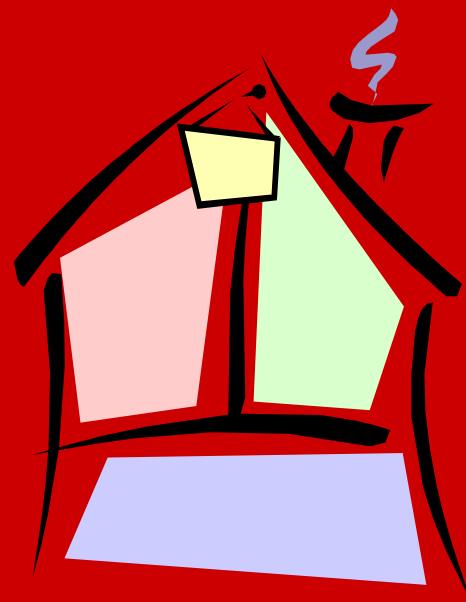


***Living as Christian  
Household's  
in Today's World***



**2007 DISTRICT STUDY DAY**

# Images or Metaphors for Household Living Today?



# The Institutional Family

- Primary goals – stability, security.
- Happiness secondary.
- Based on kinship, children, community ties, economics, father's authority.

# The Psychological Family

- Emerged in early 1900s.
- Based on more on personal achievement and happiness than family obligations and community ties.
- “Ideal form” – nuclear unit headed by stable married couple.
- Goal – satisfaction of individual family members.

# The Psychological Family

*'From its beginning the Psychological Family was germinating the seeds of its own destruction. It harbored a profound contradiction: the value of individual happiness for both men and women, coupled with the value of family stability.'*

*– Dr. Bill Doherty*

# A Pluralism of Families

- No ideal for what constitutes an “ideal” family.
- Assumption is that people find or create for themselves a wide variety of family configurations

*‘We now have the first society in human history without a clear social consensus about what constitutes a “real” family and a “good” family.’*

*– Dr. Bill Doherty*

## The Entropic Family:

*Entropy: tendency of a physical system to lose energy and coherence over time.*

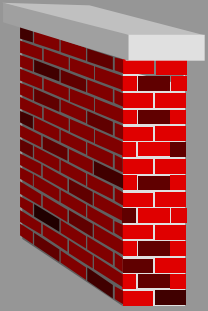


## The Intentional Family:

*Maintains energy and coherence through an intentional effort to sustain connection, meaning and community.*

What does it mean to live as  
a *Christian* household?





# Laying the Foundations

- Christian household living flows out of God's gifts in public worship.
- Christian household living involves Christ at work in and through our flawed lives together.
- Growth into and exercise of spiritual maturity is a key purpose of Christian household living.
- Christian household living takes in all sorts of households, structured in a variety of ways.
- Christian household living involves a call into mission as communities of faith ("domestic churches").

# The Vocation of Household Life

- Household life is God-given and has his rich blessing.
- Household life is a basic setting for the exercise of baptismal faith (dying to self, being raised to new life).
- Household life has an important place in God's design for the passing on of the Christian faith.
- Households are essential to the church's mission and service in the world.

[T]he greatest good in married life, that which makes all suffering and labor worth while, is that God grants offspring and commands that they be brought up to worship and serve him. **In all the world this is the noblest and most precious work, because to God there can be nothing dearer than the salvation of souls.** Now since we are all duty bound to suffer death, if need be, that we might bring a single soul to God, you can see how rich the estate of marriage is in good works. God has entrusted to its bosom souls begotten of its own body, on whom it can lavish all manner of Christian works.

**Most certainly father and mother are apostles, bishops and priests to their children, for it is they who make them acquainted with the gospel. In short, there is no greater or nobler authority on earth than that of parents over their children,** for this authority is both spiritual and temporal. Whoever teaches the gospel to another is truly his apostle and bishop. Mitre and staff and great estates indeed produce idols, but teaching the gospel produces apostles and bishops. See therefore how good and great is God's work and ordinance (*Luther's Works* 45: 46)

# What elements do you see in Deuteronomy 6:4-9 for the passing on of the faith?

- Faith as a “heart” connection.
- “Impress them on your children”.
- Conversation in the course of daily life.
- A full-time calling involving all of life.
- Experiential: use of symbols (rituals and traditions).

