time for faith conversations and learning. Strive to make FaithTrek and worship a priority for your family.
8. The number one faith formation leader is the family. Build discipleship time into your week. Do grace before meals or a return of thanks after a meal. Add faith-based books to your library. Ask your child about their FaithTrek learning. Consider having your child in the children's choir or attend monthly preschool/elementary youth group activities. An email is sent to FaithTrek families each month with dates of upcoming activities and opportunities, along with a family resource flier that syncs with the FaithTrek Word of the Month.
9. FaithTrek is an experiential, Bible-based learning ministry. We write our own age-appropriate curriculum which allows us to cater to the needs and interests of the children and to adjust the schedule or lessons, when needed. It draws on Old and New Testament stories utilizing creative arts, music, art, drama, prayer, science, storytelling, problem solving activities and plenty of Q & A time. Multigenerational relationships and a sense of community are developed as the children meet with their Guides on a regular basis.
10. Questions are always welcome. Learning is built on asking questions, exploring options and considering new ideas. Contact Deacon Sunni Richardson, FaithTrek coordinator, for more information, concerns or to share a story.



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

# Lifelong Learning is a Partnership

In Baptism, you promised to...

- Live among God's people and bring your child to worship;
- Teach them the Lord's Prayer, the Creed and the 10 Commandments;
- Place in their hand the holy scripture;
- Nurture them in faith and prayer so they can learn to trust God;
- Proclaim Christ; and
- Care for others; and
- Work for peace and justice

The congregation promised to help you by providing resources, lifelong learning opportunities and walking with you as you guide your child's growth and strengthen your own relationship with God.

Together, we are equipping young people to live as disciples on a daily basis and to know they are loved, forgiven and equipped to transform the world. It's a partnership that requires parent/guardian support and participation.

Thanks for being on board with your child.

# FaithTrek Covenant

Just like school, we have expectations about how we will work together as a community. One hour is not a lot of time and we have a lot we need to accomplish each Sunday morning. None of us are exempt from a bad day, but consistent behavior problems limit our ability to engage fully in the planned lesson. If we have consistent behavior concerns, we will invite you in to a conversation as we seek solutions to enable participation. Review the six basic principles of the FaithTrek Covenant below with your child.

Be welcoming.

Be respectful.

Be engaged.

Be a servant.

Be ready to learn.

Be a prayerful disciple.



# Creating Sacred Space



Consistency is a key element of faith formation. Kids need to participate in an activity on a regular basis for it to become meaningful and a habit. Create your own family sacred spaces for learning, prayer and faithful conversations. It can be something you pull together when you are ready to use it or space that you establish as permanent sacred space for the family. Consider gathering pillows and blankets and adding music or a lit candle in the space. Another option is establishing a prayer corner with a cross and age appropriate Bibles or Bible story books or a prayer wall or basket that is filled with photos of people you pray for regularly. You can order hand held wooden crosses for \$4 from Autom or purchase faith story based toys like puzzles, a nativity scene or costumes to add to the space. The key is to create your own traditions and be consistent in utilizing them.

# Month by Month Learning

Focusing on a Word of the Month allows us to explore scripture through the lens of daily living. It's a different approach than the traditional Sunday School program which usually uses a set curriculum with specific lessons assigned to each age group. We like the flexibility the Word of the Month approach allows us. The lessons are age appropriate and we provide monthly family resources so you can continue to the conversation at home.



## **September 2019 – DISCIPLE**

Can kids be disciples? What does it mean to be a disciple? Are there rules or responsibilities that come with the title? How can young disciples really transform the world?

## **October 2019 – CHOOSE**

We have opportunities, on a daily basis, to choose. Scripture says we are to choose love, joy, kindness, peace, forgiveness, kindness, goodness and faithfulness. How do we do that?

## **November 2019 – CARE**

The “I don’t care” attitude is not acceptable for disciples. We need to have an “I care!” attitude that’s reflected in our actions. We are called and committed to care for and walk with our neighbors with love and grace.

## **December 2019 – SURPRISE**

We find hope as we journey through Advent and surprise when we read the King was born in a stable and greeted by shepherds. We celebrate with candlelight, lots of presents, and family gatherings, knowing the real surprise is that God’s Son came to save us all. Surprise!

## **January 2020 - WORLD**

We are disciples for the sake of the world. So, we have to first ask what the word “sake” actually means. What does it mean to impact the world? How do we share the light of Christ with the world?

## **February 2020 – FIGHT**

Scripture says we are to “fight the good fight of the faith”. What’s a good fight? Let’s learn how to be good fighters so we can be faith-driven advocates and take a stand on issues that impact our neighbors and families.

## **March 2020 – LISTEN**

Just think about how many times you have said, “Are you listening?” to someone. Listening can be hard. During Lent we are going to practice listening to each other and to the moans and groans of the world and to God.

## **April 2020 – EMPOWER**

“Empowered to succeed” will be our focus in April. Jesus is counting on us! He is counting on us to be storytellers, share God’s love, serve our neighbor and use our gifts. How can we use our power and gifts for good?

## **May 2020 – DISCIPLE**

Being disciples for the sake of the world is a year around job. Let’s make a plan to continue learning and serving this summer.