# What does Deuteronomy 6:20-25 teach us about the place of adults in passing on the faith?

- Focus on adult faith.
- Children are asking how the faith *makes a difference* to adult lives (meaning).
- The faith is conveyed in terms of personal stories (“we”).
- The parent is the teacher of the faith tradition.

*Exodus 13:5-10*

*Deuteronomy 16*

*Deuteronomy 31:10-13*

*Matthew 9:6-7*

*Mark 5:18-20*

*Luke 10:38-42*

Michael Trainor – *The Quest for Home*

*Acts 2:42-44, 5:42, 20:20*

*The Household Codes*

**Who or what have been  
the greatest influences  
in your faith journey?**

# ***Principle #1***

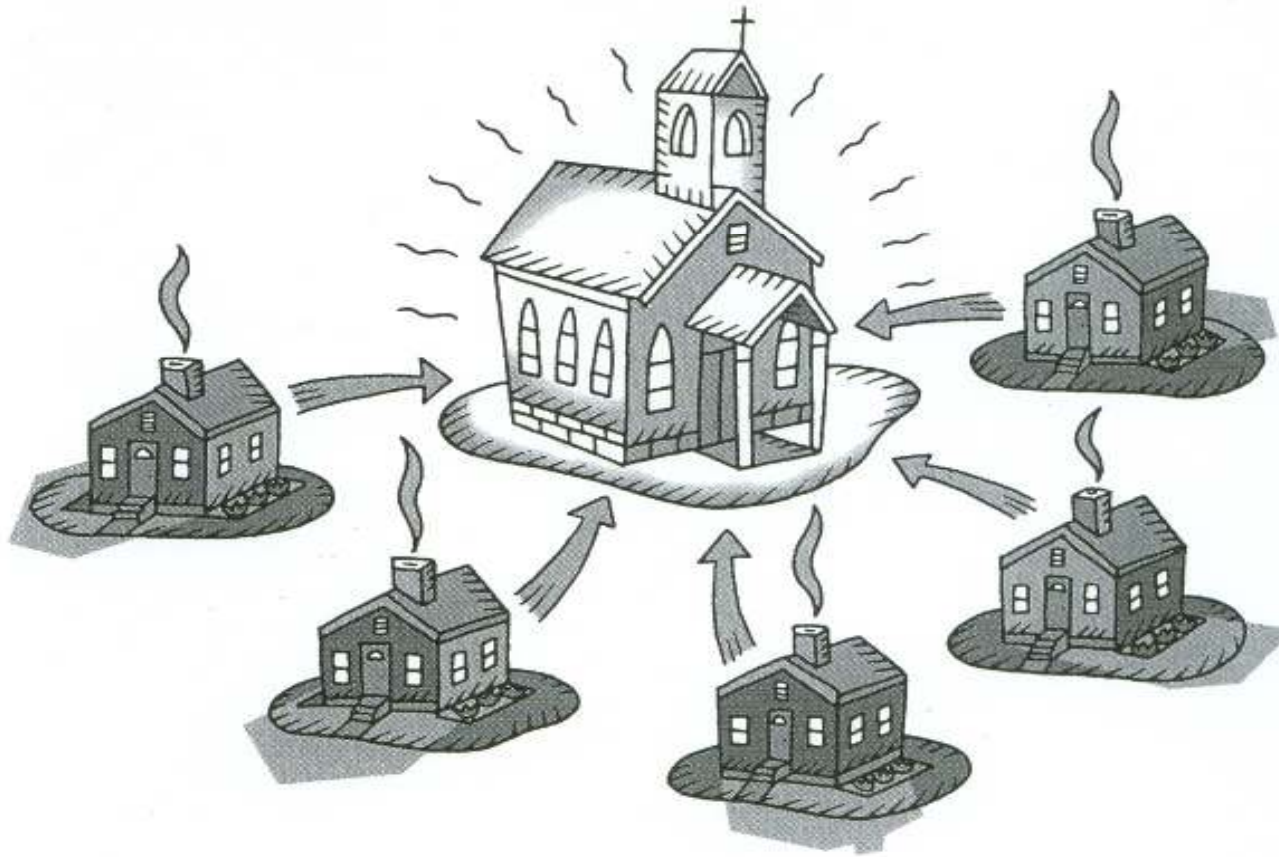
***Faith is formed by the power  
of the Holy Spirit through  
personal, trusted  
relationships, often in our  
own homes.***

## ***Principle #2***

***The church is a living partnership between the ministry of the congregation and the ministry of the home.***

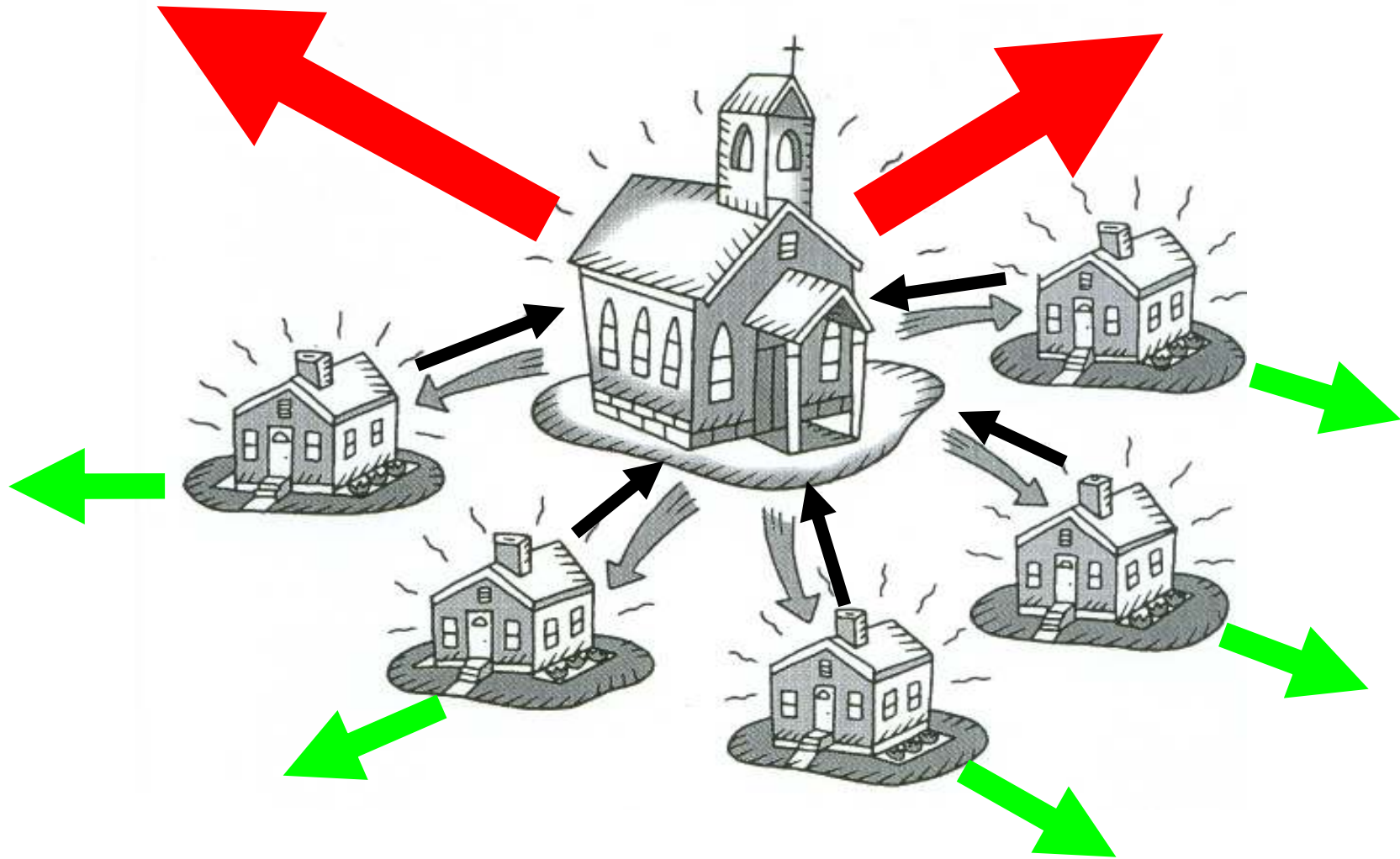
## The Old Paradigm:

Church-Centered, Home-Supported  
Christian Education and Youth Ministry



## The New Paradigm:

Home-Centered, Church-Supported  
Christian Education and Youth Ministry



# *Principle #3*


*Where Christ is present in  
faith, the home is church  
too.*

# ***Principle #4***

***Faith is caught more than it  
is taught.***

# ***Principle #5***

***If we want Christian children  
and youth, we need  
Christian adults and  
parents.***



**Four Keys**  
**to**  
**Nurturing**  
**Faith in**  
**the Home**  
**and**  
**Congregati**  
**on**

# Effective Education Study

Search Institute, 1990

*"Of the two strongest connections to faith maturity, family religiousness is slightly more important than exposure to Christian education. The particular family experiences most tied to greater faith maturity are the frequency with which an adolescent talked with mother and faith about faith, the frequency of family devotions, and the frequency with which parents and children together were involved in efforts, formal or informal, to help other people."*

# Research Outcome:

**Parents who share faith in the home double the likelihood that their children will become partners in Christ's mission.**

**% of Youth Who Were ..**

**From Church Families Where Parents ...**

	<b>NEVER EXPRESSED FAITH</b>	<b>OFTEN EXPRESSED FAITH</b>
<b>Actively Participating in Church</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>46%</b>
<b>Intentional about their Faith</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>37%</b>
<b>Involved in Serving Others</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>29%</b>

## Robert Wuthnow in *Growing Up Religious*

“Effective religious socialization comes about through *embedded practices*; that is, through specific deliberate religious activities that are firmly intertwined with the daily habits of family routines, of eating and sleeping, of having conversations, of adorning the spaces to which people live, of celebrating the holidays and of being part of a community. Compared with these practices, the formal teachings of religious leaders often pale in significance. Yet when such practices are present, formal teachings also become more important.”



# The Four Keys

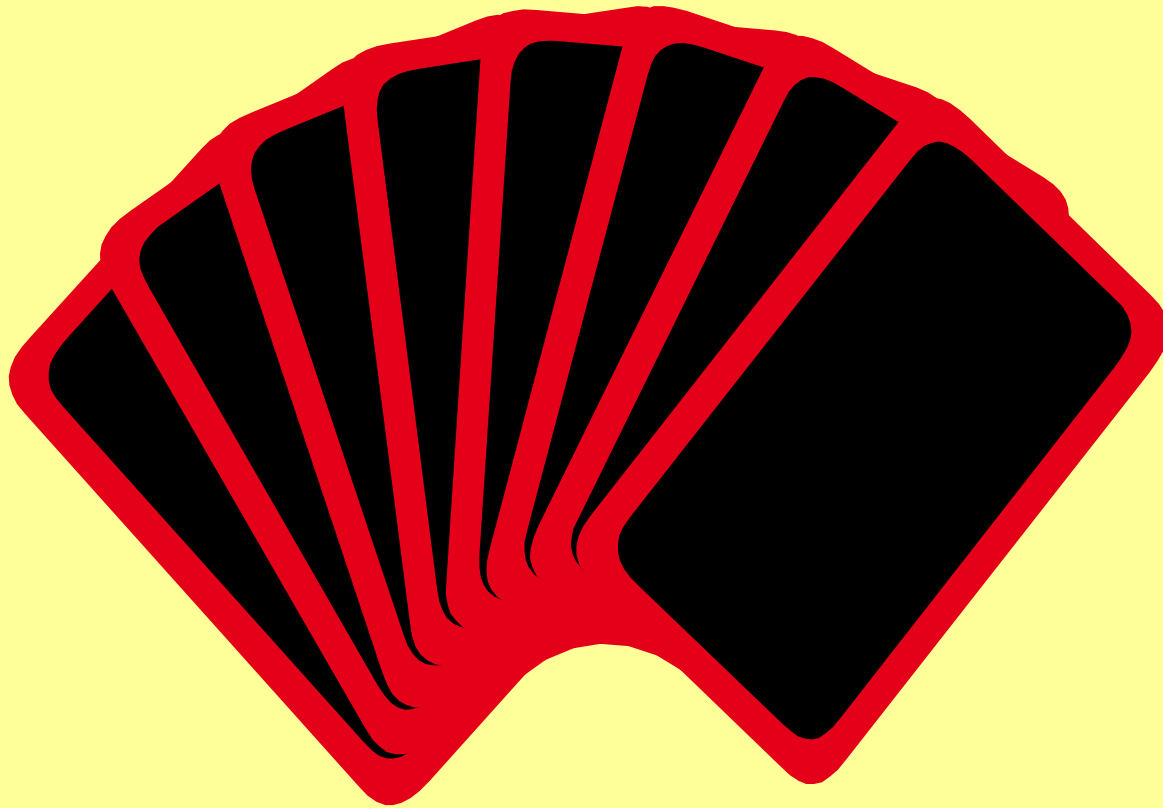
1. Caring Conversation
2. Service
3. Rituals & Traditions
4. Devotion

# Caring Conversation

- **Involves listening more than talking**
- **Is caring – i.e. Other-centred**
- **Conveys God's love and care (what we care about most)**
- **Doesn't shirk the “tough issues”**
- **Is non-verbal as much as verbal**
- **Is “holy ground”**

***In your relationships with children/youth, where do you have those “conversations” where memorable, intimate interaction takes place – i.e. communication that conveys the peace, hope and faith that God gives to your life?***

# FAITH TALK



***Share your experiences of  
devotional life within the  
home.***

# Developing Patterns of Faith Practice

## *(Faith Inkubators)*

Age 1-2	Nightly blessing as family faith practice
Age 3	Add prayer
Age 4-5	Add “highs and lows”
Age 6-7	Add nightly bible verse
Age 8-10	Add confession and forgiveness
Age 11-13	Add reflection – bringing verse and highs/lows together to ask “what is God saying to us today?”

# *Why Service?*



- **Seeing God at work through oneself and others.**
- **Building memories.**
- **Putting “wheels” onto faith.**
- **Practitioners vs. consumers.**
- **Deepening relationships.**

# What the Research Tells Us

## *(Search Institute)*

- Youth who are active in service through the congregation are twice as likely to have strong ties to the congregation.
- Youth who serve see themselves as significant in the lives of others.
- Adults higher in faith maturity are more likely to have been involved in service activities as children and teenagers.

# *Rituals & Traditions*

## **Definition:**

“Those patterns of behaviour that can be expected to occur on a routine basis and communicate certain meaning in life”

***What home rituals and traditions have helped to shape you as a person of faith?***

- Daily or Weekly Rituals and Traditions
- Church-Year Related Rituals & Traditions
- Community-Related Rituals & Traditions.
- Annual Family Rituals & Traditions
- Occasional Family Rituals and Traditions

*In groups of 3 or 4 –*

*Focus on one opportunity for enacting faith as a household through rituals and traditions.*



*What are ways in which this event / occasion / milestone could be marked from a faith perspective?*

Mike Yorkey & Greg Johnson ~  
*Faithful Parents, Faithful Kids*

**25%** had FAMILY DEVOTIONS

**50%** dropped out of HS SUNDAY SCHOOL

**15%** had regular PRAYER with their parents

**90%** had at least 6 ADULT FAITH  
MENTORS while growing up

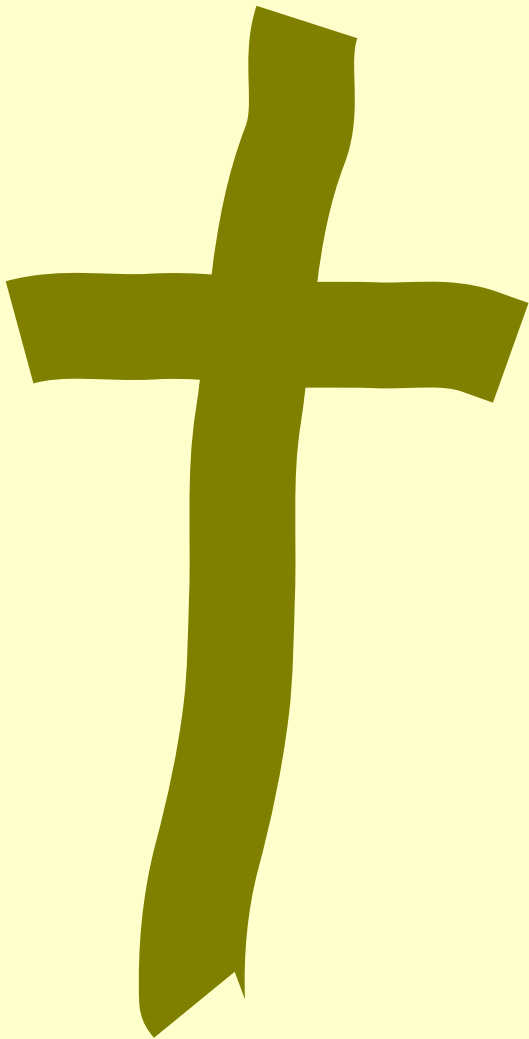
# AAA Adults

**A**available

**A**ffirming

**A**uthentic

# Cross-Generational Connections



## Eugene Roehlkepartain:

“The truths, traditions, and values of faith are passed from generation to generation not primarily through programs and curricula, but through meaningful relationships, dialogue, and mentoring across generations. Children, youth, and young adults can discover more about the faith and the life of the church by knowing and learning from mentors in faith than from any formal educational experience. Thus, building intergenerational connections may be more important for the future vitality of the church than any age-specific programming.”

(The Clergy Journal, Oct. 2003)

# ***BARNA RESEARCH ON MARRIAGE AND FAMILY***

***“God’s plan was for the church to support the family, and for the family to be the front-line of ministry within the home. Teenagers may glean some truths and principles from youth leaders, but the greatest influence in their lives will remain their parents. ...***

***Several years ago we conducted research among teens that resulted in a controversial conclusion: **perhaps the most significant product a youth ministry could provide would be helping parents to have a healthy marriage and not get divorced.** We discovered that such an outcome was of far greater impact than having kids learn verses, sing praise songs or donate money to the homeless – all of which are good and desirable activities, but simply not as life-changing as having parents who can model a Christian life for their kids. ...***

# ***BARNA RESEARCH ON MARRIAGE AND FAMILY***

***Given the big picture we would do well to recognise that the most effective context for youth ministry is to **empower and equip parents and entire families to “live Christianly” and to grow together in faith**, rather than simply attract kids to attend a church group to witness the weekly faith performance. These ministry opportunities are not mutually exclusive, but the prioritization of them is of crucial importance.”***

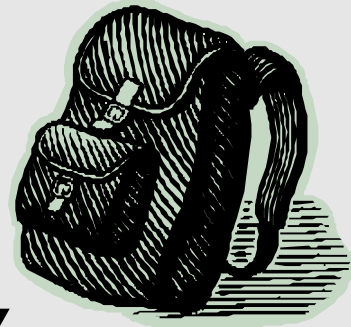
***(Third Millennium Teens Report, 1999: 66-67)***

# “Backpacks of Belonging”

***Elizabeth Caldwell: “As our young people cross the borders from childhood to adolescence and then to young adulthood, they need some resources for the journey. Think of the resources inside them in terms of a “backpack of belonging”. What are the things we would stuff in their backpacks, so to speak?”***

***What are the spiritual foundations, supports, experiences and practices we want to give young people for their journey into adulthood?***

***THINK OF ITEMS TO SYMBOLISE THESE.***

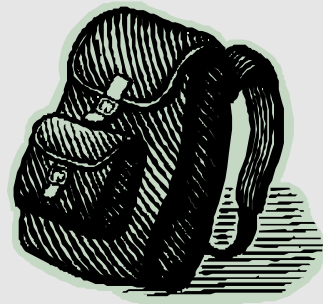


# “Backpacks of Belonging”



1. ***Placemat:*** Family mealtimes, conversations and blessings.
2. ***Baptismal candle:*** Baptismal remembrance and assurance.
3. ***Bible:*** A marked bible
4. ***Well-Worn Catechism:*** Knowing the 10 Commandments, the Apostles Creed and the Lord's Prayer and “drinking” from their riches.
5. ***Sunday Bulletin:*** A habit and rich memories of regular worship participation and involvement.
6. ***Candle and Prayer Rock:*** Regular personal devotional practices and memories of a family devotional life.
7. ***Kneepads:*** Memories of being blessed and the assurance of being prayed for.

# “Backpacks of Belonging”



8. ***Church Directory, “Family” Photos & Phone Card:*** Loving, caring relationships with a wide range of adult mentors.
9. ***A Symbol of Giftedness:*** Rich memories of using their gifts/talents in a meaningful way in a community of faith, and a strong sense of being used by God in a significant way.
10. ***Autographed T-Shirt:*** T-shirt signed by Christian peers with whom they have laughed, cried, prayed, served and hugged.
11. ***Hammer:*** Memories and stories of service, justice and kindness.
12. ***Quilt:*** A quilt made by family and congregational members to wrap around themselves in times of struggle or loneliness.

